

# China Open

Saturday, October 5, 2024

Beijing, China

## Karolina Muchova

Press Conference



K. MUCHOVA/Zheng Qinwen

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Karolina, congratulations. Into your first China Open final. Can you just give us your thoughts on the match today and your performance.

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Thank you very much.

Yeah, tough battle out there today. I was happy I was able to hold my serve during the whole match. That helped a lot.

Yeah, glad that I was able to close it in two sets today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. It wasn't your first time facing a Chinese opponent in the tournament. Tonight might have felt different obviously playing Qinwen in the Diamond Court. How did you deal with the atmosphere and the pressure tonight to come out on top?**

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, I mean, the atmosphere, I could hear the people. It was really, really loud at some points. But it's not my first time playing a - how you call it - someone from the country at the center court. I'm used to that.

Obviously, it's nice to see that the stadium is always full. They supported as well me, which is nice. Yeah, it's just great to see that they come to support her this much.

I just tried to be focused on myself during the whole match. I don't think it would get me out of the rhythm.

**Q. Yesterday you defeated Sabalenka. Today you overcame Zheng Qinwen. How do you attribute your strong performance to, especially against such formidable opponents?**

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, I mean, it's great. I was trying to build my form from the first matches here. I had

great matches. I felt good on the court.

I'm just happy I was able to perform well against these big players and put up my game and that I could see that, yeah, I can face them, I can beat them. I just have to build up as well the way throughout the ranking and everything. I didn't play for a bit.

It's just nice to see that I can compete against them.

**Q. In terms of getting your ranking up, potentially getting yourself seeded at tournaments to get a little bit of protection early on, how much of that was a goal going into the end of this season in terms of getting up the points, getting your ranking up?**

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, since I started in June, it wasn't really a thing that I would think of. Honestly, then when I did well at the US Open and I defended my points, we were with the team, we sat down and we were like, Yeah, let's try the Asian season to get points to be seeded for the Australian Open. As you mentioned, it helps to be seeded in these big competitions. You don't face the top players in the first round. Yeah, we talked. We were like, That would be nice. It was not pressure that we needed to do it, but it could be a nice goal to have from these tournaments.

So far I did pretty well (smiling). So, yeah, I'm just happy about that.

**Q. If I could go a little bit off topic. I asked Coco the same question. I was intrigued I suppose that we've seen Coco, Naomi, Iga all change coaches. I'm not expecting you to comment on those specific cases, but as a player, the relationship with a coach, what is that relationship like? Is it purely just a tennis thing or is there much more to it than that? Why is that relationship important?**

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, I guess for everyone it's different. Personally for me, I like to have people that I really like around me because we spend most of the time together on the tour traveling, like that. For me, it's important to have, again, people that I like, that we support



each other off court, on court.

I mean, look, I haven't played nine months, and these guys stay with me, kept on working and going. That's what counts the most for me. I would say they're like my second family. We are all the time together. For me the most important is this.

Of course, they are not bad as well at their work. No, I'm joking, they're really good (smiling). Yeah, I guess that's for me - again repeating myself - the most important, to have a nice relationship off court. We can go dinners. We can talk. If it's too much, if we are too much together, we can take some breaks. We can talk very openly. That's what counts the most for me.

**Q. You're facing Coco in the final. The previous two matches you've come up short. How do you plan to prepare and take the match to her tomorrow?**

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I honestly wasn't even thinking about tomorrow's match yet (smiling).

Obviously, will try to recover as best as possible tonight and tomorrow morning. Just to bring the best game. We played a year ago, so we are different players today and tomorrow.

I'll just try to play my best and challenge her and hope for the best result tomorrow.

**Q. On that point, matchups in tennis are funny. You've won three straight against Sabalenka. You're still trying to get a set against Coco. What is it about her game that is a challenge for you? Thinking back to Cincinnati and the US Open, what does she do well that you know you're going to have to solve?**

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, if I look back, I mean, those matches, honestly we played in really tough conditions. It was very hot, very humid. It was very physical. She is such a great athlete. She can run left, right. She's like a moving wall. It's tough to hit some winners and make it shorter. That's for sure a challenge. It's very different here. Very different conditions to US Open and Cincinnati. I'll try to take advantage of that.

Yeah, she's, again, an amazing athlete, such a great player. It's the finals, so I wouldn't expect anything less than that. She's just great.

**Q. Does this feel different than making the final in Cincinnati, your first 1000? Different conditions, like you said. Does this feel, the context of this, any different? More excited? Less excited?**

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, for sure I'm very excited for myself and for my team, as well. We've been through a lot this year. To have these great results, it's just nice. I'm really glad.

I will repeat myself, I said it in the past, I didn't know how this year is going to look like, if I will play, if I will not play, what my level is going to be.

Making a final here, it's just so nice. Such a nice feeling. Yeah, I'll just try to enjoy it more.

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