

# Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Saturday, 9 May 2026

Roma, Italia

## Sorana Cirstea

### Press Conference

S. CIRSTEIA/A. Sabalenka

2-6, 6-3, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Sorana, congratulations. Your thoughts on the match and your first win over a world No. 1.

SORANA CIRSTEIA: Yes, I'm very happy, of course, with the win. I didn't know this was the first time I've beaten a world No. 1. I've had some nice wins in my career, but it's good to see all the hard work paying off.

Again, I'm very happy with the level that I've brought here in Rome.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Having been around the tour for such a while, seeing so much, does a win like this kind of give you more satisfaction and understanding of what it takes to perform at the level you did?**

SORANA CIRSTEIA: Yes, absolutely. I've said it also couple of days ago. This year I've had some matches against top girls very, very close. Last week in Madrid I was 6-4, 2-Love against Coco. Then in Linz against Mirra I also had many chances in the third.

I've played quite a few matches against the top girls lately where I was a little bit short. I felt I missed a little bit maybe of being a little bit more brave in the end or taking little bit more risk in those important moments. I think I've learned from those losses.

Today in important moments I tried to play aggressive, I tried to play on my terms. Against the top girls, you can just not play safe. They are not going to give it to you. You have to earn it.

Today I knew if I wanted to beat Aryna, I had to earn it.

**Q. How do you explain that Romanian tennis has always had good tradition, especially in women's tennis, after Nastase and Tiriac, Virginia Ruzici,**



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**Simona Halep becoming No. 1. There is a reason? Are you all coming from the same area, Bucharest? Probably this is the best result since Halep and Ilie Nastase had in '73 in this place.**

SORANA CIRSTEIA: We are a country with a wonderful history in tennis, like you said, from Nastase to Tiriac to Virginia Ruzici. We had Andrei Pavel. Simona was No. 1.

I would say unfortunately we don't have a system, we are not from the same place. I just think we have a history and we have some crazy parents that invest in their kids, want their kids to reach amazing heights in tennis.

I think one of the good things is that we see tennis every single day on TV. Every single tournament, it is shown on TV in Romania. You grow up with watching tennis. Of course, you grow up wanting to be there.

Also I think my generation is the generation of Simona and Begu and a lot of other girls that were top hundred, Delghuru and so on. I think we were an amazing generation. I think we pushed each other.

Also I hope from now on other girls can follow in our steps and can keep the tennis flag high for our country.

**Q. This is the first time you've beaten a world No. 1. Is it the best win of your career?**

SORANA CIRSTEIA: It's very hard to say this is the best win because I've had wonderful wins in my career. I've always been a player that on a good day I could beat anyone.

Like I said, I had the impression that I've beaten No. 1 before. I don't know. I don't like to make a ranking and say which match was the best.

Absolutely it's a match that I'm happy with. What I'm the happiest about is the way I played. I think second set and third set I played quite high level. I was really, like, following the plan. Also, like I said, winning the match on my terms. This made me happy.

Of course, it's going to be an important win. I've had quite a few that I treasure through the years.



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**Q. In general, what is the most satisfying part of this year for you and the way you've performed consistently?**

SORANA CIRSTEIA: Yes, I think first of all the thing that makes me the happiest is the consistency that I've been able to show every single week this year. In the same time the title that I won at home in Cluj, Transylvania Open. That was amazing for me. That was the best week of my life. The experience and everything I lived that week, I will cherish it for the rest of my life.

The memories I created there, the way they made me feel was absolutely amazing. I said if I had to retire after Cluj, I would have been very, very happy.

But again, everything that's happening so far, it's great. Like I said, I've been working very, very hard to be here. I'm glad the results are showing it, as well.

**Q. I'd like to know if you have any small regret that you could do even better. You had always great potential. You showed today when you are not anymore a kid. When you thought you had the best option to do a step forward and why do you think you miss it?**

SORANA CIRSTEIA: Yes, I think every athlete has some regrets. No matter where you are, even if you are No. 1, even if you won Grand Slam, you always have regrets. You always believe that you could do more.

Of course, maybe I have regrets for the beginning of my career. I could have done things better. I could have been more disciplined. I could have, I don't know... There are lots of things I could have done better.

But I'm very happy with the last part of my career because the last part of my career I feel I've really given everything to tennis. I worked hard. I was disciplined. I've done all the right things.

If I do have regrets, it's for the beginning of my career. Towards the end now I feel I've been very, very professional. I'm very happy. Also I'm happy that I managed the last couple of years to also enjoy. Be competitive, have ambition, want to do, but also be able to enjoy what I'm doing. I love tennis. I love the sport. I found that balance that for me. It's wonderful to have.

So of course there are many regrets. I think every athlete has regrets. But at some point you have to make peace with them and move on.

**Q. Aryna said she thinks you could carry on. You're**

**not tempted?**

SORANA CIRSTEIA: Yeah, of course this is the question that I'm getting every week (smiling). At the moment not much is changing. Of course, it's a wonderful victory, but it's still a third round. I have to keep going.

I know the level is there. I know my mind is here and I'm enjoying everything. Like I said, I have so many goals. Every time I step on the court I want to improve.

In the same time my mind is quite set that at the end of the year, I want to retire. We will see how this year will go. Like a little door is there always open because you never know how things go in life. You always plan things, but then it doesn't always happen like you plan.

We will see what life has to offer for me.

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