

BNP Paribas Open

Sunday, March 16, 2025

Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference



M. ANDREEVA/A. Sabalenka

2-6, 6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Aryna, obviously not the result you wanted today, but talk about your two weeks here.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I enjoyed every day here. Yeah, it felt like, yeah, two weeks of paradise, and I'm actually really sad leaving this place, and especially after this final.

Not really happy, first of all, with leaving, and secondly with the result. But it is how it is. Anyway, happy with the tennis I played before the finals.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Good run here. Did she surprise you at all today?

ARYNA SABALENKA: No, not really. Honestly, was me against me. I mean, I made a lot of unforced errors on important points, and I just let her play a little bit better.

Yeah, at the beginning, everything was going quite straightforward, and then I just made a couple mistakes. She kind of like believed in herself. After that, I started playing much worse, and I was just trying to find my rhythm back but didn't work this time.

Q. Well done on the tournament. Something Carlos was saying yesterday about when he struggles, oftentimes he becomes too focused on the opponent and is not more focused on himself and what he needs to be doing. Is that something that creeps into your game in situations or maybe even today or perhaps in the Australian final?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, maybe sometimes you're focusing on the wrong things. But for me, today, for example, I was just too pissed with myself, because I think, yeah, it shouldn't be the way I finished and I was just pissed with myself.

I should have just thrown that aggression on that side

instead of being too much, too hard on myself. So I wasn't really caring about what she was doing. I knew what she was going to do, and nothing really surprised me. It's more just like about me controlling my anger a little bit better.

Q. Are you able to speak of similarities and differences between here and the Australian Open final?

ARYNA SABALENKA: You mean mentally, physically?

Q. Was there anything similar with you...

ARYNA SABALENKA: No, I mean, Australian Open, I played so bad. I played like it was a joke, honestly, my level of the game.

Today I think I just kind of like dropped my level in couple important games in the second set and then in the third set. Overall it was great tennis. Just like couple moments where I have to improve.

Q. I know this is purely hypothetical, but do you believe that having had the path that you have had where it was fairly straightforward to the final, it didn't help you when you actually had to find something within yourself and within your game during today's match?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Didn't really get the question.

So you think that my run was too easy so I couldn't, like, find strength in the finals?

Q. Well, of course if you win 6-1, 6-1, you don't say I wish I could have played three hours.

ARYNA SABALENKA: No, I understand what you mean. Probably if I would be, I don't know, 15 years old, not experienced, yeah, probably that would be the case.

But, I mean, I'm here for so many years -- I'm saying that -- I'm here for so many years, and I think it wasn't about the way I was playing before the finals and I was just playing great tennis mentally, physically, like, everything was just



perfect. And today I just made couple of mistakes, kind of got a little bit too emotional about myself. I think that was the main mistake. I should have just, like, keep pushing without overthinking too much.

Q. You made an interesting comment on court about Mirra and her team, the age that she is.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yes.

Q. Do you think that really is a big factor?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Oh, yeah, of course. 100%.

I'd say that, for example talking about me in that age, I was surrounded by so many wrong people. Finally when I was able to get rid of those people and, how to say, I surrounded myself with the right people, you kind of like you have more confidence and everything is more calm and the atmosphere in the team is very healthy.

So team is very important. I can see she has her family who is helping her with, I'm sure, with a lot of decisions. She has Conchita, which is really experienced person and very nice person. She doesn't have the abusive things.

Yeah, definitely she got the right team much earlier, and that's why she's so successful right now. So it's nice to see that there is players who is able to surround -- maybe it's not about her, it's more about maybe her family, because she's still too young, and maybe it's kind of like team decision, family decision. So it's nice to see, and I'm happy for her.

Yeah, I wish I will have my team, my current team in that age. Probably would be much bigger by now.

Q. But you feel you lost some years along the way yourself?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I don't have any regrets, because it's my experience. Because of that experience, I'm much more mature right now and I know things (smiling).

But of course I wish I would be a little bit smarter in that age or I would listen to my family a little bit more.

Q. Was there any one stage of the match where you would like to take back? Would it be when she broke you at the beginning of the second set, or was it another stage of the match which you would like to get back and do something different?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I mean, obviously, yeah,

second set when she broke me, but okay, whatever happened there, it's a mistake. Everyone can make one mistake. But I think I would go back when I broke her back in that third set, I think it was 1-All, and I would be probably a little bit more -- I would change couple things in that game.

Yeah, I wish we could go back in time (smiling). Life would be much easier and better.

Q. When you came back here after beating Madison Keys, someone said that she pulled the tiger's tail. Do you feel like Mirra has done that now? Do you see her differently?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I want the rematch already. Maybe she made a big mistake right now, but it's okay. I will let her enjoy the beautiful trophy (smiling).

No, I'm kidding. I don't want to talk like that. But of course next match I'm going to go out and fight even more, and I will make sure that I didn't make the same mistake that I did today.

Q. I like that you said you'd be bigger now if you had your team earlier. You're No. 1 in the world.

ARYNA SABALENKA: No, but I mean bigger, like, titles, tennis-wise.

Q. But in all seriousness, in terms of Mirra, I mean, you played her a number of times before. What do you notice has gotten so much more challenging about her now certainly than maybe even as recently as Australia?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I don't know. I don't really feel any changes. Maybe she's -- well, once again, I'll let her do that. Maybe she was serving a little bit better in the second set. Yeah, she was holding her serve much better.

But once again, I think it was totally me against me, and I just let her play the way she played at the end of the match.

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