

WTA Finals

Saturday, November 13, 2021

Guadalajara, Mexico

Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference



A. SABALENKA/I. Swiatek

2-6, 6-2, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Aryna, talk us through the match tonight, yeah, how you turned things around from the first match and first set tonight.

ARYNA SABALENKA: I guess I was needed little bit more time to adjust for these conditions.

Yeah, after the first set I was just keep saying to myself, You have to get through this challenge, you have to get through this challenge, over and over again and again. I was just like saying, You have to fight, you can't give up like you did in the first match.

Of course, with the crowd, I felt amazing. I just enjoy every second on the court. I mean, I have never felt this support before. I even felt this - how does it call, little things? I think everyone understand like a little bit.

THE MODERATOR: Goosebumps.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yes, exactly.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You are adapting to this tournament due to the altitude, but you got the title in Madrid. Madrid is 820 meters above sea level. What do you think about that?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Actually I also changed my string tension there in Madrid. I felt so good playing there. I guess altitude can help me if I can kind of find the key playing on the altitude.

Yeah, that title was something big for me, especially on the clay. I felt so good. I kind of proved to myself that I can play on each surface. Yeah, that was amazing.

Q. At the US Open the crowd was vocal for another player. With Leylah we all saw how important it can be to get the crowd on your side. What did you take from

that match that you thought about tonight?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, yeah, I remember on that match against Leylah, close to the end of the match I was really not like disappointed, but I was really sad about the atmosphere. It's not against me, they were just supporting her. I was kind of like asking them to support. After that I felt like maybe sometimes you just have to ask for support, it's nothing bad (smiling).

Yeah, I had a lot of situation when people supporting my opponent more than me. So, yeah, this time I felt so good when people supporting you. I wish I could had that atmosphere, this support, at the US Open.

Q. The passion the crowd had, how loud they were getting for you in this match, how special did that feel? This I planned to be a one-year stop in Guadalajara. Would you like to see the tour find ways to come back here more often?

ARYNA SABALENKA: It's really tough question because I also have a lot of fans in China. It's really tricky question for me.

I would just say one year here, one year in Shenzhen, one year here in Guadalajara, one year in Shenzhen (laughter).

Q. The way that you were able to turn it around, did it have something to do with the fact that you felt you gave up in your first match, felt like you couldn't overcome the conditions? When did you really feel like you were turning it around? During the changeover or in the second set?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, yeah, after the first match I just didn't want to do the same mistake. I just didn't want to give up again. I was just keep saying to myself, You have to put this ball somehow. If you don't feel well, doesn't matter, you just have to fight and you just have to try your best.

I think in the second set when I first broke her, I think after that game I kind of start feeling better, I kind of found my game. I think that first break just change around the game.



I just needed to face this challenge to - how to say - keep this advantage, to serve and lead with a break, to keep going, keep fighting.

Q. Looking ahead to facing Maria Sakkari, can you talk about what you anticipate in that matchup. You kept your chances of qualifying today. How important is that going to be for you?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, this is really important for me. I'm really happy that I have this chance to get through this group.

Yeah, Maria is a tough opponent. She's a great fighter. It's always have great matches against her. It's always big battles. I'm just really looking forward. I'm really happy that I have this chance.

I'll just do my best. I'll just bring everything I have on the court. No matter what, I will fighting. I'll not do the same mistake like I did in the first match. This time I will never give up again.

Q. Given how you feel about this crowd, they have a WTA 250 tournament, but apart from this, would you consider shaping your calendar, choosing the tournaments based on how well you feel with the crowd and the conditions?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I think everywhere I have fans and people who support me. Actually it's interesting, tricky question. We have mandatory tournament, we have Grand Slams. I cannot really change it that much.

Honestly, I would like to play WTA Finals one year here - as I said before - one year in Shenzhen. This is what I would change and that's it.

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