

# Australian Open

Friday, 19 January 2024

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Amanda Anisimova

Press Conference



A. ANISIMOVA/P. Badosa

7-5, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Back into the fourth round here in Melbourne. Can you just give us your overall thoughts on your performance today?

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: Yeah, I think I played a really good match today. Really happy with how I managed and handled how I was feeling today. It was a very tough match.

Playing against Paula is obviously not easy, and it was our first time playing against each other. Yeah, I'm just really happy that I was able to get the win today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Just curious how you were feeling at the end of the first set, just what the issue was and how you managed to kind of overcome it and keep on pushing forward.**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: Yeah, I just wasn't feeling great. I was having bad stomach cramps. I just felt like I was going to throw up. So it was just like I can't step away, so it was just a tricky situation, but I think the medical time-out kind of helped me throughout the second set.

Yeah, it was a bit difficult to still play in the second set, but I was still playing well. I was just trying to take my time, so that helped.

**Q. In terms of those last few points of getting over the line in the first set, what were you trying to tell yourself? I can imagine feeling the way that you were feeling and then also just kind of what was happening in the match. It was a lot to process while you're trying to win.**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: Yeah, it's so difficult. I'm a professional athlete, so I have to get used to feeling like that for most of the time. I was just trying to accept it is what it is. She's playing very well.

I feel like that was a really long game, actually. At 6-5 I had a couple of set points. Yeah, she was just playing

really good tennis. I was just trying to stay in it and go for my shots, so...

**Q. Is it your sense that the stomach cramps were something physical? Jack Draper was talking the other day about it being stress that induced it. Was it that?**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: I mean, I'm not sure. I feel better now. Yeah, it's just one of those days, I guess.

**Q. Can I ask you just how all of this feels for you? You're into the second week of a tournament. There's going to be lots of attention with it. When you left the game and were taking a break from it, what were some of the things you really needed a break from, and are they back? How do you feel about managing them and handling them?**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: Yeah, of course, I'm going to be getting a lot of attention on social media I guess, being in the second week of a slam, but that's never really bothered me.

I've been in the second week quite a couple of times. Yeah, it doesn't really affect me much, and I don't really go on my phone all that much. I just talked to my friends and family and try and stay away from all the other stuff. I'm going to go training tomorrow and then take care of that. Then focus on my next match.

**Q. Back when you kind of announced that you were stepping away, you said that you had been pushing through for a long time and trying to just keep on playing. I'm curious what made you kind of decide that you had to stop? Was there a particular moment that you realized this wasn't going to work?**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: I wasn't really feeling great in October of 2022 I think. Around that time, like September. So it was quite a while.

It took a long time for me to make that decision. Obviously it's a big decision to step away from the game I think at any point. It doesn't matter if it's in the middle of the season or the preseason because we really never get time off.

Yeah, it just didn't seem like I would be able to push



through it because I just wasn't enjoying it, and I was just, like, I just need a break from all of this.

I was lucky that I was able to do that. So, yeah, I think it was very helpful for me, but it did take a long time to actually make that decision, yeah.

**Q. As you said, you have been in the second week of a slam many times before. How different does it feel this time? Just being able to do it in your first slam back from the break, what does that tell you about yourself as both a competitor, an athlete, and as a person?**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: I'm really proud of myself. I wasn't sure should I expect to do well because a lot of people were telling me, Don't put too much expectations on yourself. You've taken a lot of time off. Don't get too down on yourself if you don't do well at these tournaments. I kind of took that in a little bit, but I still expected a lot out of myself.

But at the same time I was going to be happy whether I lose in the first round or if I do well. So I was going in with that approach. I'm just really happy that I was able to get this far, but I still think that I can do more.

Yeah, I'm just happy working with Mark. He's been really good working with me mentally. Yeah, I think we've been doing a lot of great work, so I feel really good about it.

**Q. Does it feel different than the it last second-week runs that you've had in your career?**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: I don't know if it feels different. It's kind of all the same. The schedule is the same, the matches. It's quite similar, so there's not much of a difference. Obviously it's exciting. I was happy back then. I'm happy now. So it's kind of similar.

**Q. You mentioned it took a long time to make the decision to take a break and stop. How long did it take you to decide to come back? What was that process of coming to that decision and that conclusion like?**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: Yeah, I talked about that in my last press conference. My plan was to start training again in September to be ready for Australian Open and to start the year here. That was my plan. I was kind of playing it by ear. I was ready when September came around to start my preseason, so it all kind of worked out.

**Q. Was it the plan from the beginning when you took a break that you were --**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: I kind of had that in my head.

**Q. It wasn't something where this is indefinite, and**

**in June you were, like, I think I want to do this again.**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: I didn't have to make that decision right away. I just had that in the back of my head. Like, I'll plan on coming back in September to train.

**Q. Just in terms of playing Sabalenka next, obviously you've had very memorable Grand Slam matches against Grand Slam champions. What do you make of her as a competitor, and what happens when both your games kind of go clashing head-to-head?**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: She's an amazing competitor. She's had a great year. I know she's going to be coming in hot, playing well. So I'm expecting a really good match.

Yeah, we're both very big hitters, so it always ends up being an enjoyable match to watch and also for us to play I think. I'm just really looking forward to it. I think it will be a good experience.

**Q. You mentioned before that you're a professional athlete. I'm curious when you were away from the sport and you put the racquet down, did you still feel like a professional athlete, or did you want to kind of move away from that title I guess for that period until you picked up your racquet again?**

AMANDA ANISIMOVA: I still considered myself an athlete, and I was still going to the gym every day and staying active. It's also a big part of my identity. I expected to come back, so I definitely wasn't going to be losing that part of myself, so yeah.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports