

BNP Paribas Open

Saturday, March 11, 2023

Elena Rybakina

Press Conference



E. RYBAKINA/S. Kenin

7-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Two very tough sets. What was the difference today against Kenin?

ELENA RYBAKINA: I think just important moments I played really well, and I was trying to focus point by point, because it was really windy, tough conditions.

Yeah, it was not much difference in the end.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. When it's that windy and you hit it that big, how do you temper your game? Do you have to bring it down a little bit, or...

ELENA RYBAKINA: No, of course I try to change something, but it was not easy because, yeah, if it's really windy, you need to really work well with the legs, which is not my biggest strength (smiling).

Yeah, of course, I had to adapt. From one side it was really tough to play, because you were playing with the wind behind the back, and it was always going out.

Yeah, it was not easy for both of us, but as I said, in the end it was just few important moments I played better and served well.

Q. I talked to Dasha earlier, Kasatkina, about the video that she and Natalia made where she also interviewed you. Could you say a few words about what that's like, that kind of atmosphere, to make fun content with your colleagues.

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, I didn't actually expect that. I passed by the table and she's like, Sit down, and she did few questions. I think it's fun.

It's also good, I guess, for her, because she's kind of doing something outside of tennis, maybe they both cutting the videos. It's kind of spending the time. I think it's fun.

People can see also how it is traveling and how is the tournaments from inside.

Q. How was it coming to this tournament now as having been a Wimbledon champ and an Australian runner-up, how is it coming to this tournament now after a year ago you weren't in that place?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Well, we play so many tournaments, so of course after Australian Open final, I was more confident to play the matches, but same time, I think that I didn't have much rest after that. I played straight after Abu Dhabi and then in Dubai was unlucky with an injury.

Now here I'm just trying to focus match by match, because I was trying to recover after Dubai. So I didn't play for a bit, I was doing a lot of recovery. Yeah, just important to stay healthy in the end and just play match by match.

Q. Last three slams you won one, got to a final. How much of an adjustment mentally is it to know that you can win these tournaments?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, of course it's a bit different now coming to play Grand Slams, because after winning at Wimbledon, it gave confidence and also you already know that the whole way to the end, these big tournaments, you kind of know what to expect.

So it's just the question is to be healthy and keep on playing that well every match. No matter how you feel try to adjust. Yeah, just easier with the kind of things you know what's gonna be ahead after these big wins.

Q. The tape on your shoulders and back looks fairly dramatic. Can you say what it does? Also, was the design your choice?

ELENA RYBAKINA: It's my physio. Everybody is saying that it's like tattoo from far, it looks like. Yeah, just helps a bit for my muscles, because here it's not easy conditions really. Slow courts, heavy balls. Also I'm coming back from the injury. So I have actually more tapes, but you can just see these two on the shoulders.

Yeah, it's just helping for me to prevent the things, yeah.

Q. The on-court interviewer was asking you what you like to do when you're away from tennis. You talked about family and friends. What do you like to do? Walk, eat...

ELENA RYBAKINA: Just to go somewhere to eat, spend some time together and depends. I like to do some things like roller coasters and everything, like crazy stuff, but at the same time I cannot do it much because of the tournaments and we are always on the road and you don't really have time for that.

Here my sister is with me. We are in a house, it's nice, we are playing some games, cards, in the evenings.

Q. Do you scream on the roller coaster?

ELENA RYBAKINA: I'm laughing all the time (smiling). I'm not really scared.

Q. So you're definitely going to play a Spaniard next. It's unclear who. But all of your matches with Paula Badosa have been extremely tight, lots of tiebreaks and three-set matches. Can you say a few words about what would make the difference if you end up playing Paula in those tight matches.

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, for sure it's going to be very tough match if I'm gonna play against Paula. She's a big hitter, very good serves. She's strong. Here, as I said, the conditions are really slow. I need to focus on my serve, not only trying to play fast but also get good angles, because here to make a winner it's not easy.

So definitely I need to try to approach the net more often. Today didn't do much, but it's something for me to improve for the next match.

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