

BNP Paribas Open

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Aryna, welcome. Just your thoughts on being back in Tennis Paradise.

ARYNA SABALENKA: I'm super happy to be back in Tennis Paradise. It's super beautiful. I really miss playing, and just cannot wait to start my first match here.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. (Question about playing with pressure.)

ARYNA SABALENKA: Is it?

Q. Precisely. What is it about your personality that thrives on that?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I don't know. I think I'm good in balancing. I'm having a lot of fun off the court, so I'm managing well to be really focused and strong on court, and that's why, like, I mean, pressure -- what is pressure? Everyone feels pressure. I'm just not focusing on that.

I'm bringing my focus on things I have to do on court, how to develop my game, and how to, yeah, basically how to get better.

Q. When did you get Ash? How old is Ash? What do you love about now having a pet?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, he's the cutest dog, I feel like, on earth. Well, I got him, actually, my fitness coach got him in Seattle, so he was with Jason for a couple of weeks.

Then I just met him couple days ago. He's almost four months old. He's so cute. I don't know. Just like little fluffy thing that is so cuddly, so cute, and brings lots of joy and fun, more fun in the team, I guess.

Q. Now that you have signed with Gucci, will we see you bringing any of their accessories to the court or co-designing kits with Gucci?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I feel like there is a work in process and a lot of things to be discussed with both. I'm pretty

sure that we're gonna come up with some cool ideas on and off the court, and I'm super excited about this partnership. I feel like it's a new beginning for me, and also for me it's a cool space to create a lot of cool stuff.

Q. I'm wondering, are you the type of person who is likely to turn the page on last season? Each year you go into a new year, do you wipe the slate clean to begin again or do you carry things over?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, there are some things you still carry with you, but I feel like every year is a new beginning. I'm just trying to be as good as possible in each match I play without focusing on, I don't know, points to defend or what happened last year or this kind of stuff. I feel like I'm pretty good in clearing the page and just leave the page and move on.

Q. I just wondered what your thoughts were on Craig Tiley's idea of women playing best-of-five sets?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Oh, let's do that.

Q. In the second half of the Grand Slam, not in the first week?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, let's do that. I feel like I would have probably more Grand Slams. I feel like physically I'm really strong, and I'm pretty confident that my body can handle that. So let's do it.

Q. You're clearly the best player in the planet, but for everybody else, do you think it would be a good idea?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I don't know. I guess it's a lot of fitness work to be done for others, but I feel like we're in sport and we have to care about ourselves, and I feel like if they do it, I have huge advantage.

Q. Do you have problems being late? You seem to be wearing two watches.

ARYNA SABALENKA: No, no, it's a WHOOP, right? I'm aware of my health, and then I'm always on time. (Laughter.)



Q. The Laureus Award nominations came out. You're nominated for an award. Can you say a little bit about what that means to you?

ARYNA SABALENKA: It means a lot, and I'm honored to be nominated. It's a huge thing in sport, and I really hope, I don't know, I can win it and I can get that beautiful little, I'll say, trophy. But, yeah, it's a huge honor, and yeah, I'm hoping for the best.

Q. What do you think about the Rage Rooms, a private place where players can go express their emotions?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Oh, that's cool, let's do that. But I think after me there will be nothing to destroy. (Laughter.)

Q. Would you be in favor of that kind of thing?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I would be there the whole day. (Laughter.)

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