

# Australian Open

Friday, 19 January 2024

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference



A. SABALENKA/L. Tsurenko

6-0, 6-0

THE MODERATOR: Aryna, very solid performance today. You must be pleased. Just talk us through your thoughts on the match.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I'm super happy with the level I played today. Just happy to get through this round.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. You said on court that you like to play at this level and get even better. Wondering how you can play better than that. After that, I wondered if I could get your thoughts on the late-night matches. Medvedev went very late last night and you had a latish night in your first round.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, there is always something to improve, you know. That's why you just can't be happy with the level you are at right now so you always have to keep moving, keep improving. That's why I said like "even better."

About late matches, yeah, Medvedev match finished super late, but I don't know, like, I don't know, honestly what to say. For me it's better to finish the match instead of playing, like, on the next day and next day you have another match. So I would just finish it, sleep as long as I can, and prepare for the next day.

Yeah, but the Medvedev match was super late. I don't know. Yeah, it was crazy late. I don't know if they had any options to move the match in another court or they didn't have any options, or, I don't know. Maybe they asked players if they're ready to go, if they want to go. So, yeah.

**Q. 6-Love, 6-Love today, no Rybakina, no Jabeur, no Pegula, Swiatek struggled yesterday. Is this tournament now yours to lose?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Listen, it's tennis. As we see by some of the top players losing in the earlier matches that anything can happen, so I don't want to look that far. I'm

just focusing match by match. Yeah, if I'm ready, ready to be in another one; if not, I'm not. I'm just trying to do my best and prepare myself as best I can for each match.

**Q. How much of an advantage is it to play first in the day so you know the start time, you know you can get it over and done with? Do you ever request first match on?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I usually never request. Last year I think I played almost all my matches early, so I had half day off, like, day and a half, I would say. So I can go for a good dinner. I don't know.

I prefer -- I don't know what I prefer, actually. I like to play late matches because then it's more people watching it, the atmosphere is incredible. At the same time I like to play first match because if you win you start earlier, you win and you go and do whatever you want to do (smiling).

**Q. How do you feel about your opponent not shaking hands with you after the match?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, this situation happening for a long time on tour, and I understand everyone position and I respect everyone's position. She was quite respectful. She said, Great play. She didn't shake my hand, but she was respectful to me, so I appreciate that.

**Q. Wonder if you consider yourself a perfectionist? Do you describe that as a perfect performance?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I think I have been like that when I was young. Right now, I'm not trying to be perfect. I'm trying to do my job as good as I can. I think today's performance was really, yeah, was perfection (smiling).

Yeah, I'm happy with the level I played today. I don't know. I lost my thought, you know.

But I used to be like that before. Right now I'm just, like, trying to keep it simple and not try to make it perfect, because as soon as you start trying to make it perfect, everything goes wrong. I'm trying to, like, be happy with what I have right now.

**Q. I was wondering if you watched at all last night's**



**tiebreaker between Elena and Anna.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I didn't watch live. I watched LiveScore. But I didn't watch the match.

**Q. What was your reaction watching the LiveScore?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I was like, Oh, wow, these girls are going to make the longest tiebreak in the history. I was wondering, like, how far they're gonna get.

**Q. Looking ahead, you'll play Amanda in the next round. Just your thoughts on that. And also with your progress through the first week not dropping a lot of games, kind of a perfect first week, you know, how do things reset for you as you look to the second week?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, first of all, I'm happy that she's back on tour. Secondly, we had a lot of great matches against each other, always tough battles.

I'm happy that my first week was not simple, but it wasn't, like, super long matches. Yeah, first week is past. You know, like now it's time to focus to the next week.

I'm not expecting, like, easy matches, because when you're getting to last stages of the tournaments, it's not going to be easy at all.

I'm just trying to, as I said before, prepare myself as good as I can, and so make sure I bring my best level and I compete in the high level.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports