

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Iga Swiatek

Press Conference



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THE MODERATOR: Welcome to Rome, Iga. Good memories, defending champion. Is it good to be back?

IGA SWIATEK: Pretty exciting. A lot of things have changed, but I'm happy to be here. I had opportunity to rest here in Rome. I'm pretty pumped up for my practices tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Tennis players probably more so than a lot of professional athletes have to adjust constantly to everything all the time, every day. Here it looks like there's a bit of rain in the forecast over the next couple of weeks. How have you come to learn how to adjust as a tennis player, incorporate that? Were you more stubborn in the past? What is the journey there for you?

IGA SWIATEK: For sure, since I started working with Tomasz, it got a little bit better because the process is faster because he knows what we should avoid, what we should do before the tournament to make it easier.

For sure, in Madrid, for example, stringing was a key. I remember in 2021 it took me, like, four days to figure it out. This year it was one day. Small things like that.

Here I would say it's easier from Madrid to Rome, the same way it's easier from Indian Wells to Miami, in my opinion, because both of these tournaments, the second tournaments are slower and more humid sometimes. Obviously we don't have altitude here.

For me, these clay courts are a little bit more 'normal'. So I think the rain may be a problem in terms of logistics, waiting for matches, making it all happen, but I don't know how it's going to be. We'll see.

I mean, is it really that bad? We'll see. Let's not speculate.

Q. You mentioned the changes that were made at this tournament. Some of them we can see. I imagine there might be some things we can't see. Wondering, what are the changes?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, I came here, like, 13 minutes ago, so... I just pick up my accreditation (smiling). I would get lost if I would be alone, for sure.

There is more space I think next to the dining area, which is moved. There's more space. There's a second gym, which is great because there was I think always lack of space in terms of having opportunity to do workouts.

We don't use that space around where the practice courts are any more, I think, right, where the dining was before?

THE MODERATOR: No.

IGA SWIATEK: Yeah, there's this nice bridge in between the stadium and the dining area, which is great. I don't know. We'll see (smiling).

If you see me lost, like Katy Perry, then please save me (laughter).

Q. Two wonderful titles two years in a row. Only a few games for your competitors in the finals. What you can do better this year?

IGA SWIATEK: Honestly, I think the whole tour is moving forward and kind of playing better and better every year. You need to catch up and also, like, be on the path of moving forward and improving.

It's tough. It's always tough. Doesn't matter how the finals look like. With Ons, it was pretty tight anyway. I remember it was really physical and every point mattered.

2021 I almost lost against Barbora in quarterfinals I think.

For sure I have good memories from here, but I'm not expecting this tournament to be easier than any other because it's tough. Yeah, we'll see how I'm going to play.

I mean, there's always some room for improvement, but we'll see. Sometimes just being consistent is enough. Sometimes you need to play really 100% and perfect matches. We'll see. It also depends how my opponents play.

Q. I'm wondering for women the only difference

... when all is said, we're done.®



between now two weeks WTA 1000 and slams is that you have the bye in the first round, then you're playing best of third set. I'm wondering during the approach of the tournament.

IGA SWIATEK: I don't understand.

THE MODERATOR: The difference between here and a Grand Slam is you have a bye now that it's two weeks.

Q. You are playing two weeks, best-of-three sets. The only difference is you have the bye in the first round.

IGA SWIATEK: I would say there are more differences.

Q. I'm wondering what is the difference for you in the approach and how you deal with this week?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, on Grand Slam you feel this totally different vibe of just being on the most important tournament. Even when we say that we're treating every tournament the same way, which I'm trying to do, for example, then for sure on a Grand Slam I feel little bit different.

Here for sure I have, like, breaks in between matches. If I'm in the half of the draw that starts later, still I have to play twice two matches in a row. It is a little bit more intense.

I would say there are a lot of differences, but honestly I don't see the point of comparing these tournaments to each other. Totally different space, different atmosphere, different people in the audience, different facilities, so...

Q. (Off microphone.)

IGA SWIATEK: Okay (smiling). I didn't know if you wanted me to, like...

Q. I want to ask about long injury layoffs. In 2017 you missed eight months because of your ankle. What were the main challenges of coming back in terms of trusting your ankle and trusting your game?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, at that point of my life, basically the problem was that I thought I'm not going to, like, play tennis any more because I was a teenager and it was a big thing already after surgery.

I wouldn't say, like, I dealt with normal issues that an injured player has in their pro career. It was more like just not being sure if I'm going to be able to come back. It's not like I always knew that I'm going to be a tennis player. I feel like every year I needed to kind of prove myself that I'm going in the right direction. I still didn't believe that I'm

going to be a pro until I actually came to WTA and won some matches.

Also there was, like, the issue of if we're going to have also money to continue, start like a little bit from the beginning, because this is something that suddenly may change your life path.

I'm pretty happy that we managed, me and my dad, to make me come back. He also found resources for me to be able to train and have practices and find coaches.

So, yeah, different stories than you usually hear on tour because I was much younger.

Q. When you arrived here last year, you are in a long winning streak. This year you are No. 1, but good rivalries against Rybakina. In your mind, is better last year or this year for you?

IGA SWIATEK: It has some advantages, and also my last year's position also has some disadvantages, like being a defending champion for the first time, having that streak that I carried on my shoulders a little bit.

I can't compare really. They're both good situations because I'm in a good place and I'm playing good. Yeah, like both of these seasons are great. Can't compare.

Q. Have you finished the book?

IGA SWIATEK: Leonardo's biography?

Q. Yes.

IGA SWIATEK: Not yet.

Q. The Da Vinci one.

IGA SWIATEK: Not yet. No, no, no, it's long (smiling). Like, I'm at 70%. I think after this tournament, I'll be done. I'm also watching Madam Secretary, so that's why.

Q. Have you ever thought about writing your own book, maybe even fiction?

IGA SWIATEK: Wait, what was the last part? I should write fiction?

I don't have imagination for that and creativity. I don't know, maybe in the future. Honestly, like we got many propositions in Poland to write a book, but I feel like it's totally too early, and I haven't lived enough to write a book, so... Maybe in a few years.

