

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Yulia Putintseva

Press Conference

Y. PUTINTSEVA/E. Rybakina

4-6, 7-6, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Can you talk about how you were able to pull that off, how you were able to come back against her?

YULIA PUTINTSEVA: Actually, I don't know, honestly. At some point I was just thinking, like, okay, just play point by point, and whatever happens, if she's playing too good, like, well done, there is nothing you can do.

But I still was trying to fight, trying to find my rhythm, and I think I start to be, start to play a little bit deeper in the middle of the second set.

I think she found it a little bit uncomfortable for her, so that's when I think the match did a little bit changed.

Q. We know a match is never over until the end, how proud are you to have that sort of reputation very clearly in the locker room? Everybody knows it.

YULIA PUTINTSEVA: I mean, it's good, you know. It's better like that than someone thinks about you that you stop fighting when you're losing the first set. So, yeah, I'm happy with, like, this quality that I have, that I always fight until the end.

I hope that, like, I will do it, as well, whenever I play (smiling).

Q. Are you surprised by how well you have adjusted from obviously playing very well at the US Open on very fast hard courts to now playing on these clay courts? Because you're obviously playing very well here, as well.

YULIA PUTINTSEVA: I'm actually surprised, because I wasn't expecting anything from this tournament. You know, also when I looked at the draw, I had a couple of players that already been playing some tournaments before, I mean, on clay. So I was like, okay, you just have



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to, like, play as many matches as you can before the French Open.

Yeah, I was surprised that I was able to get over the jet lag that quick and that I jumped from hard, like, straight on clay, like, the first day I arrived.

Yeah, I was really surprised with that. I wasn't expecting myself to play so many matches first week of clay.

Q. Do you think how you're playing and having this success, your first quarterfinal at a Premier 5, I believe, and playing so well the last three weeks, is that about confidence? Is that about maybe going into these two tournaments with lower expectations because of the circumstances? What do you think is the reason?

YULIA PUTINTSEVA: I think I was just this tournament, not that I wasn't expecting anything, but I was just putting my mindset that I just need to adapt to clay, like, I just need to feel like I need to slide, to be more patient than on hard court.

And because I played many matches in US Open, I think it helped my game, like, because I was ready. I didn't some matches behind my back to play.

So this was like a little bit easier part, because some of the girls who playing here, they didn't play the US Open. So for them, this way it's a little bit difficult, but at the same time, it's easier because they have been practicing on clay already for a long time.

So it's just a little bit mix of both, I think. Plus, yeah, I was just playing well these three weeks, so I'm really happy with that.

Q. You face Simona next. What do you expect? What is the challenge that Simona presents to you? You both are physical players, fast players, good coverage. What is difficult playing her on clay?

YULIA PUTINTSEVA: I think it's going to be another difficult match. I will have to move a lot and play a lot of rallies with her, because she's a type of player who likes to, like, dominate, but at the same time she's making the ball in play. You know, she's not finishing in like two, three strokes every point. I'm expecting a very difficult match.

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Q. Can you just talk about the last match that you had with Simona, which I believe was at the 2020 Australian Open? Can you just talk through your thoughts on that and obviously how you're feeling now facing her again.

YULIA PUTINTSEVA: Honestly, it feels like it's been in another life, this match, because after that we had so much time off. I mean, after Qatar. But still, I feel like it's been so long time ago.

As I remember, I couldn't serve that well at this day, and she was playing really great match. Yeah, it was, like, a little bit of both. I wasn't ready to play from the first point. She was there the whole time.

I think in the end I was finding my rhythm better, but it was a little bit too late.

Q. What do you think is the difference in your game as to what would make you be able to break through, be top 20, be consistent, constantly there? We are obviously seeing that a little bit in the last couple of weeks in terms of consistency of results. But from your perspective, what do you need to do to break through?

YULIA PUTINTSEVA: I think it's always a little bit of both. You cannot have only one thing that will help you to jump in, like, high ranking.

But my goal is not to focus honestly on the ranking. I'm focusing more on my game. I like to practice things that hasn't been working for me for the last few years.

So I have been, like, really on offseason like pandemic thing, I was really focusing on that, and I was really trying to change some, the little adjustment, I would say, not even to change something.

And I think I was practicing a lot, so that's what helping me right now to be a little bit more confident. I'm really thankful that where I was, I was able to practice and honestly can improve a little bit.

Q. How are you feeling after a long week? You have played quite a few matches. It's hot here. How is the body?

YULIA PUTINTSEVA: It's a little bit tired, but, I mean, when you getting this winning spirit, I don't know, like when you win some matches, you actually don't feel that much tired.

It's more when you -- well, if you lose this kind of, like, tough matches, you feel more tired than actually when you win those. You feel more energy. You want to jump, you want to do more, you want to play more.

So it's tired, but it's like good tiredness, I would say.

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