

Guadalajara Open

Saturday, 23 September 2023

Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico

Maria Sakkari

Press Conference



M. SAKKARI/C. Dolehide

7-5, 6-3

Q. Congrats on the win. Now with this title you become a little bit more Mexican, right? So do you know any words in Spanish, and if you do, where did you learn them?

MARIA SAKKARI: I know words because I lived in Spain for three and a half years. So my Spanish is okay, but speaking in Spanish... yeah.

Q. What would you say is a quality that makes Maria Sakkari the toughest rival?

MARIA SAKKARI: A tough rival to my opponents, you mean?

Q. Yes. What would you say?

MARIA SAKKARI: I think, you know, obviously my fighting spirit, the fact that I don't give up most of the times, my solid game. I would say, you know, I'm athletic, so it's tough, you know, to hit through me. I just, yeah, I don't know (laughing). All these things I said.

Q. You won today in Guadalajara. A few months ago Stefanos Tsitsipas won in Los Cabos. Do you think Mexico gives good luck to the Greek players?

MARIA SAKKARI: Maybe. Probably. I don't know. I feel like personally I've always played good here. I've said it many times that this place suits me well, it fits my game really well. Yeah, I'm happy that two Greeks have won two of the Mexican tournaments this year.

Q. The famous quote of Giannis is that losing is not a failure, it's a process to win. You talk with him about his mental toughness, and today you talk about how hard it was for you to be even a top player with just one title. So what was your mental process in all these years to finally, not only win, you not even drop a set in this tournament, that was how good you were.

MARIA SAKKARI: I can tell you that it was very tough all these years, especially the last two years that I've been a top-10 player. Everyone kept saying, Ah, she's top 10, top 5, top 3, and she has only won one 250. Finally I just can shut their mouth in a way (smiling).

Obviously there's still a long way to go. I don't want to stop in the two titles. But I'm just happy for myself that I could overcome this and I can just prove to myself that I'm capable of achieving big things.

Q. How do you feel right now, because you said in the ceremony in the stadium that you were, that you had difficult times before this title, and by the seven finals that you lost, but in this moment how do you feel, how does it feel to get this title finally?

MARIA SAKKARI: I just feel like, you know, it's been tough. I cannot deny that. I'm not going to start saying, Ah how tough it was the last few months. I've said it enough. It's gone. It's past.

For me it's just very important that I could bounce back and find a way to find happiness on the court again. That was my biggest goal this week and my biggest achievement. I'm just very happy that I managed to find a way this week and that it happened here in Guadalajara.

Q. If you could make an analysis from the match, because you were struggling in a part of the first set with the kick of Caroline, with the serve with the kick. How tough was that for you?

MARIA SAKKARI: She has a great serve and a great kick. Because of the altitude it bounces even higher. I just feel like I did the right thing then to stepping up and just mixing it up. It worked really well to give her different looks.

I just believe that I was very solid, you know, and it really clicked today. I was anxious before the match, but then I just managed to get rid of it. It doesn't really matter what the opponent does as long as I'm doing the right thing.

Q. This is the most important title of your career. How



do you feel winning in Guadalajara with all the tapatios that loves you?

MARIA SAKKARI: It feels very special. It feels very nice to win this title here, to get to spend all these days here and just one more extra day to enjoy. I'm just, yeah, I'm just so happy. I haven't really realized what I've done today.

Q. First I want to ask you if you think that losing the final last year against Pegula helped you to achieve the winning of today, or do you think it could be different if you didn't lose, maybe you lose in the third round last year, did that help you get the trophy?

MARIA SAKKARI: I don't think so. I don't think that it has to do anything with last year. It's been, you know, almost 12 months. It's the past now.

This tournament only has to do with how I played this week, how my mentality was this week. That's all that matters. There's nothing I was thinking about last year or it affected my game in any way. I just felt like today I was ready to do it and I did it.

Q. One last thing, you have been better ranked in the WTA rankings, but you have achieved a trophy that it's a 1000 point trophy. Do you think this is the best moment of your career?

MARIA SAKKARI: For sure it's the biggest win of my career. I'm just, you know, it's very tough for me to speak right now because I haven't really had the time to realize and just relax and enjoy it. But, for sure, you know, tonight and tomorrow it's going to be two very happy days for me.

I'm just very, very grateful that it happened here. I've said it many times this week, I just, you know, really enjoy my time here. Thank you all for being here this week. Yeah, it was amazing. Thank you, guys.

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