

Porsche Tennis Grand Prix

Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

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Elena Rybakina

Press Conference

E. RYBAKINA/J. Niemeier

7-5, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Elena, well done. Just talk us through your thoughts on the match and your first-match win here at Stuttgart this year.

ELENA RYBAKINA: Thank you. Yeah, really tough match. I think Jule played really well.

Today I think my serve helped me a lot. Yeah, happy to be in the next round.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the conditions between this court and in Astana when you played for the Billie Jean King Cup? Is it faster here, or what was the speed and if you felt more comfortable here or in Astana?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, it's actually felt completely different because we had different balls. In Astana it was flying, I would say, a bit faster and it was more sand on the court, so it was not easy to push.

Here it's much more slippery, and I would say that it's really two different clay courts. But I think that slowly now I'm adjusting to this one.

Q. At the end of Miami you were pretty wiped out, understandably so, given how much you had to play over the course of that month with Indian Wells and everything. With now the clay season starting, did you feel like did you have enough time? No? Where are you physically and kind of mentally at the start of the clay?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, well, I didn't have much rest. Maybe few days. Then started to prepare slowly for clay.

Then I went to play in Kazakhstan, so it was a lot of traveling. Not easy, but I think that it's gonna be more



time, I would say, maybe after Wimbledon, because now there is like few more tournaments, big tournaments on clay. Then the grass comes really fast, and it's again just few tournaments before Wimbledon.

So I would say that in my head I know that I'm gonna maybe rest more after Wimbledon.

Q. Is there any concern about that, or did you feel as though especially Miami and specifically how well you were able to get a result there despite maybe not being 100% at the start of the tournament, does that give you confidence that you can kind of push through this next two months of kind of nonstop play?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, for sure. I mean, we tried to adjust to see how I'm gonna do also the next few tournaments, and it's gonna be one week for me before French Open.

So of course we will try to do everything possible so I come to the French Open fresh, and yeah, just these tournaments I know that I have to push. I think every match I play, even if it's tough one, it's still good thing for me just to keep on playing. Like this, I get used to the clay also.

Q. Political discussions about players from Russia and Belarusia are going on on the tour. What are your feelings about this issue right now? Have you also been faced with hateful reactions like Aryna?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Well, I didn't have any experience like that, but I think it's the right thing that they are going to play since all tour they have been playing, and they have already restriction. It's no flag, no anything.

So I think that it's good to play for them, and everybody as a player wants to play in the biggest tournaments, so...

Q. Let's talk a little bit about Germany or maybe Stuttgart. Is there anything that you appreciate in particular about Germany or the Germans? Do you have any boundaries to this region maybe by occasion?



ELENA RYBAKINA: I'm here second time. I went a bit to the city. My physio is from Germany, so it's really nice place and I really enjoy to play here.

It's also really comfortable to stay right next to the stadium. You don't need to travel much to the courts, so it's really good place to be.

Q. What is his name? How long do you work together, the physio?

ELENA RYBAKINA: I think two years or maybe a bit more. Stefan Duell.

Q. You said that it was a tough match now against Jule. What can you say about potential for Jule Niemeier?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, I think she's really talented. She's has a good serve. The tweener she did, I mean, not many players do that (smiling). So I think she can be really good and dangerous.

Yeah, today was really tough for me. Just I think in these important moments maybe I played a bit better, but overall it was a tough match.

Q. Next one I believe you have Beatriz Haddad Maia, if I'm correct. Can you talk about the tricky aspect of playing her? She's a very physical player, lots of long rallies that can ask a lot of you. What's the key?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, for sure, again, really tough opponent. She's lefty. So again, I need to adjust.

We played already in Abu Dhabi, and it was really tough one. I think that I played there well. It's just in the third set maybe I didn't have enough energy.

For sure it's gonna be physical, a lot of long rallies. Yeah, hopefully I can serve same good as today. Yeah, maybe just to come forward a bit more often.

Q. What's your car situation? Do you drive every now and then? Do you have a Porsche already or any other vehicle?

ELENA RYBAKINA: No, unfortunately I don't have driver license and I really want to have them, and I just don't have time.

But, yeah, that's the goal. But it's still far, you know, to get a car (smiling).

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