

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Roma, Italia

Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference

A. SABALENKA/D. Collins

7-5, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Aryna, welcome to the final. Your thoughts on the match today?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I'm super happy to be in my first final in Rome. I think I played really great tennis today. I'm super happy with the win, especially in two sets, against Danielle. Super happy to be here in my first final here in Rome.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. After the Madrid final I think many people were wondering how much it would hurt you, if it would help you, in terms of confidence. Are you surprised that two weeks on you are in the final here in Rome or did you come out of that feeling full of confidence?

ARYNA SABALENKA: After Madrid, I didn't feel great. I had illness, then I got injured. I kind of surprised that I even was so much stuff going on I was able to make it to the final. Kind of like surprised.

At the same time I knew that the level is there. If I start feeling better, I can go to the finals. So it's like 50/50, you know?

But, I mean, that match definitely hurt me. It was really tough loss, especially after having some match points, even though she played great tennis. Yeah, was tight match. Hopefully here in Rome I can get the win and get the title.

Q. How big was the win over Elina, considering you now have reached the final?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, that was a big win. With that back injury, I was playing with the pain. I was super proud of myself that I was able to finish that match and I was able to win that match. It was really great battle, high-level tennis.



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That match definitely gave me, I would say, confidence that -- I'm tired as always. It's too late, guys (laughter).

Yeah, that match definitely give me some confidence that the level is there and I can fight through whatever. The only one problem was to fix my back, and I did it. I'm really happy to be in the final.

Q. In terms of approaching the match on Saturday, because the Madrid final was small margins, one point deciding it, how do you approach Saturday? How different does it feel to play her again?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, definitely if I'm going to get to the point when I'm going to stay there with the match point, I'm going to go a little bit more aggressive. I'll just go. I'll trust myself and go for shots instead of, like, trying to keep in the point, just keep the ball back in. Instead of play safe, I would just go for it.

Approach? I mean, I think the level is there, the tennis is there, that I got everything to get this win. I just have to focus on myself, I guess, and not rush things, wait for the right shot to finish the point.

Q. The back injury, obviously Roland Garros is around the corner, was there any thought after the Svitolina match about what you have to do to manage the back and maybe if you wouldn't play?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I was considering retiring from the tournament. Lucky me, I had an extra day. I was doing a lot of recovery. I'm still doing lots of exercise, lots of treatments, always taking care of my lower back. It's getting better. So I guess we're on the right way.

I don't know. I'm doing everything myself to recover as fast as I can and to be ready for the Paris. Right now I'm feeling great. I'm not in pain during the matches.

Of course, if something going to happen in the match, I'm going to pull out because Paris is around the corner. Hopefully it's not going to happen. I feel like it's not going to happen. So just stay positive.

Yeah, was crazy injury. I thought, Okay, I'm done in Rome. But we did a great treatment, great physios. I really appreciate that. I really appreciate the physio that they

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helped me to stay alive and to actually fix the problem.

Q. When you played someone like Iga as many times as you have, do you still continue to look for new things or is everything aimed at your own performance being at peak level?

ARYNA SABALENKA: You always look for new things. You always try to improve lots of stuff, especially after those kind of matches like in Madrid. You always try to find something else. You always try and find some stuff to improve where you can get better so next time you'll be able to finish the match.

After Madrid we work a lot on couple of things. We'll see. We'll see on Saturday if it's going to help me or not and we'll move from there.

I really have strong belief that I can get that win.

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