

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Monday, 11 May 2026

Roma, Italia

Sorana Cirstea

Mixed Zone

S. CIRSTEA/L. Noskova

6-2, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You really want to quit at the end of the year? It was a joke?

SORANA CIRSTEA: No, it was not a joke. Again, I'm enjoying every single week. I'm coming from a place where I really have no pressure. I don't want to start putting pressure on myself right now.

Again, I'm going every single week trying to focus on my tennis and really enjoying it.

Q. (Another question about retirement.)

SORANA CIRSTEA: I think in a way it freed me up a little bit, all those expectations just maybe went through the window because I didn't have to prove anything anymore.

Again, this year has been going great, above any expectations I had. I'm just enjoying. I love this sport. I love tennis.

For me to be able to play good and still have a chance to play in front of the crowd in every single city I've played through the years, it's a wonderful thing.

Q. You've been freed up, changed your training...

SORANA CIRSTEA: I've always been very professional. Even if I announce this is going to be my last year, I still work very, very hard. I didn't want to come here and be a tourist. I wanted to prove I still have the level. I wanted to prove I can push the top girls.

Also of course I'm more mature. I know what works for my body, I know what works for my game. I have a stable team around me. I feel like everything is just settled down. I'm in a good place.

Q. Anything specific you've improved this year?



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SORANA CIRSTEA: I think the consistency. I've always been a (indiscernible) player. I've been a little bit up and down. This year I feel like I managed to find the level every single week that I was competing.

I think this is the key for me this year, the consistency.

Q. I was speaking to a player who told me about another player who said they used AI to scout opponents, their strengths and weaknesses. As a player, does that sound very good to you, using chat GTP?

SORANA CIRSTEA: No, I'm a bit old school. I rely a lot on my coach analysis. Of course, I look a little bit. I look at videos. It's the job of my coach. But of course I'm involve as well.

I do not have ChatGPT. I know some people that use it. Of course, whatever helps them. Everyone, it's free to do whatever works for them.

For me, at the end of the day of course it's very good to know what your opponent does and a little bit what to expect. I think important is to be able to impose your game. If you play well, whatever strength they have, it won't matter at the end of the day.

Of course, I think all these are important until a certain point.

Q. In general life, you're not interested in using AI or ChatGPT?

SORANA CIRSTEA: No, no, no. I think we are all very different. I'm someone that hates to be on the phone. A lot of times I go out without my phone. I like to read. I like, for example, to have a book in my hand. I (indiscernible) go on E-book. I like to just live life. For me, I've always been like this.

Again, there is nothing wrong with the other way. I have a lot of friends that are a little bit addicted to AI and all this. For me it's very important, like, the connection, the emotions, everything that makes life wonderful. I don't want to be so attached to something that is artificial intelligence.



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Q. Why are the older players doing so well? Is it just becoming easier to perform at an older age?

SORANA CIRSTEIA: Absolutely not. I think it's just a couple of players. It's not a general thing. I think the sport has become more physical. It's harder to come at the top when you are very, very young because I feel like you are still lacking physical work.

I think also with aging you mature a lot, you have experience, you know how to handle moments a little bit better. Overall you are a much better player. If you are healthy... Also in my case I feel I'm very, very good. I'm way younger than what my passport says.

Again, I think it's just personal everything.

Q. You played Linda four times this year. How do you approach that? The same as before, anticipating what she's going to change?

SORANA CIRSTEIA: Of course. But you have to look at it she also knows me. I know her, but she also knows me. I'm not someone to change too much because I have a way of playing, I have a game. I'm always trying to be aggressive. I always try to focus on that.

Of course, there are little bit let's say patterns. You look the matches. Let's say serve-wise, what worked here, what didn't work here.

Again, I think it's a mix, a mix of trying to impose your game and a mix of having of course a tactic. Also at this level the differences are so small. I feel sometimes a surface might suit me better, another surface might suit her better.

For example, from outside it looks like Miami and Indian Wells are both hard-court tournaments. For us the conditions are very, very different.

I feel at this level every single week the conditions matter as well. Some suit us better, some don't.

Q. In recent years there are more and more betters coming to the matches and cheering for the player they want to win, cheering against the player they bet against. Have you experienced that, people that are not really fans?

SORANA CIRSTEIA: To be honest, I don't look so much on that. Of course, like everyone, we get all these messages after a loss. You can focus on that. I always say you can focus on the bad messages, maybe not the

right people. It's always a perspective in life. You can focus on the good or...

It's a choice always. I always prefer to focus on the good or the people that have been next to me for so long, the tennis fans.

Who knows, maybe these people that come just for betting, they fall in love with the game and they will try to come more and more. At the end who knows. I think it's very personal.

For me, I always try to take the positive out of everything. If our stadiums are full, then we are happy.

Q. Have you lost your cool or banged the racquet on the court? If so, what goes through your mind in these times?

SORANA CIRSTEIA: Yes, of course. I think we all have our ups and downs. It's such a mental sport. Also to be able to sustain that mentality for three long hours with all the adrenaline and the pressure, sometimes you don't handle it the best.

Important is to accept. I think this is the hardest thing sometimes. We don't accept. On the other side of the net you have an opponent and some days they're better than you or some days your game is not there and you just have to play ugly.

I do believe that the more composed you are, the better you play. Of course, I have my moments, as well. We are human.

Q. (Question regarding how she played before compared to now.)

SORANA CIRSTEIA: I hope Sorana from now. I do feel physically stronger and smarter on the court. I don't remember much from that time. I actually tend to have a short memory.

I'm a more complete player. I have more solutions, I'm more consistent, I have better weapons. Also, I worked really, really hard, more than 10 years. I believe also the game evolved. I'm very happy to be involved with the game.

Q. In your second life, what can we expect from you? Work in tennis or...

SORANA CIRSTEIA: Of course, I would like to have a family. I think all of us, of course we want this at some point. As an athlete, as a woman athlete, it's not so easy.

You cannot combine both. You have to stop at some point.
Of course this would be priority, to have a family.

I love the sport. I would like to stay close to the sport and give back. I'm very grateful towards tennis. It has given me so much. I would like to share some of my experience and see what kind of opportunities come my way.

Q. What does 'Sorana' mean?

SORANA CIRSTEA: The name?

Q. Yes.

SORANA CIRSTEA: I have no idea. I think I did look once. I have no idea.

Q. You're getting close to the top 20 again. How much would it mean to you to get into the top 20?

SORANA CIRSTEA: It would mean a lot because I feel I've put in the work. Of course, it will be like a celebration of all this work and all the sacrifices I've made.

Again, in the same time I'm trying not to be defined by a number. If I'm 21 or 17 at the end of the day my life won't change. It's the same thing.

Of course you want because we are all competitive, we're ambitious. We want to improve and we want to get better. Of course, it's something on my mind. At the same time I don't want to put pressure on myself. Also I don't want to have ranking goals. I'd rather have goals regarding my game where I can improve and see how far I can go.

Q. What are those goals?

SORANA CIRSTEA: There are so many. I still feel like I can improve my serve, my return. I can get quicker, be aggressive. I can take the ball earlier. There are many, many things I still think I can do better.

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