

# Roland Garros

Wednesday, 30 September 2020

Paris, France

## Serena Williams

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We have Serena in the room. Do you want to start saying anything or we go straight into questions?

SERENA WILLIAMS: No, we can go straight into questions.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

#### **Q. When did you know that you weren't going to be able to play today?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: After I warmed up, and it was a very short warmup, and then afterwards I talked to my coach and I was, like, What do you think? What are your thoughts with this?

So we kind of both thought about it, and we really realized that it more than likely wasn't the best for me to try to play today, so...

#### **Q. Firstly, what is the nature of the injury? Secondly, you have often told us that Paris is one of your favorite cities in the world. Why do you think it's important that Roland Garros takes place this year and why did you give the tournament your personal commitment that you wanted to play at Roland Garros this year?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I love playing in Paris. I actually adore the clay. It's so, I don't know, fun for me. I really wanted to give an effort here.

So it's my Achilles that didn't have enough time to properly heal after the Open. I was able to get it somewhat better, but just looking long term in this tournament will I be able to get through enough matches. And so for me I don't think I could, I'm struggling to walk, so that's kind of a telltale sign that I should try to recover.

#### **Q. Did you have a sense in your first-round match that this was going to be a struggle for you?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, definitely my first-round match, in the second set I just -- I felt like I needed to, like, walk with a limp, and that was no good. I was, like, Ah... I had to focus on walking straight so I wasn't limping. I tried, you know, I always give 100%, and



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everyone knows that, and maybe even more than 100, if that's possible.

I take solace in that. So I think Achilles is a real injury that you don't want to play with, because that is not good if it gets worse. I think it's one of the worst. So I don't want it to get to that point, where I actually have a chance to get better.

#### **Q. How long do you think it will take you to recover from it? Is this the end of your year?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think I need four to six weeks of sitting and doing nothing, at least two weeks of just sitting down, and then from after that two weeks I have been told that I need to start doing a little training.

So I think I'm going to call it more than likely. I don't know, doing the math on that, I don't know if I'll be able to play another tournament this year. I'm definitely going to take that first initial two weeks of just nothing, and then start from the next two weeks, and then from that I will get a little bit better. But it will give me a lot of time to fully recover for the future.

#### **Q. How would you describe that your spirit is willing and your body is just not letting you do what your spirit wants to do in that you're now facing more sitting after a year when you did far too much sitting because of the shutdown?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I feel like my body is willing. I just -- I just literally, this is not a nagging injury. This is an acute injury. So if it was my knee, that would be more really devastating for me. But this is something that just happened, and it's super acute. That's totally different.

I feel like my body is actually doing really, really well. I just ran into, for lack of a better word, bad timing and bad luck, really, in New York.

So it happened, but my body is actually doing really, really well, and I can never do too much sitting, because I have been working for over 20-something years.

#### **Q. You're one of the greatest tennis players in the world. You have achieved everything. At this stage in your career, what continues to inspire and motivate you to play the game at the highest level?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I love playing tennis obviously. I love competing. I love being out here. It's my job. It's

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been my job.

And I'm pretty good at it still, so until I feel that I'm not good at it, then I'll be, like, Okay.

And I'm so close to some things, so I feel like I'm almost there. I think that's what keeps me going.

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