

Sydney Tennis Classic

Sunday, 9 January 2022

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Garbine Muguruza

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome to Sydney. You have been here a few days. How are you feeling about the practice you've had?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Yeah, I came already a few days ago, actually almost a week. Well, trying to have enough days to prepare to the conditions here. Very different from Europe.

I think this is my fourth time in Sydney, so, yeah, looking forward for the start of the season. Yeah, not much to say (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. When you finish an offseason, it looked like you were having a very nice time at the resorts and the beach and all that sort of stuff, how long does it normally take you to get back into a rhythm, into a swing of being ready to play?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, how long, honestly, even if I was in the resort, I was going to the gym. I didn't show that part, just because you want to show how beautiful the beach is.

But, I mean, I never stopped training. I felt like you have to, at the same time, rest your body but you cannot stop completely, because it's like a big shock to not do anything.

So I maintained a little bit the workouts, and I think you need at least three weeks, especially if you just finished so late the year, I mean, it's pretty -- you don't have that much time anyway.

Q. So everything, as we know, was turned upside down last year, but you still had a great finish to the year with the Championships. How important is finishing the year like that, to win such a big title, coming into a new year?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, I mean, obviously a win is a win, and winning a big tournament gives you certainty, confidence, motivation. So, yeah, very looking forward to maintain or try to maintain that level and that style of playing, game style, whatever it is. Yeah, so looking forward.

Q. So you say about maintaining that level.

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Yeah.

Q. When you start a new year, do you have a different mindset each time? What have you set for this year as your main goal?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Hmm. I don't feel like every year that I start I have different goals or I start from zero. I feel like a career is a continuation and a progression. I feel like I have the same big goals I had since I started to play WTAs, which is winning the big titles, getting the titles I still don't have and all of that.

Yeah, I feel like it's just I'm continuing kind of the same year.

Q. First-round bye here at the Sydney Tennis Classic...

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Yeah, I don't want to know too much about the draw.

Q. Okay. That was going to be the question.

GARBINE MUGURUZA: I know. I can see it. I smelled it (smiling).

Q. So if you don't want to know, how do you actually prepare for a match then?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, all I have to take care of, it's me and my style of playing, my mindset. Of course I will know maybe not today but tomorrow, so it's just my way of functioning. I feel I got this routine, and I know the day before so I can prepare but not too in advance.

Q. You have been, as you have said, you have been in Sydney now a few days? What have you been doing over here, besides being at the tennis facility, practicing and training? Have you had time to get out and around Sydney? And if so, what have you done?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Hmm. Well, I have to say that I have just trained the whole week. I put a lot of hours on court with hitters, with other players. I didn't do anything

besides that (smiling).

That was the point for me to come early here and just train, train, train, and get used to -- I couldn't play in Adelaide, so I thought that coming here earlier would prepare me. That's what I did. So it's not a glamorous answer. Just trained. Yeah.

Q. Just wondering, Ash Barty has had a really strong start to the year. You have defeated her once before. How do you go about preparing facing someone in such good form if you happen to meet her here or at the Australian Open?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: I mean, yeah, she's maintaining her level in a very, you know, good way. She has great tennis, very talented player. It's always difficult to face her, whether she's not as competitive as, meaning playing every single week, but she's always a tough opponent. I will be looking forward to face her. That means that we are in a deep round of the tournament.

Q. Does the way that you finished the season, obviously in Guadalajara, did that give you more motivation, or does the season feel more exciting at all to you given that you know your form was there just a couple of months ago and just everything like that? Does it impact at all the excitement at the start of the season?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Yeah, it is exciting, because you're finishing a very good way, so you leave the court with a sweet taste. When you go back to competition, you kind of feel that, Ah, the last time I was competing I hold the trophy. It is a nice feeling which normally doesn't happen. So I think that's, yeah, the way I see it.

Q. I was talking to another coach about your season, and he was saying that one thing he thought was very clear watching you was that you were secure in your game last year, that you were playing just your style of tennis, not adjusting too much to the opponents necessarily but just being very comfortable with the way you wanted to play, very aggressive, things like that. Curious if that rings true to you? Is that how it felt last year, that you were kind of playing your tennis on your terms more often and more comfortably than maybe in previous seasons?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Hmm. I did play well. Of course you need to play well to have a good season. I felt like, yes, I played my game style. I feel like I also adapted better to the moments where I couldn't do my game style, so I adapted and find a way to stay on every single moment and never feel like it's not going my way or whatever.

You know, I think that's the confidence maybe that you

were talking about. But you cannot always do your game style. You know, there is moments where you have to adapt and you have to be open for that. I feel like last year I was very open for any tough moment. I would handle it the best way I could, and that's it.

Q. On your preseason, how much of the focus for you and Conchi during the preseason was to maintain or rediscover the level that you finished the season at, or was it to look to, you know, make improvements, make gains, you know, going into the start?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: There is always improvements, there is always things you want to improve that you felt like, yeah, the last time I played I felt this, I felt that, I think that's important here and there.

I feel like especially with everything going on, the most important part is to feel fresh, to refresh. You have to work hard and improve. But for me the offseason and the vacation/offseason was a lot in recovering from that long, tough year with the bubbles and the restrictions and some tournaments with no crowd and others with crowds.

So it was a very roller-coaster year. It takes a lot of energy. I was more focused and training and getting ready, but at the same time taking the time off to just get ready for another tough year.

Q. I just wanted to ask you, you came so close to winning the Australian Open in 2020. How do you reflect on that experience? How much motivation does that give you, knowing you were so close?

GARBINE MUGURUZA: Well, it isn't a sweet memory, that's for sure. I reflected. It was a tough tournament for me. I started in a very so-so way and managed to, every round, get better and better, and then found myself in the final. A very strange final, also.

But I have, yes, it's not a sweet memory, but it is a great tournament, and it gives you the certainty that you can play well here, and I felt a lot of support from the crowd. It was amazing, and hopefully I can win one day.

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