

Guadalajara Open

Tuesday, 18 October 2022

Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico

Maria Sakkari

Press Conference



M. SAKKARI/M. Kostyuk

6-4, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started. Maria, strong performance today. Can you share your thoughts on the match.

MARIA SAKKARI: Sure. I think it was a very, very good level from both of us. Obviously, a very tough opening match for me.

Marta played very solid from the beginning until the last point of the match. Yeah, I'm very pleased that I got to play my first match in this tournament the way I did today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. That's what we all felt tonight when you were playing, energy. What did you feel tonight? Could you please describe it to us?

MARIA SAKKARI: I think I expressed my feelings of how I feel about this tournament. Last year I had some very special moments here. Obviously, didn't make it until the end. But even the match I lost, I think it was very, very special.

And the atmosphere was from the first match I played until the last was, like, incredible. When I came back here, I just felt like I want to feel that again. I think that today everyone showed me that it's the same as it was last year.

Q. We all felt the same. We saw that you could go through that with the three break points against you. Do you think that was the summit of the match for you?

MARIA SAKKARI: Well, obviously, it's not a nice place to be, serving for the match and being Love-40 down. You're just praying for something good to happen. I just went for it. I served well.

I just had a little bit of luck with that frame forehand, and

yeah, it was a very important game.

Q. You were here at Guadalajara November of last year at the WTA Finals. Now you're here, and you are one of the favorites of the people. The first one, do you feel pressure? And the second one, do you think this is revenge for you here in Guadalajara?

MARIA SAKKARI: I don't feel any pressure. I would say the opposite. It's just very nice that I can feel the love from every single fan.

I come from a country that is very far, and I was actually surprised the last year that I got this love from every single Mexican in this tournament. I'm very grateful and thankful for that.

I'll try and enjoy as much as I can this week because I want to stay until the end. I really like this place.

Q. Do you think that the beginning of the match, the way it came, it was because of the altitude? Of course, the night sessions that have more windy conditions, do you think that that was a thing?

MARIA SAKKARI: I would say that I played a good first game. Maybe then I didn't serve the right way for the next two service games that I had. But then obviously I changed a few things. I believe I didn't get broken after that again. That's what I remember. Maybe I did get broken, but I don't remember.

Then I just started building my game. I started trusting more myself and the weapons that I have, and just getting used to how I have to hit the ball.

Q. Second question. Did you notice all the flags of Greece and also the letters that there were on the stadium?

MARIA SAKKARI: Yes, I was very actually surprised. And it was very nice to see so many Greek flags. Especially, as I said, that far from home. It means a lot because it's one of the, hopefully not my last, tournament of the season.



But having the support and just seeing how many people want me to win is very important.

Q. You already said you don't feel pressure, but what you need to do for yourself, you want to bring to these people, and all these fans you have gained here, the trophy?

MARIA SAKKARI: Yes, that would be the dream. I'll do my best every single match and do it all. I'll fight until the last point just so I can stay here as long as I can.

Of course, the goal is to win that trophy. That would be ideal. That would be the tournament of my life. But I still have a long way to go. I don't even want to think that far because I'm only in the last 16.

There are so many good players ahead and so many players that are playing good right now and even probably they're in better form than me.

But I'm going to trust myself and go for it in the next match.

Q. Like you know, this tournament, the WTA Finals, they were here because special circumstances. But Guadalajara still doesn't have nothing sure more than 250. Do you think they already proved that it's capable to have a permanent tournament of this level?

MARIA SAKKARI: I think that if this organization is not capable in organizing this tournament again, then no one is. The service for the players, the love we get, and the treatment that we get from them is very unique.

For me, obviously last year it was different because we were only how many players? There were also doubles players. Not eight, it's 24.

It was different. But this year they have a large draw, and they still treat us the same, even better. For me, that's one of the reasons why I want to stay here, and I want this tournament to keep going as long as they want it to and as long as I'm playing tennis for.

Q. I have a question for you. It's not a typical question, so a little bit of critical thinking, but you know that Latinas and Europeans and people from other countries play differently mainly because they have other opportunities and other type of trainings in the past. It's not the same as being in Latin America or being in Europe. So when you play with Latinas, what are the differences that you see playing with them versus playing with European women or any other type of your colleagues from other countries?

MARIA SAKKARI: I mean, there are not many Latinas on the tour, unfortunately. I would say that Mediterranean people are very similar to Latin people. I would say they're both cultures that are very outgoing and very passionate.

I have to say that it reminds me a lot of how my country is and how I am. So you know every Latin player is a fighter, and you know they're just going to fight until the last point.

Q. Do you expect so much love from the fans because we see you train and we see a lot of fans, a lot of fans seeing you? Do you expect so much love from the fans?

MARIA SAKKARI: It's not like I expect it. It's there, and I take it. I'm going to take the love from the fans because it's something that it can fill you as a person and as a player.

I think that I appreciate it, and that makes me even, like, wanting to win even more.

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