

Roland Garros

Friday, 4 June 2021

Paris, France

Elena Rybakina

Press Conference

E. RYBAKINA/E. Vesnina

6-1, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. That was very convincing today. Given the year that you have had, it's been quite difficult to find that consistency. How important was this to pass the third round of a major for the first time?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yes, it was important for me because I didn't start the year so good. After Australia I had many problems like health problems and was not going my way.

Now I'm just feeling better, and I'm trying to find my rhythm. I feel that with every match it's just getting better.

Q. You had that amazing run in 2020 to begin your year where you reached the four finals. Then the pandemic hit that completely derailed your momentum. How difficult have you found that to rediscover that form and that consistency since?

ELENA RYBAKINA: I mean, it was tough time for everybody. Of course after lockdowns last year, it was difficult to start again good. Actually, I felt much better in the beginning of this year, also first tournament in Abu Dhabi. I was feeling good, I was playing well.

I did also great preparation, and I was unlucky being in this hard lockdown in Australia which completely changed everything, I can say, because I lost this time preparation and everything. After, I had some issues with the health. Was not easy at all, but finally now I'm feeling much better.

Also, before this tournament I didn't play, like, three weeks. I rested a bit and I practiced, so I think it was a good decision.

Now I'm just trying to find this game today. I was serving well, and slowly, slowly, I'm feeling better on court.

Q. From your opinion, how has your level been through the first three matches this week?



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Obviously you're winning, but are you happy with how you're playing?

ELENA RYBAKINA: There is moments which I don't like, like, for example today of course I dropped concentration, and the only like really good thing for me it was the serve. Maybe just one game was not that great, but still the whole match I was serving really good. I think it was like 12 aces.

But also today was different conditions because it was colder. It was raining in the morning. So the ball is flying different, bouncing different. It's also not easy to adapt.

Also, it depends on my opponents, also how I feel on court how to adapt to every player, so I think for now I played really well all these three matches.

Q. Just going back to what you were discussing before about the hard lockdown in Australia, really kind of ruining your preseason preparation and maybe momentum and confidence, can you talk a little bit more about that? What exactly did you feel you lost because of the hard lockdown?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Of course comparing last year I didn't play that much matches. For me, it's really difficult to find this momentum. I need to feel good, to be healthy.

Of course mentally it was also not easy and still not easy to be in the bubble every time, but the main issues I had, it's like health problems mostly. But now it's much better, so, yeah, we see how it goes (smiling).

Q. When you and Stefano were talking about the season and trying to get momentum, what were the key things you guys kept talking about to stay positive, to not get too down about results and things like that?

ELENA RYBAKINA: Yeah, of course to stay positive, to keep practicing, improving, because if you improve in practices, for sure it's going to show on the matches.

So, I mean, it was just not easy for me even get good practices, because I didn't feel well. So it was difficult to practice to manage all the things.

Yeah, it's just most important to improve, to improve your game, and then of course the results will come.



Q. Looking ahead, you'll play either Serena or Danielle Collins. Can you just talk about what you might anticipate, or I guess the challenge of playing Serena and the challenge of playing Danielle?

ELENA RYBAKINA: I never played both. Of course I would like to play with Serena.

But for me, doesn't really matter because I will go on court, I will try to do my best, to fight. Of course the goal is to win, so I'm going to do everything possible. Will fight.

They are both big hitters. It's gonna be not easy, for sure.

Q. Why do you want to play Serena?

ELENA RYBAKINA: The legend of the sport. Of course I want to be with her on the court, to feel this power and everything. I was watching her matches when I was growing up, and it will be nice to play with Serena. Why not (smiling)?

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