

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Sunday, 20 September 2020

Roma, Italia

Simona Halep

Press Conference

S. HALEP/G. Muguruza

6-3, 4-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Can you talk through that crazy match? How did it get so close? It seemed like you were in control in both the second and third sets. What do you take out of a victory like this?

SIMONA HALEP: Against Muguruza always. She's a very, very difficult player and good player. It's always, you know, good vibe and good feeling when I win against her.

I feel confident now that I was able to win this match. I know I had so many chances to maybe finish it a little bit faster and easier, but as we saw, she doesn't give up. Credit to her that she fought till the end.

But I am happy that I was a little bit stronger in the end and I could, you know, be more aggressive when I needed to.

Q. What is it about her and the matches that you guys play against each other? Why do you take special confidence out of getting a win like this over Garbine?

SIMONA HALEP: Because she's a great player, Grand Slam champion, and also winning so many matches against tough players. She knows how it is there. She knows this level. She has a lot of experience.

In my opinion, she's one of the best players in the world, even if she's out of top 10 now. Doesn't matter. It's always tough to play against her.

Q. I was just wondering, did the fans coming back to the stadium today have any effect on the game at all with so many nervous points and so many breaks?

SIMONA HALEP: Well, yeah, it's been nice to see people in the crowd, even if they were not supporting me at all today (smiling). They were with Muguruza, but I understand.



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But I was happy to see them and I felt the energy.

Q. You said yesterday you were unhappy about the way you were returning. I was wondering how you feel today in terms of returns. Then you said yesterday you are usually come to Italy as soon as you get a chance to, and I was wondering, where have you been and where would you like to go next time?

SIMONA HALEP: Well, I'm not sure I understood the question. If it's about Italy, yeah, I love to come here. Every time I have a chance, I come for holiday, as well.

Playing in Roma, it's my third final. Thanks God I don't play Svitolina, because I lost two times against her (smiling).

Yeah, it's a good chance tomorrow. It's a big challenge. I really hope, I really wish to win this title, but it's always tough.

So I'm just happy to be in Roma. I'm just happy to play this tournament and to play well.

Q. And what about your returning game? You said yesterday you were unhappy about it, and how you feel today?

SIMONA HALEP: I feel happy, as well, because I played really well. Against a tough player, it's always nice to have a good rhythm and a good level of tennis.

I'm really thankful with the game I played today. Of course in some moments I haven't been aggressive, but in the end I did, and I'm really happy about it.

Q. My question is actually about Francesca Schiavone, who is going to celebrate the 10th anniversary of her title at Roland Garros. I think that was your first year in the main draw. Do you have any recollection of her title and if you took any inspiration from what she was able to do there that year in Paris?

SIMONA HALEP: She's always an inspiration. She's been an inspiration on the court and out of the court, as well.

She's a great person. She's one of my favorites from the tour. I always had good chats with her. Actually, I miss



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her on tour.

She had always a good vibe, and I really want to congratulate her again for that title. I think it means a lot for her, and as I won French Open, I know that it's really important. So she has to enjoy this maximum because she deserves it.

Q. Did you watch that final, do you remember? I think you lost to Stosur in the first round who also played in that final.

SIMONA HALEP: Exactly. I qualified, and then I lost to Stosur. Then she played the final.

Yeah, I watched that match. It was really, really good level, both of them, with a lot of topspin. It was really nice to watch and was really inspiring for us.

Q. So third Rome final. What will it take to win it this time?

SIMONA HALEP: I said about Svitolina (smiling).

Q. I remember those. Trust me, don't worry. But what does it take to win this time? Just not playing Elina?

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, exactly. I'm not playing her so I have a plus.

Well, it's a final, so I have just to manage it a little bit better than previous years. It's gonna be a tough match against both of them. Doesn't matter who is gonna win.

But now I'm more mature, I really think (smiling). So let's hope that I can be better tomorrow and to win it.

Q. What do you think is the challenge of playing Karolina here in Rome? Obviously you guys have played on clay before. You've played against each other many times. You know each other's games very well. She respects your game, especially on clay, a lot. So what is the key to playing Karolina?

SIMONA HALEP: I think if I play against her, it's going to be similar to today. So it's going to be very aggressive match. So I have just to be as much as possible aggressive, too.

I know how to play against her because we played so many times. But here, she won last year, so she likes the court.

But I like also the court. So we will see. I am confident that I have my chance, but I also know that is gonna be a

tough battle.

Q. What if it's Vondrousova? You guys played here last year. She has a very tricky game. I feel like people watch her game and they don't really understand why she's so good. What is the challenge of playing her?

SIMONA HALEP: Well, yeah. I remember the match from last year. It was a tricky one, like you said. She's very talented, and her dropshots are just crazy. Her forehand cross, lefty, it's really, really good.

Yeah, it's gonna be a big challenge again. I really want to play against her, because I lost two times I think, so maybe I will have the chance to revenge.

But anyone who I will face tomorrow, I'm ready for them.

Q. I know you're going to concentrate on Monday's final tomorrow, but there is such a short time this year between Rome and the French Open. I wonder if you have had any thoughts about how you're going to recover from tomorrow and prepare for Roland Garros?

SIMONA HALEP: I will do the same thing I did previous years. So I have been in this situation three times already.

I'm focusing on the match that I have tomorrow, and then I will have two days' rest. Then again, I need to practice on those courts, to get rhythm, to get the feeling. But I'm just focusing on tomorrow.

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