

BNP Paribas Open

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Naomi Osaka

Press Conference



A. SABALENKA/N. Osaka

6-2, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Obviously a tough match today. Talk us through your thoughts on the match.

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah, I mean, it was definitely really tough, but honestly, my biggest takeaway is that I had a lot of fun. I hadn't gotten the opportunity to play on Stadium 1, and to play against the No. 1 player, it was really cool.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. In terms of facing her for the first time in a very long time, did it just feel like playing her for the first time? Was it what you expected, I guess, the ball coming off her racquet, the manner in which she was playing?

NAOMI OSAKA: No, it definitely felt like playing her for the first time. I think, like, obviously I could watch her on TV or whatever, but in reality, it's very different.

I also feel like I was a little, like, flat-footed sometimes, because I expected the ball to be coming harder but then it didn't. She grunts the same way for every ball. I was, like, Oh, my God, she tricked me (smiling).

No, it was a cool learning experience. I know we haven't played for a long time, so I hope that we can play again sometime soon.

Q. Does it make any difference playing someone, you used to be with the same agency, you must know her, does that make any difference going into a match like this?

NAOMI OSAKA: I mean, for me, I don't think so, no. I obviously don't have that experience, but I'm also the player that doesn't look anywhere, you know, during the match. I don't notice people, I don't hear things. I'm kind of just focused on the tennis. I kind of feel like that's how it should be.

Q. You mentioned before the tournament that you had been dealing obviously with the injury in Australia and then picked up another one in training. So being able to hopefully practice in full in the off days and play through these matches, how confident are you feeling that that stuff is behind you?

NAOMI OSAKA: I'm not, Courtney (smiling). I'm not. Every day is a new day (smiling).

Yeah, I mean, I think I'm at an age now where I just have to, I'm at the ripe age of 28, that, I don't know, I just have to take every day, like today obviously I didn't win, but I learned a lot. I had a lot of fun, and I didn't hurt myself.

So that's a W for me. I'm lucky that I'm able to play in Miami. I'm going to be seeded there.

It's quite different from last year, and yeah, I just want to continue doing well. Yeah, I look forward to all the Grand Slams, like you know. So it will be a cool year.

Q. It's only a few months in, but are you pleased with that decision to move from your old agency to IMG? I ask, because Aryna said, I feel sorry for her that she moved back. I think it may have been said probably as a joke.

NAOMI OSAKA: Was she laughing when she said it (smiling)?

Look, we're two different people, like, for sure. I think her experiences aren't the same as mine, and I wouldn't have it any other way, you know.

For me, I have always loved IMG. I have been treated really well there, and the people there are really kind to me. I would recommend to IMG to people. I guess she wouldn't.

But, yeah, I think we just have two very different experiences at two different places.

Q. Frivolous question, but is it new kits for every big tournament, or is it the leopard in Miami?



NAOMI OSAKA: It's the leopard, but we might switch it up.
We might do something, and I might get in trouble with
Nike, I'm not sure.

But, no, I think it's fun. I think it's fun that people are
engaging and asking. You definitely haven't asked me a
fashion question yet, but I think it will be fun.

For, like, the swings, the kits are kind of set. It's like
Australia, Indian Wells, Miami, Europe. Yeah, we're just
trying to make it a little more fun.

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