

# Brisbane International

Friday, 5 January 2024

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

## Aryna Sabalenka

### Press Conference



A. SABALENKA/D. Kasatkina

6-1, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Aryna, another straight-sets win. Can you assess your performance.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, it was great match. Always tough battles against Daria. Just super happy with the win tonight.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Tough semifinal against someone you know very well. How do you feel about that?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, we played some matches. It was really great battles. Yeah, she's an amazing player. I was growing watching her. It's going to be great battle. I'm really looking forward for that semifinals match.

**Q. 14 consecutive wins on Australian soil now. How long can this keep going for?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I'm trying to not focus on that. I mean, last year was an amazing result. This year we start everything over again. I'm not focusing on all those wins. I'm just trying to improve my game and show better tennis than I showed last year.

Yeah, the main focus is on myself and bringing my best tennis on each match here in Australia.

**Q. Where are those improvements coming from?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I mean, first of all, I'm working a lot on my serve. I still think there is a lot of things to improve on my serve. Secondly, after the tough match at the US Open when I lost against Coco, I tried to step in a little bit more on court, like, recognize the short approach shots, try to move forward instead of staying on the baseline.

Yeah, it's been tough pre-season. It's been a lot of work on the pre-season. As we say, hard work pay off. Hopefully it's going to pay off.

**Q. Vika is playing pretty good tennis. Is that inspirational to see, still playing at such a high level?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: That's amazing, after giving birth, come back on a high definitely. Definitely inspiring me so much. Give me belief that maybe one day I can have baby and come back and play on the high level.

Yeah, I watched a little bit of her game this week. She's playing really amazing well, serves really well. I saw today she served 16 aces, which is incredible. Seems like something amazing.

Yeah, I'm really looking forward for that semifinals match. I'm really expecting great battle.

**Q. On the mother situation, do you think Vika has been a good inspiration for the other players who are coming back now who had babies, coming back fairly quickly?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I definitely think Victoria, Serena, they really inspired other girls to have baby and come back, play on the high level. Yeah, I definitely think they inspiring so many girls, so many woman athletes.

**Q. At one stage in the first set you missed a backhand and clustered your back. Any problem there?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I just swing so hard and I hit myself with the racquet (laughter). Yeah, thanks God nothing serious happen there. I'm just strong (smiling).

**Q. Before 2023 you seemed to be hitting and missing a lot of your deep groundstrokes. In 2023 you were getting more in than out. What has been the main difference? Different breathing technique?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: No, I was just telling myself, Keep hitting, at some point you'll start hitting the right targets (laughter).

No, honestly 2022 was really tough season, really tough year for me. I was struggle a lot. I was keep reminding myself if I can get through that tough situation, I can get through anything. I take it as motivation to keep working, keep fighting for my dream.

After that season, I decided to work - not work, but just



kind of like change my approach to tennis, just let it go, don't get crazy on court, try to control myself better, don't lose myself after tough points or whatever.

Since that, I realized that it's bringing me so much control on myself and control in the game, that it's not necessary to throw the racquet. You miss the point, that's okay, just move on and try to think what can you do better in the next one.

This kind of approach really helped me in the last season. Hopefully I can improve that kind of thinking in this season.

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