

Australian Open

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Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Elina Svitolina

Press Conference



E. SVITOLINA/T. Preston

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THE MODERATOR: Elina, we missed you here last year. How does it feel to be back and get that first win under your belt?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Yeah, happy to be back. Happy winning the first round again here (smiling).

I mean, just happy with the way I started, yeah, Australian Open in general. Of course not easy at the beginning of the match, but then played quite solid, so I'm happy with the win today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Last night we saw Sabalenka play close to midnight. Many fans had left. What are your thoughts on that? Do you think slams should be introducing time limits like the WTA and ATP?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Well, it's very different, because the guys are playing best-of-five. So I guess it is how it is, you know. It's very different. As I say, some of the matches, men's can play up to five hours. Yesterday was four hours or something like this Djokovic played.

It is nice to have a night session, but of course in terms of crowd, sometimes, you know, some days can be more people; some days can be less people. But now with the one day off, I think it's quite fine. I mean, for me it would be fine.

Q. Naomi Osaka said she is not with her daughter in Australia, and Caroline Wozniacki said she is with her children. Are you with your child?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Skai is here with us. It was a long trip all the way from Europe, first New Zealand and now here.

I'm happy that I brought her with me. I had some trips without her, like, to Wimbledon, for example. To US Open, as well, she didn't come. But now since she's already one year and four months, you know, it's a little bit easier, as well, with the long flights.

Even though it was not easy for us because she got very sick the day before we left, so we had to push back the flight. And, you know, these kind of things you do now these days putting the priority of your child, it is the life like this right now.

But I'm so happy that we decided to bring her here with us. We spend so much of nice time and really enjoy time together, the weather is super nice. In Europe a little bit cold, snowing (smiling). So it's nice for her to be here, spend a lot of time in the park with my mom, with the nanny, as well. So it is nice to have her, because when you are leaving for very long time, it's difficult I think mentally.

There is plus and minus, you know, in this situation, but I feel like we made the right choice on this time.

Q. As a mother, which do you prefer, day session or night session?

ELINA SVITOLINA: I don't mind. Either way works, because if I'm playing at night I'm gonna go in the morning to see her. If I'm playing in the morning, like now, okay, Gael is going to play soon, but I'm going to see her this afternoon.

So we just have to adjust (smiling).

Q. This year the Olympics is coming, Gael's mother nation. I remember your great comeback on the bronze medal match in Tokyo 2021. Do you have a different feeling? You won 17 tour titles, but bronze medal in Olympics, something is proud as Ukrainian. And IOC decided to allow Russian and Belarusian athletes as neutral athletes. What is your feeling about that as tennis player and also Ukrainian citizen?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Yeah, for sure, and I'm really excited about the Olympics. It's going to be in Paris this time, you know, first time for me on the clay playing the Olympics there.

I didn't play the one on grass. So, you know, for a change, it's nice to have on the surface that I have been growing up.



Regarding the situation, I mean, the decision is made, you know. I think it's now up to our Olympic committee, Ukrainian committee, you know, to make a move and we are keeping a close eye on the situation. We'll see what's gonna be the next step.

Q. We can see you in Paris?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Yes, yes, for sure. Any time that I have opportunity to represent my country, I know that, you know, here and any other tournament I'm playing and I have a flag next to my name.

But, you know, when you're playing for the team, like, for example, Billie Jean King Cup, playing Olympics, these kind of events, you know, puts more, puts more like pressure but, you know, in the nice pressure to have when you're playing and your country is behind you.

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