

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Roma, Italia

Daria Kasatkina

Press Conference

D. KASATKINA/J. Teichmann

6-4, 3-2 (ret.)

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations on getting into the semifinals. Not probably the way you wanted to get into them. Tell us how you felt on court today.

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, to be honest, surprisingly I felt pretty good today on the court because I finished my match today. The previous match I finished today, and I had to play another one.

I'm happy the way I was able to be on the court, the way I was watching the ball, the way I was focus, decision I was making. I mean, I think it was pretty decent level of tennis I show.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Do you know that another famous tennis player is playing with the same racquet that you use or not? I'm surprised that there are not many people playing with Artengo.

DARIA KASATKINA: Yet (smiling).

Q. I'd like to know what is your relationship with that brand and when did you start to play with that? It's a difficult racquet? And since when?

DARIA KASATKINA: I don't know the player, first of all. Second of all, I fall in love with this racquet first time I took it. It was last pre-season. I was trying racquets. This one was like a blind testing. I didn't know what was the racquet. It was just a black frame.

I tried it and I was like, What the... What is this? I was playing on the baseline, trying all the shots, all the strokes. I was like, What is this racquet?

When they tell me the brand, I was like I thought they were making fun of me. I didn't even know that this brand exist.

They told me, If you like the racquet, take it, which I did.



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I'm really happy with the way this racquet is. I'm happy how I feel on the court with the racquet. This the most important because in our sport, tennis racquet is the most important thing. You cannot hesitate with this one. I'm really happy that I did this move.

Q. You know that Gael Monfils plays with the same racquet?

DARIA KASATKINA: This one I know.

Q. Is your game adjusted to this racquet? Not many people play with that yet. I want to know more.

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, for me this racquet fits my game good because I'm spinning. When I spinning the ball with this racquet, I felt like I can accelerate the ball more, ball was going with more power but the same or more control than before. This is the most important for me, to be able to feel that I can hit spin, I'm controlling the ball. This is exactly what I have. I'm happy with this way.

Q. What do you think has been the key this week to get back into a 1000 semi?

DARIA KASATKINA: Fight and brain. I mean, I remember going on the court in the first round, I was really nervous. You could see by the scoreline in the first match. Then the second match against Leylah was also ups and downs. Was pretty nervous match.

I'm happy. With every set I play, I played better and better. My level was increasing. I'm happy with the way I feel on the court. Okay, maybe not all the time I am making the right decisions and I'm doing the right shots, but I'm happy generally with how I am on the court.

I don't know about other players, but this is what I'm always trying to search for.

Q. On your season, how you've arrived to this match, you've had quietly a very good season, tough draws, but can you just talk a little bit about how you felt your tennis has progressed since January.

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, in January I liked how my tennis was. I think I was playing really good in Australia. Then I had couple of not best weeks. Also getting COVID.



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Here and there was not the best. I a little bit went out of my shape. Was a tough, tough way to get back.

I can recommend better you keep your shape because to get back is much more difficult than to keep it in the good level, so...

Yeah, after Indian Wells, in Miami we start to work really a lot. I spend a lot of hours on the court playing, a lot of exercising with a thousand balls where I have to put a thousand balls inside the court. Was super tough, annoying, pain in the ass to make these practices.

Then I realized that this one is something what I need to feel better on the court. I'm happy that I, together with Carlos and my team, we discovered this one.

Q. Is there a specific shot that, if it works for you, you know you're in good shape?

DARIA KASATKINA: My specific shot, it's the forehand, inside-out probably.

Q. That needs to work for you to be able to play your game well?

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, honestly every shot is important. I would say not the shot, but it's my legs. My legs has to work good. My legs have to be fast. I have to be low on the legs to play good. Without the legs, there is no one shot I can make good unfortunately. I am not Nick Kyrgios.

Q. You're probably going to need your legs against Ons in the next round.

DARIA KASATKINA: Yes.

Q. Your thoughts on that match?

DARIA KASATKINA: Yeah, we are playing pretty often last couple of, I don't know, since last year we played few matches. It's never easy. I hope it's not easy for her as well to play against me.

Yeah, Ons is a pain in the ass and she knows it. She's on the way. She won 10 matches in a row. I hope she is a bit tired after this (smiling).

I mean, it's semifinals, everyone is squeezing maximum of what they have left. For sure it's going to be a tough battle.

Semifinal, I mean, the big stages of the tournaments is the point where you have to enjoy the most. This is what we are playing for: to go further in the tournaments. I mean,

let's enjoy tomorrow.

Q. You're playing in Italy. I'd like to know do you know the city where you were born is an Italian region.

DARIA KASATKINA: I know.

Q. Can you tell us why, what Tolyattigrad means, why it comes out, that name or not?

DARIA KASATKINA: Well, I remember that he discover something, but I will not lie and I don't want to look stupid, as well. I know that he's Italian, of course. I know it's kind of funny because I'm a bit proud that the name of the city where I was born is, like, Italian. Sound pretty nice.

What was another question? I forgot. Oh, the crowd here.

Yeah, this is, in my experience, one of the most crowdly tournaments we have on tour. It's amazing to have so many fans around, they know every player. It's amazing.

I mean, when we were playing in pandemic without the crowd, that was awful. Honestly, nothing can be worse than the empty stadium. So that's why the fans, I mean, they're one of the very important thing in sports in general, in tennis.

The best thing is to play in front of the full crowd, for sure.

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