

Roland Garros

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Paris, France

Iga Swiatek

Press Conference



ROLAND-GARROS

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What's the best thing that's happened to you since you won Roland Garros?

IGA SWIATEK: Oh, the best thing? It's hard to say, but since I won or since I came here, sorry? Since I won?

Well, for sure finding a balance after few weeks that were really, really hard for me, because after I won Roland Garros, you know, everybody started treating me differently. My life changed totally. Finding a balance and really being able to enjoy the victory after such a, you know, chaotic time, it was really, really nice.

Actually, also, you know, coming back to the same shape I had during Roland Garros and winning two titles, that was amazing for me, because I'm still, you know, not sure if I'm gonna be consistent for the rest of my career. This shows that I can actually perform well not only once but I can repeat it. So that's the most important thing for me.

Q. You were suggesting your life has changed dramatically in the last year or so. Wonder what you think about Naomi Osaka's comments about press conferences where you're suddenly such a big star. Do you find the press conference experience difficult and do you think at times it affects your mental health?

IGA SWIATEK: I don't. I personally feel that this is part of the job. And of course, you know, talking to press after we lost, it's not the most enjoyable thing to do. But it's good to find the balance and find the distance to all of that.

You know, as soon as I don't have so many media obligations, I'm okay with it, but I think it's just important to have people around you who are going to be that kind of wall that's gonna separate you from, I don't know, hate or something.

It's good to be aware of that, but for sure, you know, sometimes we are in the spotlight and everybody is looking at us. It may be hard, but I feel like with proper kind of support and with distance and, you know, with balance it's, you know, part of the job.

I feel that media is really important as well because they are giving us, you are giving us a platform to, you know, talk about our lives and our perspective. And it's also important because not everybody is a professional athlete and not everybody knows what we are dealing with on court. It's good to speak about that.

We have like two ways to do that: media and social media. It's good to use both of these platforms and to educate people actually, because, you know, as I said, not everybody knows what's our perspective, and we actually have a chance to say what's our perspective and sometimes explain, so I think it's good.

Q. I have two questions for you. First one is about this year you set a strategy and focus on bigger tournaments, so you have played only Rome and Madrid. Considering you were coming from a title, do you think is successful idea? Do you intend to repeat it next year? And the second one...

THE MODERATOR: We will go with one question and see if we have time for the second one.

IGA SWIATEK: You know, actually, that part of the strategy is actually, my coach is responsible for that, and I think he's doing a great job with all of the planning and my calendar.

Yeah, the beginning of the year I was, you know, asking myself maybe it's a good idea to play smaller tournaments, just to feel the confidence, and feel that you can actually win. Because, you know, at the end for many players you only have one winner in tennis, and losing semifinal and final, it's obviously great that you were on that stage, but still, you are losing the last match (smiling).

But then I was talking to my coach about that, and to my team, and they said that from their perspective it's better to focus on bigger tournaments, as you said. Yeah, it's going pretty well, because I feel like I'm progressing. I'm playing, you know, against top-10 players more often, and I can actually get more experience and, you know, learn, because that's the most important thing for me right now, to learn and to be in as many situations on court as possible so I can have more experience later.

Q. I'm asking players about superstitions. I wonder, do you have any superstitions before you go onto a court or whatever? And I wonder, as well, does your

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psychologist encourage that?

IGA SWIATEK: I don't have any superstitions. And, no, I mean, she's against that, because, you know, there are some situations when you kind of do some stuff that you have done before and suddenly you're going to be all nervous and it's just not necessary. When you have a chance to avoid that it's better, but I like to keep my routines.

I think there is a difference between superstition and routines. I'm big fan of routines, because I like to listen to the same music before I enter the court, but it's not like if I'm gonna eat different kind of eggs and breakfast everything is gonna be bad (smiling).

It's good to have distance to this stuff and just keep your routines, because it's really important in sports.

Q. Dominic Thiem was telling us that after he won the US Open he kind of had achieved his life goal and he fell into a hole motivation-wise. What did it do to you to win the French Open at such a young age, especially in respect to your motivation?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, I think we have, we were in different positions because he was on tour for a longer time, and last year was actually my second year on tour. In my case, I think it was all like more chaotic, because Dominic actually played some finals of Grand Slams before he won. For me, it was totally new experience and nobody was expecting that.

So for me the harder part was actually, you know, learning how to deal with business side of sport and, you know, dealing with all the new obligations that I have and new responsibilities. But as soon as I learned how to do that it was much, much better. That's why the first few weeks were really, really hard for me, and then it became easier, because I just had to learn how to deal with that, as any other thing. When something is new for you, you're not as confident as you would like to be.

So, yeah, for sure when I started the season I felt like it's a little bit overwhelming for me, but then after Australian Open and after Adelaide, I found my rhythm in all of that, so it was good.

Q. Following up on the talk of Daria, your psychologist, you were saying, you have often said how crucial she has been to your success. I'm wondering, has she imparted any particular advice as you prepare to defend a major for the first time?

IGA SWIATEK: You know, we are just focusing on treating this tournament the same as any other, because that's the most important thing. You know, the season is long, and I have played many tournaments until that stage, and I'm gonna have many more chances after. So

I'm just trying to, you know, lower my expectations and remember that from the experience of other players it's not easy to be a defending champion, so I'm giving myself time.

She's encouraging me to do that and explaining that it's a good way to approach stuff, because, yeah, it may be really, really stressful, but I just want to be the same competitor as any other girl. Yeah.

Q. Welcome back to Paris. Can you just talk about your opening-round match? What was your reaction to seeing that draw? Does that make anything about your first match back at Roland Garros, is it more complicated now? What do you take from the match you guys played in February? All that stuff.

IGA SWIATEK: Yeah, it's not easy to play against your best friend. It wasn't like nice to see that, because one of us is going to lose.

But, you know, we know each other's game pretty well, so I think the most important thing is gonna be to really be prepared in terms of tactics. For sure that match in February is giving me more confidence.

I'm just trying to, as well, find a distance to that. We are friends, but on court everybody is equal. I am actually good at, you know, forgetting that I'm playing against my best friend and just, you know, just playing tennis and just hitting the ball. I don't know what's philosophy on that, but yeah, I'm just ready, and I'm looking forward to that match.

Of course it's going to be tricky because it's first round. It's first match as defending champion and against Kaja. I just want to keep my routines and focus on little things. It gave me good results earlier, so hopefully it's gonna be the same.

Q. Many times you have said you're a big fan of Rafa Nadal. Have you ever talked to him about defending the trophy in Paris? Have you ever consulted with him about any tennis question?

IGA SWIATEK: No, not yet. Maybe we're gonna have a chance to do that later, but we just had like a quick small talk last year, and yesterday he said hi to me. For now I'm too overwhelmed to even say hi. So, you know, I'm a big fan of his, and if I'm gonna have a chance to, you know, ask him some stuff and also learn from him, it would be great, but we are both busy, so I know it's gonna be hard to schedule that.

But, yeah, we're gonna see.

Q. My question was actually about Rafa, as well. You're turning 20 on Monday, I believe. I think he celebrates his birthday during Roland Garros, as

well. There was the coincidence of you guys saving match points in Rome and winning that title. Your fandom of him, have you ever thought about these things, about the kind of weird connections that you guys have or don't have?

IGA SWIATEK: Well, I thought about it, but I also think it's kind of weird. I don't know. I don't know what to say, because it's also some kind of superstition when you look at that stuff and try to compare each other.

But, yeah, I know it's weird (smiling).

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