

Australian Open

Monday, 22 January 2024

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Victoria Azarenka

Press Conference



D. YASTREMSKA/V. Azarenka

7-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Tough match today. Just talk us through your thoughts of how you played, how your opponent played, and just generally about the match.

VICTORIA AZARENKA: Not a good day for me playing-wise. I feel like, yeah, just wasn't able to really connect my game fully. I feel like I had a lot of opportunities still and just didn't take advantage of them. Yeah, a bit of a disappointing day for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. When you say that you weren't able to kind of execute your game fully, what do you think was the gap, and where did it fall short from your perspective?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: I feel like just overall today, like balls were a bit off timing-wise. Serves were really low percentage of first serve today. Tried to kind of get into the game, tried to get the energy up, and didn't work today.

So, yeah, definitely very disappointing to not be able to convert some of the opportunities to hopefully get the ball rolling a little bit better, but it happens. It's disappointing that it happened in the fourth round of a Grand Slam, but I need to definitely look at it and see what I can do better and move on. It's as simple as that.

Q. Did you have any additional pressure because the opponent was Ukrainian? How do you feel about the atmosphere of the fans?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: The atmosphere was good. I always enjoy playing in Australia. I think it was great. The stadium is always fun. I always have so much support here.

Yeah, I wish I could have played just longer here, but it wasn't meant to be.

Q. How about the pressure? Did you feel any additional pressure because the opponent is

Ukrainian?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: Next.

Q. Well, some people are saying that the draw was seemingly quite open in the top half, especially after Noskova knocked out Iga. I'm curious if there was any kind of sense of extra opportunity in this tournament for you. Did you sense that at all?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: I think so. Obviously I think there is certain amount of thinking you can put to that, but as I said in my previous press conference, every opponent that got here to this stage definitely has been playing some great tennis.

So for me it's just you have to take it one match at a time. The players who beat Iga and others, they deserved that win. They took their opportunities. They won. Congratulations to them.

I think that some of those opponents probably become a little bit more dangerous because they can be hot and cold, hot and cold. It is what it is. It's just there are eight players or whoever it's going to be after today that deserve to be there.

Q. There's been talk in the last year or two about combining the men's and women's tours. I was wondering, do you have any kind of thoughts on that issue?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: As a potential opportunity, I think that there is absolute merit to it. It makes some sort of sense. In practicality, I don't see that happening any time soon.

Q. In what sense?

VICTORIA AZARENKA: I think there is just too many moving parts.

Q. With Yastremaska, players like her, like Noskova, who can run hot and cold but do have the weaponry to be able to when they're hot, put a lot of pressure on opponents. How tricky is that to play against when you know that maybe they could drop, but if they hold that level, it's a lot of pressure for a lot of the more stable players to unwind?



VICTORIA AZARENKA: Well, yeah, it's just a matter of can they do it week in, week out. We definitely see a little bit more consistency at higher level than players like that.

But, again, for example, Noskova, she's a very young player. We've seen her play really well last year in Adelaide and then the next week it was not so great.

I think that there is for sure a learning curve for all these players there. But, yeah, I think that when you play somebody like that, you need to be able to at least bring your level there. Unfortunately, it wasn't the case for me today.

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