

Porsche Tennis Grand Prix

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Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference

A. SABALENKA/J. Paolini

7-5, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Aryna, congratulations. Into another final here in Stuttgart. Just talk us through how you came back in that match and managed to do it in two sets today.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, that was very tough match. She was playing really great tennis. She made me work for every point. Yeah, I actually enjoyed playing. It was a real fight, and happy to be in another final here.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. What do you think was the difference between this match and the Miami semifinal you played against her?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I mean, obviously we were playing on the clay court. Everything a bit slower. I had to adjust a little bit to the tactic. I had to work extra, extra hard to get every point.

But I actually enjoyed it. Yeah, I had to be ready to finish the point, and I had to be ready for an extra shot coming back. Yeah, that was the difference.

Q. I'm not sure if you remember, but the point on 5-All, 30-love, in the first set. That was the point where you tried the lob and then you hit the backhand-down-the-line winner?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Oh, yeah, when she approached the net, right?

Q. Yes. If that was really important for you also mentally in that situation when she was coming back and...

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, yeah, of course. Yeah, I was 5-2 up, and then it was 5-All, 30-Love to her, and then I did it to 30-All.

Yeah, of course I knew it was important point in that



situation. I was just trying to do my best, and I was just trying to stay in the point, and yeah, try and get the win.

Yeah, of course I knew that that game was very important for me.

Q. When you look for tomorrow, usually you're the player who plays fast, and now you play Ostapenko who plays also very fast. How do you approach that game? Do you change your tactics against her, or...

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, we played a couple of times, and the last meeting was on the clay. First of all, I'm aware of her shots. Yeah, she can play really aggressive.

I think I know the way I have to play in that match, and I'm really looking forward. I think it's going to be very aggressive tennis from both.

I'm excited for the final. Yeah, really can't wait to play.

Q. It will be your fourth final here.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah (smiling).

Q. We have been here with you in all these years.

ARYNA SABALENKA: You enjoyed me failing every year (smiling).

Q. Is it a lot of pressure now, or do you want it more, or how is it?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I mean, I think we always deal with pressure. As they always say, pressure is the privilege. So I'm not focusing on the pressure.

I want it more than ever. You know, like when you're losing three times in the finals, I think it's becoming something like really important for you to kind of, like, I don't know, to make sure you -- I don't know, you put this, I don't know how you call this...

Q. Tick?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, next to the goal. Next to,

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like, in the list of your goals, you want to make sure you succeed here. So it's very important final for me, and I'll make sure I bring my best game there tomorrow.

Q. I will tell you a little secret. We were talking with Iga yesterday about her game with Ostapenko, and I asked her, what's the difference between the big hitters, Sabalenka and Ostapenko. She said Aryna is playing with more logic. Do you think logic is going to be the answer for tomorrow's game?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, thanks for that. I actually understand what she's talking about (smiling). Yeah, I understand what she's talking about, and with Jelena, you really have to stay low and be ready for anything and do not expect some logical decisions over there and just, like, try to play your best and try to put all of that pressure she's trying to putting on you back on her and see what happens.

Yeah, I mean, that's a very nice comment actually from Iga (smiling). Or actually, maybe it's about, that's why she still knows me. Maybe I have to become that player when I play against Iga, like, not following the logic (smiling).

Q. I want to ask about your serve today, because probably you weren't really satisfied with how the second serve was going, especially probably in the first set. So I wonder if it was something that was broke by the opponent, probably the aggressive position, or something with your serve that you didn't really like the way you were serving overall?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I mean, probably today wasn't the best day of me serving, but you're talking about my second serve or...

Q. Yes, because I think the percentage...

ARYNA SABALENKA: The percentage was, like, winning.

Q. It was like 20% of points won with the second serve in the first set.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Oh, really? Wow, that bad? I didn't feel it was that bad. Yeah, that's actually pretty bad stats.

Well, she's a great player, and I think she adjusted well on my second serve. Yeah, she was returning really well. But also, maybe tactically I wasn't, like, serving quite well.

So it's not like I'm not happy with my serve. I think it just, like, was one of those days when you just have to overcome something, like when something is not working well.

But yeah, I mean, I'm really happy that even with that percentage I was able to win the match, because it's really bad, 20%.

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