

BNP Paribas Open

Friday, March 6, 2026

Naomi Osaka

Press Conference



N. OSAKA/V. Jimenez Kasintseva

7-5, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Congrats, Naomi. What are your feelings about your match today?

NAOMI OSAKA: Honestly, I don't really know. I think just trying to be consistent. I have never played her before, so trying to figure out her game and also, yeah, just have fun.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Welcome back. In terms of just how the trainings were going in February, preparations, just kind of assessing Australia, where was your head at before going into this tournament?

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah, I mean, for me it wasn't, like, too positive. I was really disappointed, because it's something that I have done to myself before, and I feel like every year I go through that specific injury. Every year I can kind of, like, feel it starting to happen.

Yeah, I was just really disappointed in myself, and then ironically, like, we were training, and then I injured myself, like I did another injury. So I just felt, like, hopefully that's enough injuries for the whole year.

But yeah, I'm just grateful to be out here and be playing. Last year I didn't do too well here, so I think I already exceeded the previous year. So I just hope that I can keep going.

Q. You debuted a new look today on court. I wanted to sort of ask you about, you know, there is a phrase people say, "look good, feel good," maybe play good, as well. Is that something you consider at all in sort of the development of these kits you're wearing? Is it sort of a confidence thing as well?

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah, I mean, I would definitely say obviously if I wear these outfits, I want to stay in the tournament for a long time, and I do believe in, like, "look good, feel good."

But I think for me, when I'm developing the kits or designing stuff with Nike, I love telling stories. So when I was a kid, I loved, like, creating sketches and kind of designing the world where that character came from.

For me, that's something that I'm really grateful that I can do and that people are interested in. Yeah, I would say it's fun for me to get through the rounds and be asked questions about it.

Q. The ATP started the Athlete Arrivals. I don't know if you saw that, like showing the men in fashion that was selected and the partnership with stylists. Do you think for women doing something like that is more of a liability of being called frivolous or distracted? Do you think it's easier for men's athletes to get away with caring about fashion in that way?

NAOMI OSAKA: Honestly, I'm not too sure. I don't know what the comments look like on the guy Instagrams, or whatever, and honestly I try not to look at my own social media comments.

I know we did do, it wasn't a tunnel walk-on, but it was, like, a little walkout in Toronto maybe two years ago. Well, I did it. I don't know who else did it.

I think it's cool. I think it brings fashion more into tennis, especially with the tennis players participating.

I didn't really see the guys' outfits, though, so... Were they good? Dang.

Q. Andrey was great. Zizou was good.

NAOMI OSAKA: Andrey is kind of swaggy, no?

Q. So a Turkish player was threatened with violence last night if she didn't lose her match today in Turkey, and possibly because of a WTA data breach. I'm wondering, A, were you affected by the breach? B, how you feel about the increase in sports gambling and incidents like this.

NAOMI OSAKA: Like, in person?

THE MODERATOR: I can provide some information about this after the press conference.

NAOMI OSAKA: I was looking, because I haven't heard about this at all, actually. I can tell the Turkish player was Zeynep, right?

Q. No. Panna?

NAOMI OSAKA: Zeynep is Turkish, right?

Q. She is, but a different Turkish player.

NAOMI OSAKA: No, I mean, that's really crazy. I'm sorry, I don't have like an in-depth...

Q. Do you have any opinion just about sports gambling in general?

NAOMI OSAKA: Sports gambling?

Q. Have you been affected in that way?

NAOMI OSAKA: Probably, but I don't -- like, I just live my life, and whatever happens, it's whatever, which is either really, like, positive way of thinking or negative, I don't know, but that's just how I deal with it.

I think sports gambling, it's harsh to say it's terrible, because obviously I'm an athlete, and so I'm living on the other side of it. But I don't see a positive to it, especially when people don't treat the athletes as human.

And I get some people, like, bet absurd amount of money, but that's their responsibility and they shouldn't be taking it out on the athlete, because I think we care more if we win or lose than the person betting money. So to like threaten someone's life over it is insane.

Q. Earlier you were talking about enjoying and trying to just be happy and to find the joy in the playing. I don't know if you were following the Olympics very much. Were you familiar with, at all, Alysa Liu?

NAOMI OSAKA: Of course.

Q. I thought of you a little bit when I was watching her. Curious what your reaction was, not just to her performances and all that sort of stuff, but also what she was saying and what her story was in terms of her relationship with her sport and finding happiness.

NAOMI OSAKA: So it's kind of funny. So I first saw her,

like, way before the Olympics, because they were saying that she took a long break, and then she started coming back to skating. I thought it was really cool, because she was saying that she's not gonna let people tell her what she can or can't eat and stuff like that.

I thought it was amazing, she was so young and she was standing up for herself. Then obviously the Olympics was an incredible moment for her.

For me, it was just really amazing to see how joyful she looked when she was skating. Yeah, she's a really cool girl, and I think a lot of people think the same way.

Q. How hard is it to just be happy playing? Tennis, specifically.

NAOMI OSAKA: I think that answer changes based on who you ask. For me, I'm a little bit of a perfectionist, only when it comes to tennis, though, because I have been playing since I was so young, and I want things to go a certain way, because that's how I practice. But I'm learning how to let go and kind of just take every day as a new adventure.

So it's a little easier now to be happy, especially since I'm getting older (smiling). So, you know, these joints don't work like they used to, but yeah, I'm just happy to have been able to play on Stadium 2 and play a night match, which was really fun.

Q. I just wanted to ask back to your look, because you mentioned something about wanting to tell stories. I wanted to know exactly what was the story behind this specific kit.

NAOMI OSAKA: Okay, so get ready for my long spiel. So obviously the base of the outfit was leopard print. Then when I was kind of diving deeper into it, we were thinking, okay, leopard in the desert. Then there is that iconic photo of Naomi Campbell running with the cheetah, right?

I was, like, okay, do I want to tell a story like this, but, like, obviously based on who I am, my leopard is more like a huntress, like I'm hunting something, there is something I want to go get.

Then we kind of morphed into the story of, like, there is desert, there is dunes, there is a leopard but with the desert, like -- crazy, now we're, like, Mad Max. Then we're like, okay, huntress, hunting, there is a lot of, like, iron (phonetic), there is the story of pursuing something, and then we just kind of built the world in there.

Q. You were wearing jewelry pieces, as well, so that's



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part of it too?

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah.

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