

BNP Paribas Open

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Victoria Azarenka

Press Conference



V. AZARENKA/J. Pegula

6-4, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Vika, can you talk us through your match today.

VICTORIA AZARENKA: Yeah, I thought it was a really good match. Very high quality from both players. Very consistent in terms of level for me. I felt that I really played well in the crucial moments. I felt like I stepped up a lot to the occasion. That's what I'm really happy with today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Earlier this week you were talking about wanting to play this event with the intention of implementing some changes to your game that you'd been working on. You looked satisfied today. You're not a player that I thought was not an aggressive player. When you talk about adding more aggression to your game, what are you looking at?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: I wouldn't say that I'm not an aggressive player, but I think the court coverage and taking maybe less shots to win the point, that's something that is important for me to improve. I think on the baseline, counterattacking, having high intensity, that's something that worked really well for me. It doesn't necessarily work all the time. It's more demanding. I'm looking for things that I can implement that will make it a bit easier for me.

I'm also not in the beginning of my career to grind every match. It's not necessarily tougher physically, but from one match to another it adds up. I'm looking how I can be more efficient as a player.

Q. Can you talk about where you felt like you started to feel comfortable in terms of your range and knowing how you wanted to play the match today, when your comfort level kicked in?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: Well, I mean, the first couple games obviously they weren't going my way. I think that's how you start. You have to start somewhere, then you find

your range. If you're trying to start the match by trying to make the ball, it's going to be harder to be aggressive, be brave in the important moments.

I started going for my shots from the beginning. I knew I have to apply pressure on her and I will have the moment where I will have opportunity. I think in the beginning of the match we had a lot of great rallies, a lot of points where I was like, Oh, maybe I got this one, and she got me. I felt that I really just stuck to being aggressive and being consistent. I got my opportunities.

Q. You're now in the semifinals of Indian Wells. You've had a tricky season, not necessarily the season you were thinking of. What would it mean for you to get this result and better results? Does it reshape how you look back on the season?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: I don't think I'll be looking at this and kind of look back into the season. I think the more important is to actually look right now what I'm able to do. Not necessarily look forward, but it's almost like reassurance here.

The results are coming. That's the measure, right? How else are you going to measure your progress? In tennis unfortunately it's all by the results, especially that measure from the outside. For yourself, you can put little goals and try to kind of climb that ladder. In the end of the day, results is going to determine how well you performed, which sometimes can be tricky.

I wouldn't necessarily want to be stuck with that. I would like to see what are those, like, mini goals that I put in front of myself, have I achieved them. Every time being stuck with the results, it's a lot of up and down with your emotion, with your confidence and stuff.

I'm trying to see how I can have more of a steady line and continue to maybe take one step at a time and not go too high or too low.

Q. I've asked a couple of players today, there's been a lot of talk of late and today about space travel for the general public. William Shatner went up in space and

landed successfully. Would you ever consider something like that? What is your mindset?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: To go to space? I'm not necessarily too excited about it. I think it's cool. I think the fact that people can actually develop something, technology, to be able to achieve that, I think that's pretty cool from the engineering standpoint and development.

Me personally, I kind of like planet earth. I hope we as society will take better care of it before moving to another planet. That's kind of where I stand.

Q. Few players have had the level of success you've had here. What do you like about playing here and how you've been able to be successful here?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: I mean, I feel like I've always liked to play on big tournaments. Indian Wells is almost like the fifth Grand Slam. I always had a lot more motivation coming to tournaments like this.

I said that earlier, like when we come here every year, you sometimes take it for granted. Then two and a half years later I feel like I actually forgot how beautiful this place is, how fun it is to play here.

But in terms of game-wise, conditions are pretty tricky here. It's about, like, adjustment a lot and navigating through two weeks. It's a two-week event, so it also takes a lot of energy a lot of focus out of you.

Q. Can you step back and say what are the one or two things that have given you the greatest satisfaction in your journey.

VICTORIA AZARENKA: I mean, I'm not the type of person who likes to really step back and look back because I still feel like I'm in my journey. I don't necessarily reassess, kind of take from my old experiences: Oh, that's how it felt. I don't necessarily think you remember the whole picture. It's more about certain selective memories that you pick out.

If I will look back at my career, I mean, I think the answer you're looking for is what was the best result that I had, right? That we can definitely say my Grand Slams will always be the most important to me. That was my number one goal since I started playing tennis. And the Olympic medal, those were the two kind of highlights. Those are just based on kind of tennis results. I think that's what everybody expects you to say.

But the best moments are invisible moments I will say, the ones that nobody sees and you overcome. I will say that

those couple moments in my life happened where I was super proud of myself which had nothing to do with tennis results.

Q. You'll play either Ostapenko or Rogers. Facing Jelena, she's one of more aggressive players, how do you see that matchup with these conditions?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: I don't necessarily think any differently. It's kind of the same mindset, taking care of your side of the court and not letting the other, your opponent, control the outcome. I think that doesn't necessarily change my approach. It may change some rallies, some shots, but approach definitely not.

Q. I'm not meaning to be rude, probing, but is there any issue with your eyes that you're wearing reflective sunglasses in the interview room?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: Yes, I don't like the lights. They times give me migraines. I try to protect myself.

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