

BNP Paribas Open

Thursday, March 17, 2022

Paula Badosa

Press Conference



P. BADOSA/V. Kudermetova

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Can you talk about your match today.

PAULA BADOSA: Really happy about my win today. It was tough for me at the beginning because I never won versus Veronika, she's a tough opponent. I'm happy I played very good today and I'm through semifinals again.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. It seemed as though you were really feeling the forehand today. Do you think that was the key in terms of moving her around the court and dominating?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, I think a little bit the key was to serve well, as well, to attack her second serve. I've played her three time, and I always was doing the same mistakes. I didn't want to do it for a fourth time in a row.

Yeah, of course, I wanted to dominate with my forehand. Maybe not to let her a lot to open me the court. At the beginning maybe I was hitting a little bit more harder in the middle and then when I have my opportunity to move her. When she was moving me, try to put always one ball more was important as well.

Q. It feels like your opponent has to do so many things to win a single point.

PAULA BADOSA: That's good (smiling).

Q. Is that really a thing for you, I'm going to make you work super hard?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, that's what I want to show my opponents at the beginning always of the matches, that if you want to win me, you have to stay there three hours and play very well. That's a little bit, yeah, what I want to show them.

Of course, I want to play aggressive, to find the balance of aggressive and I'm a good mover. I know I'm very tall, very

big. Maybe I don't move as well as other players. But I think I really improved on that.

Yeah, I think a little bit what I want to show them is they have to be three hours on court.

Q. That's what you successfully did to Victoria Azarenka in the final here. Do you think that gives you an additional edge at this particular court, that they know you mean it, it's not a show in the first few games?

PAULA BADOSA: What you just said about Azarenka, to be honest I thought it today. I never won her. She was a very aggressive player. But today my thought was like, C'mon, you won Victoria Azarenka here playing amazing, similar game, so you can do it again today, but you have to stay really focused. Very important the three or four first shots. So that gave me a little bit of confidence, to be honest.

Q. What do you remember about your match with Maria Sakkari, last year's match?

PAULA BADOSA: I remember was a very tough match. She hits very hard the ball. She moves well. As well, she's a fighter. I really see sometimes myself on her. I think we play quite similar, or we try to do the same things.

I remember it was really tough. The match was, what, two key moments. So, yeah, I think I will have to fight every ball, stay aggressive as well, serve well. She's a good server, as well. She's a good mover.

Yeah, I mean, in this round you just have to try to put your best tennis on the table and let's see how it goes.

Q. Are you surprised you're back in the semifinals?

PAULA BADOSA: I mean, if you asked me that 10 days ago, yes. I wasn't imagine to be in the semifinals again. As I said, I didn't play well one month ago. I mean, the year is very long. Of course, you're not going to play well every tournament.

But I wasn't expecting to be back on semifinals and playing again this level, to be honest. So, yeah, I'm really happy and I'm really grateful that I'm here again.

Q. Is there a certain feeling you get from playing on that big stadium? Is it one of the courts you like the most?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah. I mean, it's very easy to say it now, but I used to say it before when I came here first time, that I was playing quallies. I remember talking. I just lost against Veronika. I remember after that match that I thought I have to play good here. I mean, the conditions suit my game very well.

Let's see in the future, but I think I will play good in this tournament. Now, of course, I've won so many matches here, I feel so comfortable playing here. I like the fans, as well. I don't know, I like the conditions. The ball bounces. I like when the ball bounces. It's a little bit maybe slower.

As well, the balls fly less here so you can play more the point. There's a lot of things that makes me feel very well here.

Q. A look at the entire lineup of the semifinals. It's three top-10 players, former No. 1. What is your take on the lineup as a fan?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, as a tennis fan, that's true. Yesterday before the quarterfinals start, I was at home watching it. I was like, Oh, it would be great to have Halep, Swiatek and Sakkari and me in semifinals. I was really wishing for that. It's good for tennis. I hope there will be very good matches.

Yeah, I'm very happy that I'm one of them here in the semifinals.

Q. I wanted to ask you about the great beginning for the Spanish players, you, Rafa, Carlos Alcaraz. Can you talk about the great momentum.

PAULA BADOSA: I mean, today before the match, I was watching here, waiting for the match. I saw three flags of Spain because there's three matches here that Spanish people are playing.

It's amazing. For me it's amazing to be one of them. I think Spain, we have amazing players. We always had amazing players, not only Rafa. Now Carlos Alcaraz. So many good ones. It's super nice to be one of them and be here in the semifinals.

Yeah, I mean, yesterday I watched Rafa and I watched

Carlos. It's insane how they play. Carlos, he's not even the future, he's the present. He hits so hard the ball. It's insane.

Rafa, I don't have words. I'm little bit not concentrate here because I want to watch this match (laughter). Yeah, no, it's so good.

Q. Specifically about Alcaraz, have you had a chance to speak with him about your experience?

PAULA BADOSA: Yeah, I mean, with Alcaraz, he's a very nice person, very humble. That really surprised me because he's very young. When you're, like, so, so good it's difficult to stay humble.

He's very nice. We have a very good relationship. We talk a lot. I mean, I don't need to give him any advice because he does everything perfect. I mean, when I was his age, I was doing everything opposite as him, so I think I have to learn from him.

But, no, I mean, he's so good, I don't know. He's going to be amazing.

Q. The whole defending the title, you said you're not really thinking about it. Was it an effort, sort of a trick that you had to play on yourself when you came here to avoid that kind of pressure?

PAULA BADOSA: Totally. I was saying it here on press. I was really, like, doing this effort to think like that. To think I won this in October, I don't want to think I have so many points to defend.

When I start the year, of course, I have a lot of points, I'm top 10. But I think I don't get worried I'm going to have to defend this. It's like, Okay, I have to make these points. I will try to make them in some tournaments. I don't want to be, like, scared, like October to come because I have to win Indian Wells again.

I think if I don't win it there, I have to win points somewhere else.

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