

China Open

Sunday, October 8, 2023

Beijing, China

Iga Swiatek

Press Conference



I. SWIATEK/L. Samsonova

6-2, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Iga, congratulations. Your first title here in Beijing, your fifth overall for the season. Give us your thoughts on the match today and your performance.

IGA SWIATEK: Well, for sure you could feel that we are playing a final because it was a little bit tense, I would say. But I'm happy that I kind of adjusted to what Liudmila was playing. I wanted to really be consistent with what I wanted to do no matter how she's doing.

I'm happy that I won because, for sure, this is really big for me. Winning this title is something that I never would have thought at the beginning of the tournament about. I'm pretty proud of myself.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Could you maybe speak a little bit about your emotions at the end of that match, of a long tournament. Just now you said this is a big victory for you. What makes it so big? Does the recent demotion to No. 2 have any context there, as well?

IGA SWIATEK: I mean, I would say the overall state that I kind of had for couple of weeks, I don't know, I feel like this tournament will give me confidence for the rest of my career that there's always ability, I mean, a chance to overcome and work on what you do or what you feel. You can always get better. Sometimes it's kind of pretty easy, but we tend to make it more complicated in our heads.

I'm really happy that I just focused on hard work. It kind of paid off - maybe not instantly, but I'm happy that after US Open I just got back to basics and just worked really hard tennis-wise. I'll just continue to do that.

For sure winning this trophy is something that will, yeah, teach me kind of a lesson for the rest of my life.

Q. Just now Liudmila said that she thinks you make

her feel stressful on court. How do you make it? Is that a physical or psychological thing?

IGA SWIATEK: I mean, just trying honestly to do my job. I don't have that much influence I think on what my opponents feel. Obviously I try to put pressure on them when I feel like I need to or make the right decisions for my opponent to not feel comfortable. I'm happy that it seems like I'm good at that because that's something that you also need to do when you want to just win points.

But overall I'm just kind of focused on myself and what I should do. Well, what can I say? I mean, yeah, that's all. I'm kind of focusing on myself, and I guess it worked, so...

Q. At the start of the tournament and in the middle the tournament you were saying you kind of earned the right to regroup a little bit and have time to refocus. You just said that you never thought this would be possible at the start of the tournament. Can you give us a sense as to where your head was at? It seems like maybe you were more not down but affected by everything maybe in New York or in the weeks past than I guess maybe we thought.

IGA SWIATEK: Yeah, I was. It was just kind of hard for me to not think about all this stuff that sometimes is messing with my head a little bit.

But it really clicked here in Beijing. It wasn't easy before the first match. I felt like really anxious. I felt like usually after feeling down, I tend to bounce back. This was something that I was kind of expecting to do. It put even a little bit more pressure on myself.

So I just was really able to, like, cut everything off and just think kind of about the future, really about the next step, really about the next five minutes what I want to do on court. Sometimes it's harder. Sometimes it's easier to do that.

For sure here in Beijing it just worked. Every day I was able to keep this attitude. I think I really just enjoyed playing here on this surface and on these stadiums. Everything kind of worked.



Sometimes I feel like that at Roland Garros, that I really know this place, that everything is really nice and comfortable. Here I'm for the first time, but I also felt that. I just enjoyed my team here in Beijing, and that also had some influence (smiling).

Q. How long are you going to stay in China now? Are you going to see something maybe in Beijing?

IGA SWIATEK: Unfortunately there's no chance for me to do that. I wish I could. Yeah, the schedule is pretty tight. I want to use every day that I have off to be home at this part of season. It's pretty important.

It's hard to be fresh and kind of want to be on tour when you've been on tour since middle of December. I'm going to come back home probably as fast as possible.

That doesn't mean that I don't want to stay here because for sure Beijing was really great. Yeah, next year I'm going to do my best to go sightseeing a little bit more and to see more of the Chinese culture and learn about it.

Q. Looking ahead to Cancun, have you spoken at all with Tomasz in terms of what the next few days, weeks look like in terms of preparation for that? Is it a separate block or just practice as usual? What's the priority ahead of the Finals?

IGA SWIATEK: He actually gave me the whole plan kind of as a joke because he knew I'm not going to remember about it in next 10 minutes.

For sure today is about a celebration. But he told me when I'm going to be back at work. Yeah, it's not a long time for me to have rest at this point 'cause, for sure, Cancun is really important tournament. I want to get ready and also kind of continue the work I've been doing after US Open in terms of technique and what I want to improve on court.

Yeah, I'm going to spend two weeks home and I'm going to probably practice, like, eight days, and the rest are going to be days off. I don't think there's going to be a lot of time for me to do anything more. I'll just focus on work and on the last tournament of the season.

Q. You just said you want to celebrate. How are you going to celebrate? Also your experience of China culture, what impress you the most? Also, you just say you don't have time to visit. Are there any place you really want to go?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, for sure I want to say the Great Wall. But there are many, honestly. I just want to go see all

these beautiful, like, historic things in the city. Yeah, but next year I'll try to do that.

For sure the thing that I like the most were the fans because they were really enthusiastic and with a lot of positive energy. Every day I felt that around the match courts, around the practice courts, when I had day off. For sure they made really great atmosphere.

This is the most I kind of noticed about the culture so far. But, yeah, I would say that they are really excited for tennis and for sports overall. I'm pretty happy that I could experience that.

Q. There's so many Chinese fans making posters with pictures on it as well as umbrellas with pictures on them. So many posters cheering for you. They are coming from different cities, coming to Beijing to cheer for you. What's the difference between Chinese fans as well as fans from other places? Any things you would like to say to them?

IGA SWIATEK: The only thing I want to say is, like, really I'm grateful for them coming and being here.

I would say the difference is that you feel no matter if you're going to win or lose, no matter if you're in a good place or not, they're always going to support you.

I got many, like, fun mail and letters from the fans, and they were all kind of with a lot of understanding and with a lot of just supportive things. It's not so obvious for fans to do that because I tend to kind of feel they're kind of expecting for the player to win. But here it was just full support no matter what's going to happen. That's what I felt was pretty amazing.

I'm really happy that people from all over China came. For sure the (indiscernible) they had with my face and name was pretty fun to sign. There was this group at the stands that was always holding the signs and really cheering. I'm really grateful for that.

Q. I rarely saw you cry, showing emotions on camera. I saw you at the end of the match, you were crying a little bit. Could you share your emotions with us?

IGA SWIATEK: You know, I cried a little bit after because I know how tough it was for us to kind of, I don't know, stay positive and stay focused on the future. Maybe not for us, but for me. I felt like huge support from my team during these past weeks. I was really just grateful for that. Overall, yeah, these were my emotions after.

During the match I was just focused on the next step and



what I should do to play the best way possible. There was no time for me to kind of think about the bigger picture. I'm pretty happy I was able to stay focused and didn't show a lot during the game.

Q. In the past two years you won Grand Slams, you were No. 1, also top seed in many tournaments. Did you feel a lot of pressure? Now you are No. 2. Would that be a pressure relief so that you can focus with a better mentality for future tournaments? Or even though you are coming back to No. 1, will you have a different mentality facing that?

IGA SWIATEK: For sure, yeah, there was a lot of pressure during past seasons. I would say the progress that I've made was pretty fast and I kind of wasn't expecting to become world No. 1 last year. I had to deal with a lot of things and kind of grow up tennis-wise really quickly.

For sure, the pressure and everything that's happening outside of the courts, it's kind of, yeah, hard to deal with sometimes.

On the other hand this is part of the sport and we have to learn how to adjust and how to, like, really keep focusing on tennis and not all of the stuff around.

I would say if I would become world No. 1 again, for sure I think I would be kind of more prepared for everything. It's not like I would change some things exactly, but I would know how to deal with them at this point.

Yeah, I think if I learn and take lessons from it, it's going to be easier. But for sure the first thing is getting there. I'll just try to do that. For now, step by step. I'll just celebrate this trophy.

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