

Porsche Tennis Grand Prix

Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Saturday, 19 April 2025

Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference

A. SABALENKA/E. Mertens

6-4, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Aryna, congratulations. Into another semifinal here in Stuttgart. Just talk us through your thoughts on the match and what you thought you did well today.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I'm super happy with the win. Finally I played my match. Never happened before that I play the first match on Saturday, so it feels awkward.

Yeah, happy with the level I played. Happy with the variety of the game I brought today on the court. Yeah, I think it was very decent game.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. At the changeover when she was up 4-3 with the break up, did you think about changing something, or you were just encouraging yourself to keep going in that way?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I think I just made couple of unforced errors in that game, and every time I played on her serve, it was very tight and close. So I was, like, I think I should just keep going, keep putting the pressure.

I was trying to probably bring a bit of spin on the court, do not go like that flat and go for bigger targets. That's basically, that's it.

Q. As this was your first match on clay this year, did you felt something, I don't know, different from the practice? Did you need a few more games to adapt to the surface? You had a week to prepare for this one. Did you feel comfortable?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I had a week to practice on these courts, so I felt pretty comfortable. Also, I played here so many times, so I know the courts and I feel really good on this surface.

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So I think it was about just playing the first match on clay, get used to the game, not over-rush things. It was mostly about that.

Q. On the court you said you had time to explore the city. What did you do then? What can you recommend now?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I went to couple of restaurants. I went to the Porsche museum, which is very cool one. Yeah, I had a great time. They have a great steakhouse there.

Also, we went to one Italian place. Was also good food. That's actually, that's pretty much it. I think we could do more, but yeah, I had to practice, go to the gym. I wish I'd go out a bit more.

Q. There was this unusual moment where you took the picture of the ball mark. Did you double-check it? Was it still in, do you think?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, it was definitely in. I understand. I mean, everyone can make mistakes and I'm not the one who is going to be complaining with the referee. I'm usually quite respectful.

But I think you cannot make these kind of mistakes. I think you have to, if you make the mistake, I think you have to have guts to admit it and make a call. I guess not everyone have the guts to do that, but it's okay.

Once again, everyone can make mistake, and as the time, not the time go, but with a little bit of time, I had time to cool down, let's say like that, and I kind of like let it go, the situation. And it's okay, whatever happens there.

Q. How do you feel physically? Because you were staying for, like, one week here. Because tomorrow you will have another important game now. So how do you see it, from one day to another after a week of pause?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I mean, I'm quite extreme player, and I had a lot of different situations. Physically and mentally I'm quite strong, so I think I'm pretty much ready

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to handle another great battle tomorrow.

Q. A question about the matchup with Elise. You're 9-1 now, and she last time beat you seven years ago. So what does this matchup do for you that you're so good at it?

ARYNA SABALENKA: That's crazy actually to hear these numbers. For me, feels like we've been on tour only for a few years. Seven years sounds really crazy.

I don't know. Every time I play against basically everyone, I'm just focusing on myself and I do not focus on the statistics against the player. I think that's the key to keep doing what you're doing against some players you have a really good score against.

I don't know. I think my ability to focus on myself and to bring the best game on court every time I'm playing against players I have a good score, I think it's pretty good.

Q. We had a special day yesterday when it was not allowed to have matches, to play. Obviously everybody has some special days, maybe holidays in the year, days and dates. What would that be for you, days that are important for you? How would you celebrate them?

ARYNA SABALENKA: You're asking about Easter specifically, or...

Q. What you find important.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I don't know what to say about that. I mean, I'm religious, and I think it's important holiday, and we do all of the things like everyone do in this holiday, like eating the cake, cracking the eggs. I think it's important holiday.

So, yeah, it was nice to have a day off.

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