

# Australian Open

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Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Iga Swiatek

Press Conference



I. SWIATEK/S. Kenin

7-6, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Iga, I guess when you look at the draw, you don't want to see another Grand Slam winner in the first round. How does it feel to get that one against Sonia?

IGA SWIATEK: For sure, it wasn't the easiest first round. She played really well. I tried to find my rhythm, especially in the first set. I'm happy at the end of the set I could win the most important points.

Yeah, as I said, it wasn't easy. I'm happy that I am through and I could play a little bit better in the second set.

THE MODERATOR: Go to questions.

**Q. You spoke on court about how important Ash Barty was a couple years ago. Can you touch further on how she motivated you to step up?**

IGA SWIATEK: Well, it was really annoying losing against her and playing against her because, as I said, you knew what she's going to play in terms of the tactics and the placement. She did it so well, there was nothing you could do. It really annoyed me. I wanted to get better, be able to be solid when she's playing her slices.

Even though she wasn't the tallest one, she served really well and the placement was amazing. I knew that if I'm going to be working hard, it could be possible for me.

So, yeah, she really motivated me. I never got to win against Ash. She was, like, also off court I felt like, I don't know, she has distance to everything what's going on. Yeah, for sure she felt a lot of pressure and stress. She was always, like, in her own bubble, in the zone. I really respected that.

**Q. Last year she said you two shared a love of books and would swap tips. Have you caught up with her here and do you still have that exchange of ideas, book clubs?**

IGA SWIATEK: We would swap what?

**Q. Book suggestions.**

IGA SWIATEK: Me and Ash?

**Q. Yes.**

IGA SWIATEK: I received a gift, a book, from her once. I never really recommended her anything. It was more one-sided.

Well, what was the question?

**Q. Do you catch up with her still?**

IGA SWIATEK: Not really. I mean, she has her own life. I don't even know if she wants to kind of still talk about tennis, with people from tennis.

No, I mean, I think we had couple of messages, like I congratulated her for the baby obviously. That's all. I mean, she's kind of private person, so... Me too, as well.

**Q. What was the biggest challenge today and what were the keys to solving those challenges?**

IGA SWIATEK: Well, hmmm... I mean, as I said, I felt a little bit off in terms of the timing. You could see I played a couple of frames.

For sure, the temperature was higher than any match I played this season. I needed to adjust to that. The balls were a little bit flying out of control. That's normal in these conditions.

Yeah, well, at the beginning I knew I could do a little bit more in terms of the placement. I wanted to be more aggressive. But on the other hand I was backing down a little bit. I just wanted to go forward and be proactive and have initiative. For sure when I started second set, it was a little bit easier for me to do that.

**Q. The tournament are allowing fans to move around more this year. Did you know that before you started playing? Then today, did you see it much? Did it bother you?**

IGA SWIATEK: Yeah, my psychologist told me today. It's good that my team knows because they can get me



ready for any situation.

Well, I mean, I don't mind. If the referee allows me to wait little bit when they are going down the stairs, because you never know if they're going to turn right when your opponent is tossing the ball or the other side. If the referee's going to let me wait a little bit, it's going to be fine, then I don't mind.

So I guess it's up to the chair umpire if they allow 'cause, yeah, I don't like to play when people are moving in the back behind my opponent.

**Q. Did you see it much today?**

IGA SWIATEK: I did, but they sat quickly. I mean, we waited little bit. I would say it was more than usually than when we to the changeover. We just had to repeat it couple more times when the number of games was even.

**Q. Could you elaborate from the players' perspective, if there's a lot of movement in the arena, a lot of sounds, how do you experience that as a player? What happens with your focus, with your concentration?**

IGA SWIATEK: Well, I would say, I mean, some players, they don't care. I'm pretty sensitive. I can get my focus really in the zone, but sometimes I see the movement and it annoys me a little bit.

For me it's better to wait and see where these people are going to go. Sometimes they're right behind the opponent and I can see them, but I'm trying to stay focused. It's kind of my job to do that.

It's fine. This is the audience. We are kind of playing for them. They should do whatever they want.

On the other hand, everybody knows the rules in tennis. It would be nice if they would not move maybe right before the point.

Honestly, depends on the stadium. Here the court is in the sun. The audience is in the shadow. It's really convenient. There are stadiums where you're already in the shadow but the audience is in the sun and it's more visible. Sometimes there are stadiums, they are something metallic. It's like a mirror. The sun is pretty annoying.

Here it's fine. I don't see any problems. But honestly, I played on US Open, and I think the people are so loud, they're moving a lot there. If I could focus there, I think I can focus anywhere.

**Q. Ash Barty retired at the top of her game. She's 27 years old. Would you like to see her return to the sport? Do you think she could have an impact if she**

**does?**

IGA SWIATEK: I would love to see her back on court. It's totally her decision. I don't think we can impact her. Of course, she can impact a lot of people. She's a huge inspiration. Obviously in Australia she's a role model for everybody probably.

So, yeah, of course. I mean, I totally get why she stopped. She's happy now. Let her be happy.

**Q. It was announced earlier today that Rafael Nadal is going to be an ambassador for the Saudi Tennis Foundation. Given the nation's track record on human rights, especially with women, how does that sit with you?**

IGA SWIATEK: Honestly, I didn't know that this is the case. Well, for sure I feel like it's not black and white, everything that's going on, in the sport. It's hard for me to sum up in one sentence.

There were a lot of rumors about WTA Finals going to Saudi. We're still waiting for the decision. It was always hard for me to say if it's good or not because it's not easy for women in these areas. Obviously these countries also want to change and improve politically and sociologically. It's not easy to decide.

Also in terms of many events that were held, there were rumors about sportswashing. In my case, because I have nothing to do with Rafa and his decisions, it should be up to the federations and the governing bodies who decide if we're going to play there or not. If there would be some negative backlash, they should take the responsibility.

For me it's hard to straightforwardly go one way and say anything. I didn't even know about Rafa's decision. Obviously men's sport is already there in Saudi.

I don't know if it's a good decision or not. I'm kind of trying not to be too up front. Sorry (smiling).

**Q. It looks like Danielle won the match with Kerber. She'll be your second-round opponent. You played semis here. What do you make of that matchup, coming again so early playing one of these match that you have a little bit of history with?**

IGA SWIATEK: Well, for sure I can't say that I have easy draw here. I'll try to do my best. Danielle is a really good player. We played really tight matches. On the other hand our last match was pretty -- I mean, from the score, I had it under control. We'll see.

Every match is different. I'm not going to anticipate anything. I'm just going to be ready and we'll see.

**Q. You obviously are one of the best returners in the world. A lot of people enjoyed seeing you go up against the male servers at United Cup. Did you enjoy the challenge of seeing how you fared against them, if anything you changed to try to tackle them?**

IGA SWIATEK: Honestly, I didn't have to practice a lot because I'm practicing against guys at home. I'm used to men serving to me. Maybe not that speed, because obviously at United Cup, there were top ATP players. But, yeah, it was really fun and a challenge.

I felt like I could just play without any expectations. I kind of guessed sometimes the direction that it's going to go because I couldn't wait and see from their movement. It would be too quick for me to get it.

Yeah, it was great - especially when it worked. I just could see that they were so annoyed sometimes (smiling). I'm sorry, but I really had fun.

**Q. Also in the baseline exchanges, you hit a few winners against Zverev. Did you enjoy that?**

IGA SWIATEK: Thanks. I mean, honestly if they would start moving me around, it would be much on like singles court, it would be much, much harder. I remember when I played this 10-minute practice with Rafa at Roland Garros. When he played through the middle, it was fine. Then he played one meter to my side and I was already late for everything (smiling).

In mixed doubles, it's a little bit easier.

**Q. How far through have you looked at the draw?**

IGA SWIATEK: I mean, I only know that I'm going to play Danielle. With the first round against Sofia, I think it's already a tough draw.

**Q. Interested in your perspective on an issue on the men's side. It was confirmed overnight that Alexander Zverev will face a trial in Germany of domestic violence charges. He denies that. Is it appropriate that he continues to serve on the players council while that happens or continues to play until that is resolved?**

IGA SWIATEK: Well, any answer that I give, I mean, there's no good answer to that. I think it's up to ATP what they decide. For sure it's not good when a player who's facing charges like that is kind of being promoted.

I don't know what the result of the investigation or the case is going to be. I'm also not sure what's the history in terms of the other cases that he had. I don't know if he won or lost. I guess you have to ask ATP what they want to do with that 'cause I'm not in the right position to judge.