

# Australian Open

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Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Dayana Yastremska

Press Conference



D. YASTREMSKA/L. Noskova

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Dayana, congratulations. You're into the semifinals here. Also as a qualifier, a bit of a first since 1978 to do it here in Australia. Just talk about your thoughts and what you're feeling right now.

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: Yes, thank you. As I said on court, it's nice to make a history. It's something new for me and for my generation (smiling) because the last time it happened it was a long time ago. I wasn't born yet. It's nice. I'm really happy to be in my first semifinals. I was a little bit nervous, but at the same time tired.

I think I was a little bit too emotional. Today before my match I got angry at the practice of my coach (smiling). But that's fine, because I could put my emotions away.

Yeah, another step is done.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. When you were going through qualifying, the early stages, did you think this would have been possible to go this far?**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: I didn't think about it. I came here, and I was just focusing on playing each match, on improving. I was working on some things that is a little bit, like, personal, you know. It was more associating with my head and with the way I feel on court. I wasn't really putting the goal, you know, to go quarters, fourth round, semis or whatever. I was just trying to enjoy playing here.

**Q. You said you were obviously nervous and had to get a lot of the emotions out before the match. During the match you seemed pretty under control in terms of what we could see, anyway, in terms of how you managed the game. Could you talk just tactically about how you played today's match and what you think the key was between you and Linda.**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: I will say I didn't have, like, a huge tactic for today. The most important thing was for me is to keep the energy up, because I had, like, a lot of

matches here already and played a lot of sets.

You know, you feel the tiredness, and it's normal. The main goal was just to keep the energy up and stay positive, even if I was doing sometimes stupid mistakes.

I try not to get angry on myself, because I understood why it's happening. Yeah, just, I don't know, there wasn't a huge plan.

**Q. On the qualifying, you played three tough three-set matches against lower-ranked players. I'm curious how you felt then, how you managed to get out of your head, and what the difference is between then and now playing against top players and winning in straight sets to reach a Slam semi?**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: The difference between the last match three sets and today's match, right?

**Q. When you were in qualifying, when you were playing against players ranked 200 and now you're in a Slam semifinal.**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: Yeah, I'm not really looking up the ranking of the players who I'm playing, because I think it's not so important, ranking. The girls, you know, at any ranking can show amazing game.

I was doing just my thing and focusing on myself, the way I play. I think that's working (smiling).

**Q. Can you talk to us about what you wrote on the camera and what that means to you.**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: If you understood what I wrote, it was about the Ukrainian fighters, that I'm very proud of them. They really deserve a huge respect. I always try to write something for Ukraine, about Ukraine.

I think it's my mission here. If I do well, I can get -- tough to express. I'm just trying to give the signal to Ukraine that I'm really proud of it.

**Q. Just on the Ukraine issue, I think one of the junior Ukrainian players shook hands with her Russian opponent at the end of her match. I was wondering how you feel about that.**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: You know, Ukrainians, we have our position. We are not shaking the hands. But I think she's still a little bit young. Not so experienced. It can happen with everyone, you know.

I cannot judge her, because I don't know what was in her head. So did she made this in purpose or not in purpose, I don't know. But I'm sure that she stand by Ukraine, and I'm sure that she just got too emotional and confused (smiling).

**Q. You spoke really beautifully about your mother on court, and it's common obviously that a lot of parents would sacrifice a lot to travel with their children. How much more difficult has it been for your mother, given what's going on back home, to be juggling all of this?**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: Before, my parents were traveling with me a lot. Then there was some period when I was traveling alone, and that didn't really work out (smiling).

I think I had a period where I wanted to feel a bit older, more responsible, and doing things just by myself. But I think in tennis it's important to have family close to you. When the war started, I was traveling half year just with my sister, and my parents were at home. It was pretty hard, because you also are responsible for your younger sister.

Last year before the Roland Garros, my mother and father, they left Ukraine, they came for a couple days to Paris to see us, and then my mother, with younger sister, they left to South of France where she was living and practicing, because she was also playing tennis.

My father was in Ukraine or sometimes he came to see us. So only from last year my mother started again to travel with me for some tournaments. I think it's really nice, because before, I always wanted to be by myself, alone, you know, and now we have, like, better relationship than before, and we can spend a lot of time behind the court together. We can go walk and do many things. I think that it really helps when there is someone from the family with you.

**Q. Your coach is French?**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: I have two coaches.

**Q. What is your connection with France, my country? Remember the story with the tournament of Lyon a few years ago? Special, France, for you?**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: Well, in Lyon, it was the first tournament when the war started. I haven't practiced it before because there was a massive attack, and we had to think about other things. When we left with sister

there, France met us really nice, very warm, and, you know, I think I was overemotion there. And the way I played and how I get into the finals, to be honest, I don't know how I made this, but it was a tough moment.

I mean, I like France. I love it. It's really nice there during the summer, spring, it's warm and nice conditions to practice. But I still prefer my home (smiling). I wish I could get there more often.

**Q. I remember in 2020 especially you had so much stuff going on, putting out music, doing photo shoots, all sorts of stuff. You were very busy. Curious if you still have all those other outside interests as well or if things have simplified around just more tennis focus lately?**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: You know, there is many things that I like to do (smiling). I like singing, yes, but I will say it's a little bit past. But in February I hope that one new song will come out. It's not just mine. It's gonna be three of us, three different countries, that we, you know, got together and we made a nice song. I'm not going to talk much about it. You're going to hear it soon, I hope.

I like modeling, I like fashion, I like philosophy, and I like many things to do. But I don't have much time for it.

**Q. It's obviously your first semifinal of a Grand Slam. The whole place is quite different in the second week, with not as many people around. Is it an unusual experience for you behind the scenes too as well as on the court?**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: I don't know. For me it feels same. I don't know why. Feels very comfortable and feels like at home.

I had already experience at Wimbledon when I get to the second week, but I lost fourth round there, so I couldn't really feel it, you know, how is it.

And here you're tough focus on the matches, on the process, on the routines, that the time goes like this (clicking fingers) pretty fast.

You don't have much time to, you know, analyze how is it and how it feels, but for sure when everything is going to be done here, then I will have a lot of time to think about it, how I felt and the emotions I had.

So for now, I'm enjoying to be here in the second week.

**Q. In your last press conference, you talked about how tough the last three years have been at times. Wondering what the challenge was of coming back after you were clear to play again following the provisional ban and what the challenge was of**

**regaining your form and regaining the tennis and getting back to the level I'm sure you wanted to play at.**

DAYANA YASTREMSKA: The challenge... I need to think. It's a good question. I didn't ask myself that question, to be honest.

You know, I think that I have a dream since I'm a child, and that's what was moving me forward no matter what happens. I had a lot of difficult situations, and I don't want to talk about it right now. Maybe some other time I can explain it, and the story will sound completely differently.

But for now I can say is that I just, I don't know, I relaxed. I don't have much to say. Just relaxed, and I try to enjoy what I'm doing.

As I said last time, I was putting a lot of pressure on myself, responsibility. Now I just took it everything out of my bag, and I'm trying to enjoy it.

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