

# Roland Garros

Saturday, 26 September 2020

Paris, France

## Serena Williams

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Happy birthday.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I generally try to forget this day. I generally don't celebrate birthdays.

**Q. When you were a teenager, did you still think you'd be playing at the age of 39? Do you feel fit enough to carry on into your fifth decade?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I honestly never thought I would be playing at my age. I mean, I don't quite look 39. But yeah I don't know when it's going to stop for me. I just have fun. When I feel it's over, it's over.

But I could have guaranteed and pretty much bet my life that I would not have been playing at 39. This is why I don't bet (smiling).

**Q. You talked in the U.S. about your own personal health, reasons why you had to be careful during this pandemic. How difficult a decision was it for you to come to Europe? What were the reasons why you made that decision?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I love it here. Obviously I feel like I'm so close to doing better, just playing better. Honestly, I just need to keep playing matches and keep playing people.

For me, it was really important to do everything that I could to just create my own personal bubble, just to stay in it, a travel bubble, like everything that I can possibly do we kind of do. It works. It definitely beats staying at home.

**Q. I know you have an apartment in the city. Presumably you're not allowed to stay there. Has it been a bit unusual staying in a hotel when you have your own home very close by?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, it's very different and weird.

(Loss of Teams stream.)

SERENA WILLIAMS: You guys went out? Can you hear me?



**ROLAND-GARROS**

**Q. I'll ask the question again. You obviously have an apartment in Paris, but you're having to stay at a hotel. I was wondering if it's a bit weird staying in a hotel when you have a home nearby?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: It's definitely weird. This has always been my home away from home. I always loved being here. It has been really different for me staying at an apartment when I'm like, Oh, this is what we normally do.

I guess it's a must.

**Q. I see you didn't really play tune-up events prior to Roland Garros. What was your preparation like from the US Open to now?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I didn't play any tune-ups, which is really rare. But this whole year has been really rare.

After New York I flew to France and I've just been training at Patrick's academy, mostly rehabbing, trying to be, yeah, ready. So that was basically what it was, rehab and training.

**Q. We saw you were suffering an Achilles problem in New York. How is that?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I'm here. I wouldn't be playing if I didn't think I could perform. I'm not at 100% physically. But I don't know any athlete that ever plays physically when they're feeling perfect. That's just something I think as athletes we have to play with.

**Q. It kind of seems like it's a dark time. There's a little bit of maybe fatigue or something around the tour. What are you doing to stay positive? In your opinion, is it important to have some positivity in order for you to put your best foot forward?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I'm in general just a happy, positive person, so... I think just having those different personalities help. For me, anything can happen, as we've seen this year. Nothing is guaranteed. You just have to be really excited about each moment that life gives you because you don't know if it's going to be your last personally, so...

**Q. I saw a video of you last week where you said for anyone else, a semifinal would be amazing, but for**



... when all is said, we're done.®

**you, you're Serena Williams, so people don't say that. How do you see it? Are you able to take positives out of winning five matches, forcing an opponent to play at their best tennis? Given that your standards are so high, is that not sufficient?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think a semifinal is always great. Is it great for me? Absolutely not. That's just how I feel. That's how I always feel. It is what it is.

I'm happy that I can feel that way. And really there was nothing I could do. Yeah, there was nothing I could do in the end. It was what it was. I mean, I'm in a position in my career where I cannot be satisfied. I don't want to sit here and say, Oh, I'm happy. Because I'm not.

**Q. You're looking to equal Margaret Court's record. Lewis Hamilton is also looking to equal the record of Michael Schumacher. You know each other very well. Lewis has spoken highly of you recently. What do you think of Lewis, his achievements, also his relentless campaigning recently against injustice?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Well, I'm a little surprised that Lewis just spoke highly of me (laughter). Lewis and I are super close. I've known him for years. I love that guy. He's a really good friend of mine. The guy is such a champion. Has such a champion's mindset. I look at what he does training, physically, his job, it's really no words for it, to be honest.

He is for me the greatest driver that our generation has seen. I'm confident that he will break the record of Michael Schumacher, who was also a fabulous driver.

But Lewis is so intense. If you know anything, even if you're a fan, you know he lives his life on his sleeve. He's very emotional. He says what he says. That's just who he is. He doesn't care who you are. That's one thing I've grown to really appreciate about him, as well.

**Q. Are you excited about the new roof on Chatrier? How do you feel about the cool conditions in Paris right now?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I hate the cold. I'm from L.A. and I live in Florida. For half my life I've never seen snow. Cold weather and me do not mix. That's my Achilles' heel (laughter).

But I'm dealing with it. I'm having a positive attitude about it.

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