

BNP Paribas Open

Sunday, March 17, 2024

Iga Swiatek

Press Conference



I. SWIATEK/M. Sakkari

6-4, 6-0

THE MODERATOR: Iga, congratulations. Your thoughts on winning your second title here at Indian Wells.

IGA SWIATEK: Thank you. Yeah, I'm really proud of myself. I'm super happy. I mean, even though this tournament looked like, the scores, maybe I had everything under control, it wasn't from the beginning to the end so easy. So I'm happy I could improve during the tournament. I felt really good on the last two matches, big amount of confidence.

I'm really proud of myself.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Iga, what does winning this title actually mean to you? I don't think I can remember ever seeing you so excited about a victory for a long time. Does it have some specific significance? What was it?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, I don't know. I feel like I'm usually excited when I win tournaments. Sometimes, okay, there's maybe a little bit more of the relief than just pure happiness. But right now I just feel I've done really good work.

Maybe because of that, I just know that it hasn't been easy after Australia, and I've been working hard to play well and to handle everything mentally well.

So I'm just proud of myself maybe because of that.

Q. Do you feel that this is a title that could be significant for the rest of the year for you?

IGA SWIATEK: I don't think, you know, in terms like that, because I don't know what's going to happen in the future.

For sure two years ago it felt like that because I actually believed that I can win titles on hard courts after winning Indian Wells and then Miami. But, I mean, I already kind of

know that. So this time is just I'm super happy with the work.

I don't know what's going to happen in the future, but for sure I'll work hard to play at this kind of level.

Q. You're always talking about the importance of focusing on the process rather than the results. Why do you think that's so hard and such a challenge? Because I'm sure it is for you at times and certainly for so many other players.

IGA SWIATEK: Well, because you can't control your thoughts usually, you know. They will come. The question is how are you going to handle them and what are you going to do with them? But usually when you don't want to think about something it's going to start popping in your head anyway. It's not easy to control that. I think that's why.

Q. You said it was more challenging than it looked, according to the scorelines, your run at this tournament. So what were the challenges you faced? How were you able to overcome them?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, I would say at the beginning of the tournament I felt like, again, I didn't have much luck with the draw. I played, you know, opponents that sometimes I struggled with. I lost against Linda in Australia this year. Then I was pretty stressed actually, you know, before facing Caroline Wozniacki, because I felt like we haven't played in a while. I didn't really know how her game feels on my racquet. I just have huge respect for her. This was the kind of match where I had to kind of work through the stress.

But then after that I just felt like I could actually play my game more freely, and that's what I meant.

Q. Congratulations. You won this tournament two years ago, and then Ash Barty announced her retirement and you were elevated to No. 1. Since then you have been No. 1 except for just a couple of weeks. If you look back on these two years, what is the thing that you are most proud of? Do you recall a little bit

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about the times you became No. 1 two years ago?

IGA SWIATEK: Oh, well, I remember everything, honestly. It was pretty crazy. I'm pretty proud of the way I adapted to all these challenges that I had to face. First becoming World No. 1, then actually feeling comfortable with it and using it on court and being the target of many players that wanted to beat particularly me, you know, and then starting next season as World No. 1. So I'm really proud of how I handled everything.

It's not like it just happens and then it's done. You have many things, you know, that you have to face during one season. So, yeah, I'm just pretty proud.

Q. Congratulations. As you spoke a lot about your serve in the last few days also, I felt today probably you went for it with the first serve especially when the score was 3-All or 4-All. How would you rate that part of the game, and if you really trusted it, if you felt more comfortable match after match here?

IGA SWIATEK: Yes, for sure I felt more comfortable match after match. It wasn't, you know, like only about the serve. It was overall how I felt.

But regarding the serve, I don't -- I mean, actually somebody from my team told me about this moment of the match, but I don't really remember now. But, you know, I think I had, like, what, served good first serves?

Q. For example, 4-All you were 15-All, and you hit three (indiscernible) especially with an ace on the T?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, remember there were also new balls. So it may be also about that.

I'm always kind of focusing on my serve. I feel like it's, you know -- I mean, I was the kind of player that just pushed the ball into the court to start the rally or something, but now I feel like I can do more with my serve, so I'm trying to make proper decisions. I guess I made good ones today.

Q. So you got to meet Zendaya after the match. What was that like? Is it weird having to shift gears from playing a final and then 20 minutes later you're doing that?

IGA SWIATEK: I already got used to all this postmatch craziness. For sure, meeting Zendaya was crazy, but on the other hand, she's a human like all of us. So I was just happy that she's enjoying tennis and she's, you know, having this movie with tennis theme coming out. So that should be really exciting. She can practice with me any time if she wants to. (Laughter.)

But for sure it was fun and she's a really great person. I feel pretty privileged that I'm in this place where I can meet these kind of people.

Q. What is it like for you this time of year, you have one more tournament left before you can get back on the clay, which is a surface you've done pretty well on? Is there any translation from, you know, success on hard courts to the clay? Does it set it up in some way? Then as you get closer to that time of year, do you just get hungrier or feel relief, or what's the emotions?

IGA SWIATEK: I would say at earlier stages of my career and when I was a junior I always felt a bigger kick of motivation. Like, I'm in a place right now to play better but now it doesn't really matter because I feel I can play well also on hard courts.

I would say I'm not really thinking much about clay yet during the Miami tournament, because maybe my conditioning coach would think a little bit more because we are adding some exercises that are maybe gonna help with movement on clay and everything.

But I'm not really thinking about that. I mean, I don't need to really overthink it, because I don't need much time on clay to get used to this surface. So I'm just going to start thinking about it when I'm going to have my first practice on clay.

But also, I think we have Fed Cup on hard courts, so I'm just going to basically do the transition right before Stuttgart, which is going to be tough, but I did that two years ago and it was fine.

Q. You mentioned Caroline Wozniacki that you faced during the tournament. When she was No. 1, she kept being asked if she felt really No. 1. They don't ask you because of all of the kind of wins you can put together. Can you put into words what you think it is feeling like No. 1?

IGA SWIATEK: I would say you just feel like your game is better than anyone out there. Obviously it's not for granted that you're going to win because of that, but you feel like you have skills and you have everything to be able to, you know, present your best game.

I mean, because of that, I don't expect, like, it's going to happen all the time, but I just know that it's somewhere there and I need to make the best work to put it out there.

Q. Iga, can you talk a little bit about what it was like to



go from 4-4, kind of a really close match at that point, you had given up a 3-Love lead, to just running through the last eight games? Is there a point where you feel something on the other side of the net or maybe you feel something within you that says you can roll through the match, not drop another game?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, it was pretty simple. I just knew what I wanted to improve. I had pretty clear idea of that. I just focused on that and I kept focusing on it till the end. I knew that I should have, you know, made some decisions that let Maria come back to the game a little bit when I lost my lead.

But honestly, like, there is no point of overanalyzing it, because it's not like I have been broken. We still had 3-All, 4-All. 4-All? Yeah, I wasn't feeling like I lost control or something. I just knew what I wanted to improve and I did that.

Q. Iga, getting back to the No. 1 aspect, you got into that No. 1 position unexpectedly at the time when it happened. Obviously you're quite comfortable in that role as No. 1 now, but it came out of the blue when Ash retired. How long did it take you it feel totally comfortable at being No. 1?

IGA SWIATEK: I mean, there are going to be ups and downs still, so I don't expect I'm always going to feel comfortable with pressure. Sometimes it hits harder; sometimes it doesn't hit at all.

I wouldn't say that at some point I felt comfortable and that's it, now I'm going to be comfortable till the rest of my career. Yeah.

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