

# Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Wednesday, 12 May 2021

Roma, Italia

## Serena Williams

Press Conference

N. PODOROSKA/S. Williams

7-6, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. She already has three French Open semifinals, but what do you think about Podoroska game and what she's able to do next month or next years in the tour?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, you know, she has a good game, for sure, obviously. She's very consistent.

**Q. I wonder if you could just give us a brief assessment of how you felt you played. Curious to know if you would consider playing another match at another event in the next two weeks before Roland Garros?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: You know, it's tough to have a first match on clay. It was definitely kind of good to go the distance and to try to be out there, but clearly I can do legions better.

I just gotta get there. Maybe I do need a few more matches, so I'm going to try to figure that out with my coach and my team and see what we would like to do. But, yeah, I just feel like it's different. I have been training for months, but it feels definitely different on clay to make that last adjustment.

**Q. Do you think that having the two weeks, normally it's just one week and you'd be right back into Roland Garros, but having two weeks of additional preparation, is that a good thing? Is it a frustrating thing? Obviously it lengthens the amount of time. What's your take on it?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think it's a good thing, you know. Can always use more time when it comes to playing at Roland Garros, for me at least. I think more time is a good thing. Yeah, I can't say it's a bad thing.

**Q. You said that you have been training super hard and just didn't find it maybe on the match court today.**



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**Where did you find the biggest gap? Just in reading like the match game and finding your rhythms there, where did you feel like the biggest kind of gulf is there for you?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, just filling out the game, finding the rhythm. Even sliding and confidence with that, with movement, and just not wanting to break my ankle when I moved. That's always like a little struggle in the first two matches, and then I'm raring to go.

Yeah, that's kind of where I was struggling a little bit, and just final shots. Like, I had a lot of opportunities to win, like, final shots and just kind of missing those.

Overall, it was good for me to play such a clay court player on clay today, but it's a little frustrating. But it's all right. It is what it is.

**Q. There was something I was just going to raise with you and ask you, the first match since the Australian Open. How important was it for you to be actually getting out on the court and playing a match to start getting it back into the rhythm of match practice?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, like I was saying, I think it's good because I feel like sometimes, you know, I'm not playing as many matches. I'm just doing a lot of training. So it's actually really good to get out and to play some matches.

But I usually don't take this much time off on a clay court season, so usually I play like a Charleston or a Madrid or somewhere. So my season doesn't usually start this late on clay. But the training isn't for nothing, so I know that it's just a matter of time.

**Q. You said you thought that having an extra week would help in terms of preparing for the French Open. I wonder what you feel the effect might be for you and for other players on your preparation for Wimbledon, having one week less to play on grass or to practice for Wimbledon.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, well, actually I'm a pro at that, you know. Most of my career Wimbledon has been only two weeks after the French Open, and I was super elated when it moved to three weeks for probably, what, three



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years maybe? Two, three years? So I'm used to it. So it will be fine. It's a quick turnaround. Yeah, I'll be ready.

**Q. Can you talk a little bit about the amount of time between last year's French Open and this year's French Open? It's only seven months. Is that a negative that there is so much play on clay in a crazy year it's been already?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: No. For me, no. I actually love clay. I love playing on clay. So I don't think it's a negative, but, you know, I think if anything it helps to keep that rhythm of clay.

Unfortunately I only played one match last year on clay, and I haven't been playing a lot on clay in the last two years. So, yeah, it will be good to get back and keep working on it.

**Q. Nadia said that you are one of her heroes when she was young. I would like to know what did she said to you when the match was over, the net.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I didn't know that she said anything. We just tapped racquets.

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