

WTA Finals

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

Guadalajara, Mexico

Garbine Muguruza

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome to Media Day at the AKRON Finals Guadalajara. Our first player is Garbine Muguruza.

We will start with questions.

Q. How do you feel this year has been for you?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, it's been a very good year. I think to be here is already the proof of it. We all know after 2020 to be back on competition, have a very good results, a solid year in general, yeah, I'm very happy to be back to these Finals. It means a lot to me.

Q. I saw your video you posted of yourself dancing around Guadalajara. There's been a few videos you posted like that this year. You seem to enjoy the process of traveling, being on tour. What has been the key to keeping the fun in the sport which can be challenging through the highs and lows you have? What has been the mental key to staying positive and happy this year?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Yeah, that's a good question.

Well, I feel like doing these type of things, having fun - we were isolated for so many tournaments and in bubbles - when I get to get out, do fun stuff, I want to tape it, want to just show the world that we are doing more things than playing tennis. Why not show a little bit of Guadalajara, the vibes we have here that is such a good feeling?

Yeah, balancing is always the key. Very hard. It has been very hard also in 2021, at the beginning especially, not being able to do anything but playing tennis, which is good, but you can burn out very quickly. Some weeks were tough, others were good. I always try to do fun stuff and show my fans that I'm in a good mood.

Q. A quick question on the conditions playing at altitude in Guadalajara. You've had some great experience in Mexico, in Monterrey. How does it compare to that and how do you feel in general about how the courts are playing?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, I have not experienced anything like this before, this altitude. I've definitely played well in Mexico in other conditions. Yeah, I've been already here. It's a great, great feeling to be in Mexico and having the Mexican crowd tomorrow on court.

Just struggling to get used to conditions because I've never experienced anything like that, like what I said before. But looking forward, every day getting a little bit better. Hopefully tomorrow I can get the best version of myself there.

Q. How many days have you had already on the practice courts to get acclimated? Have you been there for a while?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: I would say like four or five days. It seems good preparation, but this is a special condition that we might need a little longer.

But, yeah, it is what it is.

Q. You talk about the conditions and how tricky it is here. I don't know if it's tougher, the altitude, with respect to getting air in the lungs, playing long rallies, or is it control, trying to get the ball to do what you want it to do?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, I feel like you get the breathing faster. I feel like you can easily work on that right away. Your body gets kind of used to.

But just controlling the ball and playing and getting used to tennis in this altitude, I feel like it's hard. But I feel like it's hard for everybody.

Yeah, just looking forward to go there and try to do my best effort, yeah, see how it goes. I also feel like it's an excellent experience to play in such altitude. I'm excited.

Q. I know the season's not over yet, but if you had to pick what would be the biggest highlight of your career, the highest moment, and I guess the toughest moment of the year for you?



GARBINE MUGURUZA: The highlight? Well, the highlight is definitely winning Dubai. I felt like that was an amazing feeling. Although we had no crowd in the final, that was such a weird feeling.

It was an important tournament for me that I always played well. I was always almost. But this year also making several finals, making it to the trophy, lifting it there, it was great. It really helped me out to get that confidence, that extra confidence.

Probably low points? I feel like when I injured my thigh in clay court. That didn't go at all my way. It's a surface that I love. I was like, Why does this injury have to happen now? I have a Grand Slam, Madrid, Rome, big tournaments in Europe. Yeah, I didn't like that part of the year.

In general I feel like it's been a very good year, finishing here in the Masters after a few years missing it. Yeah, I can't wait to see how it goes.

Q. Do you think you and Paula can be fan favorites during Mexico? Also how important is it to see Spanish-speaking players at the top of the game in terms of making the game global, especially for Latin America market?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: I do feel we could be the fan favorite just because we have a similar culture, Latin-speaking in general culture. I feel it's great.

It's been a long time, 21 years, since two Spanish players were qualified both for the Finals. It's a great achievement to have two players in the top of the elite. Looking forward.

I feel like this is going to motivate young girls from Spain, from Latin America, that they can relate to and hear us talk, get a more familiar feeling of tennis, not always seeing far or foreigner players. I feel like this time they can be more close to us.

Q. I think this is the biggest tournament ever in Latin America. What does that mean to you as a player with roots in Venezuela, Spain? Culturally, what do you think this means to the tour having a showcase event in this part of the world for the first time?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, to be really honest, I never thought that Latin America would held a Masters Final just because it is very complicated, many aspects.

When Steve said that Guadalajara was an option, I was like, Oh, my God, are you sure? You mean Guadalajara, Mexico, right, not other Guadalajara (smiling)? I was so

nervous to make it happen. Now I want it even more.

It's always great to play the WTA Final, but not the same for me playing China to playing Latin America. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. That had a big effect on me.

I feel it's great because tennis in Latin America, women's tennis is not a priority. I feel like now people can see it. I feel like it's kind of something that now it's possible that seemed impossible, and now it's possible.

I hope other countries are going to get more excited. It would be amazing to have a little tour in South America at some point during the calendar. I don't know, I'm just dropping that (laughter).

Q. I know you hate looking at draws, but you have to sit up on the stage.

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Here was no chance. Here I was just there. I was like, Okay (laughter).

Q. What are your thoughts on your group and also facing Karolina, someone you know very well, played already 10 times?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, I think I got the toughest group. I feel like the players that are in my group, I don't know if it's more experienced. I know Karolina is more experienced, of course, playing the Finals. I feel like Krejčíková is having a great year and winning a major. Kontaveit, she has the biggest confidence, like crazy confidence. It's going to be a tough group. The other group is also tough, of course.

Yeah, I'm going to have to play well and manage to get to the semifinal. That's the whole point of the round-robin, yeah, to get those matches on your way.

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