

# BNP Paribas Open

Saturday, March 12, 2022

## Jasmine Paolini

Press Conference



J. PAOLINI/A. Sabalenka

2-6, 6-3, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Could you talk us through your emotions today through the match, how you pulled off a big win.

JASMINE PAOLINI: Yeah, I'm really happy. I play an amazing match. I try to be there, to be focus every point.

Yeah, I mean, I'm so happy I beat Sabalenka. She's a great player, so yeah.

**Q. What do you think was the key today? What was it about your game that frustrated Aryna?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: I think I tried to return deep balls, you know, to try to make body serves because was tough for me to keep her, you know, far from the baseline because she's standing so close in the court. She's hitting especially the first ball very hard.

Yeah, just trying to keep her as far as I can from the court. And, yeah, to play many balls as possible because I think she's so strong with the first ball, I mean, serve and return.

So I think that's was the key.

**Q. The biggest win of your career at a very big tournament that you've done well at before. What does this win over Aryna mean for you?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: Yeah, it means a lot. I mean, yeah, I didn't play very well this year, I mean, at the beginning in Australia. I just tried to fight every point, I mean, have a better condition.

I think here I like the weather, I like the courts, so it helped a little bit I think. I had also good memories from last year.

So, yeah, I think it means a lot this win, also because I never won against a top-10 player, so yeah.

**Q. When you lost the first set, what were you**

**thinking? Were you feeling anxious, feeling the pressure? How did you actually turn it around?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: Yeah, I mean, after the first set I didn't expect to win the match, but I try just to be there every point, you know, to be just right there every point, to don't think about the score. I mean, the score was 6-2 for her. I mean, I wasn't even close to her.

But then point by point I started to believe it. I started to hit better the ball, deeper on the court. Yeah, after this I feel well on the court, so...

**Q. You said you've never beaten a top-10 player before. When you went into the match, what were your emotions like when you realized that Sabalenka can be so up and down, her serve can be all over the place?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: I think I stepped on the court to try to win the match because, if you don't think this before the match, you are not going to win for sure.

Yeah, she's not a regular player. She's a player that can hit very strong, many winners. But it's not easy to play every point full power.

Yeah, I try to stay there, to play my game. Like Brooksby said one time, tennis is not to hit strong the ball, it's doing something different. I think I just try to run, to put the ball as deep as I can, and sometimes also I made some winners.

Yeah, I'm happy with my performance.

**Q. You said you haven't played very well this year until today. Your ranking is in the top 50 now, you've made a lot of progress over the last couple seasons. Can you tell me why you think you've been able to make these strides, what you have improved in your game?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: I think I have more confidence on hard courts. I work a lot with - I don't know how is - a guy who make video analysis, yeah. That I think was the key.



Before, last year, I didn't believe that I could play also on hard courts. So I was playing pretty well on clay courts, but I had difficulties on hard courts.

Now I think I believe that I can play also here. So I think that's the key. More tournaments are on hard courts, I mean, instead of clay courts. I have more chances to do points. That gave me confidence I think during the year, yeah.

**Q. What does it take for you to have success on the hard court?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: I think I improve a little bit the serve. I still have to improve it, I know. Also the forehand because I need time to hit the forehand well.

Yeah, I worked a lot on my forehand and on my serve. I think I can improve more because I'm trying to do every day. It's not going to be easy, but c'mon, I'm here to do it (smiling).

**Q. You talked about the video analysis. What did you see, something that maybe surprised you, something that you saw that you needed to work on? What was the most impact?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: I think, yeah, as I said, the serve and the forehand. I didn't work on the match analysis, I work on the shot, you know?

Yeah, I try to open a little bit less and lower the forehand. I was doing the final, I don't know the name?

**Q. Finish?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: Yeah. Not here, but most of the time here. The serve, as well, yeah, I have to improve my serve like percentage and also the spin. I cannot play flat because I'm 160 centimeters (laughter). I have to be more precise, yeah, to improve the percentage. That's what we are working on.

**Q. Obviously a lot of you guys grow up on the clay. You have players in the past who have had great success on the hard courts, Flavia, Roberta. How much does that give you confidence that you can transition and make changes to your clay court game to have good success and consistent success on the hard courts?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: I think they made an amazing job, but like two years ago there weren't many players in top 10, women players. They stopped, and we started. I mean, me, Martina Trevisan, Camila was already there. They

retired and then we came.

Wasn't easy because there weren't player from Italy in the middle that could show us what to do. So it wasn't that easy. Yeah, I think, I mean, I'm working on myself. I don't know how much this help me. For sure they made an amazing job.

**Q. All hard courts are different. How do you feel about the hard courts here? Is this a good hard court for you?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: I think so. I think so because it's not really fast. Yeah, I have time to hit forehand and backhand.

Now I think I like the hard courts because, yeah, I can serve good, I mean, better than on clay. I can move well. But this court for me, I think are especially good, yeah.

**Q. You might be the first person to sit in a press conference and quote Jenson Brooksby. Are you like a tennis nerd? Do you read a lot of quotes?**

JASMINE PAOLINI: Not really. When I read this title, yes, it stayed in my mind, you know. I remember also in another match that I thought this, that tennis is not just hitting winners and strong the ball. Yeah, today during the match I repeat this to me, yeah, because it's important. I think for me is important to keep it here in my mind.

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