

# BNP Paribas Open

Friday, March 17, 2023

## Elena Rybakina

Press Conference



E. RYBAKINA/I. Swiatek

6-2, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Congrats on reaching the final. Can you talk about your thoughts on your performance.

ELENA RYBAKINA: Thank you. Yeah, today was really great match for me, because I played unbelievable. I would say one of the best matches I played this year. So, yeah, hopefully I can keep the level for Sunday.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. You said on court that you kind of came in not really knowing what to expect and your level surprised you. Did you feel that during the warmup? Did you feel like you were just seeing and hitting the ball really well, or did that all just come in the match?**

ELENA RYBAKINA: Well, the warmup was as usual, nothing really changed.

I felt good on court, but I just knew that after such a difficult match of yesterday, it might be difficult to play today. I didn't know how fast I can recover also.

But I think with the team, we did a good job. I really felt good physically on court today.

Yeah, that's why I was kind of surprised. I really enjoyed this match today.

**Q. Do you feel like it's Australia revisited?**

ELENA RYBAKINA: You mean...

**Q. Semifinal and final.**

ELENA RYBAKINA: I think that I did really good preparation as preseason, I was always saying. And we tried to maintain this level. So yeah, I think that for now I'm playing really well this beginning of the season. I just try to keep the level.

**Q. The consistency has been the thing that it feels like you've been chasing in particular over the last few years, just not having lulls in your season. Now making two big finals in the span of three months, what do you think has been the key to that, and how pleased are you to be able to, yeah, get this consistency at the biggest events of the season?**

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, I think I was improving in these four years on tour. It just everything coming together, the experience, team became bigger and working a lot on fitness.

Yeah, just getting stronger a bit physically, and just the work which we did for the past four years. It just, yeah, showing it now on the court and with my results.

**Q. When you look at the final, what are your thoughts there? The stats, even though all the matches have been three-setters, the stats are not in your favor, there have been four matches, Sabalenka has won each one. What do you do to maybe flip that result and change things?**

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, as you said, I lost the last four times and it was always like three sets. I think just to play better in these important moments and hold the serve, because I think few times it was just because of one break.

Yeah, it's gonna be not an easy match, and it's gonna be in these clutch moments I just need to play better. Hopefully now it's gonna change the score between us (smiling).

**Q. How important do you think the court surface really is in predicting or imagining matchups? Daniil Medvedev said this wasn't even a hard court when he was angry. Yet we have you and Aryna in the final. Can you just speak about how important the surface really is.**

ELENA RYBAKINA: Well, I would say it is important, of course. But I'm happy that even I was saying that it's not my advantage, this surface, because it's too slow. I think that in the end it proves me that I actually can play in such slow conditions. It's only good for me in the end, if

physically I feel well and I'm healthy, that it's possible to play on any surface for me, which is a good thing.

I had such tough battles in the first matches, and also conditions are not predictable with the wind. Either it's too hot or too cold. Like today I would say it was perfect conditions to play.

**Q. Why did you think that you were not good on slow surfaces? Because you've had pretty good results the last couple of years on clay. Obviously that run at Roland Garros and I think Strasbourg maybe, if I'm remembering correctly. Why do you think you're not good on slower surfaces?**

ELENA RYBAKINA: Well, I didn't say that I'm bad on clay. But clay is actually, it's kind of faster than here, I will say, in the sense of you can slide and you have just more time. But here the ball stops and it's a bit different compared to other hard courts.

But I just know that when the court is slower and of course it's more physically, in this aspect I need to improve the most, I will say, to have this consistency. Which now I guess we are doing correct things, and slowly I'm getting this consistency.

Yeah, I just know that if the court is a bit faster, it's maybe more advantage for me since I can get these free points.

Yeah, as I said, physically I'm well. I can play even on the slow courts.

**Q. But just on the topic of playing Iga now twice and getting these two wins this year, what is it about your game style or the way you play your game that makes you think you've been able to, yeah, win four straight sets off her?**

ELENA RYBAKINA: I think just my aggressive style of the game. Big serves. Today I was pushing a lot. I think that just overall some players it's more difficult to play against.

With Iga, she's tough, really tough opponent, but when I play like this good and everything goes in, because today some moments I played, I would say, on my highest level. So yeah, there is moments where you can feel, okay, I can beat anyone if I always play like this.

But it's the goal, but you never feel amazing and perfect every match. Yeah, I think today it was just really good from me.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

