

# Gippsland Trophy

Sunday, 31 January 2021

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Iga Swiatek

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Could you tell us how you've been, how you approached preparation.**

IGA SWIATEK: Well, that's, like, a really hard question to answer because it depends. I mean, I've been really good for the last few months. We were kind of resting from what happened in Paris, then preparing for the next season.

Right now I feel like I'm ready. Actually I can't wait for the tournament to start.

**Q. How anxious are you to get on court and play a match all over again?**

IGA SWIATEK: Well, I'm not anxious. I'm mostly excited. Basically I have, like, some kind of amount of stress, but it's normal amount. I don't feel like more pressure than before French Open. Actually, I'm more kind of confident that I can play good tennis.

But it all depends on my preparation, on my attitude. Basically I'm trying to keep my expectations low, even though I did a really good pre-season. I'm just, yeah, waiting for the tournament to start.

Actually I've practiced for so long that mostly I'm excited and not anxious.

**Q. How long did it take you to come down from that cloud after Roland Garros?**

IGA SWIATEK: I wouldn't say that I was in the cloud (laughter).

Well, my life changed. I had many more obligations. It was hard to rest after French Open. I always need rest after Grand Slam. It doesn't matter if I won it or not. It's intense two weeks.

When we came back to Warsaw, it was even more intense, so... I needed, like, I don't know, probably one month to fully focus on preparing for next season.

It was last tournament of the season, and I had lot of time. We didn't rush it, you know. And also really I don't

think I would describe the whole situation as being on a cloud, so yeah.

**Q. You say your life changed. It's obvious it would have changed. You've got more obligations. What are some of those obligations? Now when you're walking down the streets at home, wherever, is it constant recognition?**

IGA SWIATEK: It isn't constant. Well, actually a few days ago when we were -- actually yesterday, because we went out of the quarantine two days ago, when we were walking for breakfast, one person, he realized that I'm tennis player. He wanted photo. He was from Poland. So even though when I get recognized, it's people from Poland even though I'm in different place.

It isn't constant. It's not bothering. It's really nice. In Poland it's more often, but I'm really happy about it. It's not, like, a problem for me.

About the other obligations, well, obviously I have more media obligations. Right now I feel like there are more eyes on me, you know. Sometimes I have to just, I don't know, change my planning or change, like, preparation for the tournament because I know I'm going to have more stuff to do.

But, well, it's not like something new for me because even though I didn't have, like, many tournaments that I won before, it was kind of step by step since I was, like, 14. So it's okay for me.

**Q. You won the last major that was played. What does that do for you coming into the Australian Open? Does that put more pressure on you? Does it take pressure off of you?**

IGA SWIATEK: I wouldn't say it takes off pressure and I wouldn't say I have more pressure. It's kind of like the same. It's constant. It only depends on how I approach these things.

I try to, as I said before, keep my expectations low and keep doing what I did because it works, yeah.

**Q. Where is the trophy? Where have you the French Open trophy sitting?**

IGA SWIATEK: It's in the same place as any other trophy. It's in my room in my house. I mean, not my house, my dad's house. Yeah, I mean, it's not really special place. I don't have a museum with all my trophies (smiling).

**Q. After the French Open you said that you wanted to bring consistency because in the WTA sometimes that hasn't been easy to do. Is that a priority for you this season or do you think it's a bit difficult to focus on that, considering you haven't played in a long time, schedule is a bit different, not the typical season?**

IGA SWIATEK: It is a priority, but it's kind of like long-term goal. It's not that I want to be consistent right now because I know it takes, like, sometimes years to achieve that.

But, I mean, obviously I know that first tournament of the season can always be different and weird and more stressful. I'm giving myself time to be, like, back on tour this year, to fully get back to playing.

But actually I was always okay with starting the season even when I was coming back from injuries after seven months of not playing tournaments, and I played well. So I don't think it's going to be a big problem for me.

Also I don't think I'm, right now, like, I reached my highest level and I can be consistent player whole year because I'm still only 19 (smiling).

**Q. You obviously have a lot of new obligations, media attention. Have you spoken to any player, past or present, anyone who has been in this situation, that has given you any advice on how to handle this kind of stuff?**

IGA SWIATEK: Well, I didn't because I don't feel like it's a problem. It's obviously, like, different, it's more work. I'm okay with it. Actually, after French Open, even my team was pretty surprised that I handled things in a good way, I did everything right.

It's not that kind of thing that I would ask for advice because it's okay. But actually when I was practicing right now with (indiscernible), she gave me some advice, not in this matter but like overall. That was pretty nice because I feel like not many players are okay with sharing this stuff to younger players. That was really great. I really appreciate that.

**Q. When you look back at the French Open, what you achieved there, was there any one thing that was a key to how you won there? Was there a change in your mentality, a change in your game? A lot of us knew you were a very good player, but I don't think many people realized you were that good.**

IGA SWIATEK: I didn't realize that either, so... Basically there was a huge change. Actually right before the tournament I had my own doubts and I didn't know if I'm going to be ready to play my best tennis. French Open was always important for me.

Yeah, I changed my attitude because I remembered that I kind of, like, cared too much before the tournament and it was hard for me to just play and don't think about winning, just focusing on having fun on court, not all the expectations.

Mainly the thing I changed was I bring back my expectations -- sorry. I haven't had press conference in a few months (smiling).

I tried to bring back my expectations to a lower level, just having fun on court basically. The beginning of clay season wasn't easy for me. Even though I was looking forward to it, and clay is my favorite surface, I lost in Rome in first round. My confidence level wasn't on the highest one.

So, yeah, I tried to actually not care before the French Open.

**Q. Do you think you can do the same again this year, this week, at the Australian Open?**

IGA SWIATEK: Yeah, I mean, right now I'm more aware that, even though it seems really weird not to care before a tournament, sometimes it's good because you can have this distance and you can see things not like in an emotional way, you know, but more rationally.

Yeah, I'm going to try to do that, but I don't know if I can just snap a fingers and do it. We're going to see.

**Q. A question related to an earlier answer when you were asked about being in a cloud after Roland Garros. You said that's not how you would describe it. So how would you describe what it felt like returning to Poland after Roland Garros?**

IGA SWIATEK: Actually it's like the opposite of being on a cloud. I always thought after winning a Grand Slam, I don't know, I'm going to celebrate every day and just be happy about it. But it was, like, pretty hard. I felt -- it's hard to describe.

Like most of the players also need to prepare for the success, not only for the whole process of winning. I feel like maybe I didn't prepare. But we didn't also have time. Nobody ever knew that I'm going to win a Grand Slam being 19.

It was more of, like, hitting with the reality that winning a Grand Slam isn't, like - how to say - unusual experience,

it's just like winning another tournament, and now comes more work, comes all the obligation and expectation.

Yeah, it was opposite of being on a cloud.

**Q. I saw a video of you with Robert Lewandowski when you came in second with the Polish awards. And you high-five'd your statues. Can you hear me?**

IGA SWIATEK: Can you speak louder. Sorry.

**Q. I saw you with Robert Lewandowski in the awards show. What was that experience like when you came second in the awards? Did you share any words with him?**

IGA SWIATEK: Actually we tried to, but during the break of the whole ceremony when we wanted to talk, like, all the people suddenly came and they wanted to make a photo of us. We didn't get a chance to, like, talk longer.

But it was really nice, like, meeting him. Even though I was second, usually I don't like losing, I feel like he deserved it because, well, his whole career is great. He's like the most popular sports person in Poland.

I was pretty happy that I was second. I just focused on that. I was nervous of my speech. The only thing I could think about besides just being excited was if I can, like, do a speech properly because I'm not, like, really good at it. On French Open I wasn't really prepared. Right now I did a preparation, but I was improvising anyway.

Yeah, I focused on that. But it was like really amazing. He's a good role model for other people.

**Q. During the pandemic it's so tough to fly to such a place like Australia. Can you tell us was it comfortable for you to fly in? How was the quarantine in Melbourne?**

IGA SWIATEK: It was comfortable. Obviously it's a long trip here. We were traveling for, like, I don't know, 40 hours, maybe a little bit less. I got used to that.

I'm really glad that Australian Open and tournaments in Australia are first in the season because you're not so tired of traveling and you can go there. I just rested on the airplane.

Also during quarantine, I could practice and I could go out for five hours a day. I was one of the lucky ones. It was okay for me. I mean, after all the fuss that was in Poland about me, it was nice to be in another place, rest, focus on working. I didn't have a problem with that.

Obviously I sometimes needed, you know, to go out, to breathe some fresh air, but I couldn't do that. It's not a problem. I'm really glad and I really appreciate that we

have a chance to play and to do our job, to do what we love. Overall it wasn't bad for me.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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