

Roland Garros

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Paris, France

Anastasia

Pavlyuchenkova

Press Conference

A. PAVLYUCHENKOVA/E. Rybakina

6-7, 6-2, 9-7

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What does this moment mean to you? Has it even sunk in yet?

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: Yeah, I'm a bit out of emotions right now. I guess I need a little bit more time. Probably later tonight I'll realize that. I mean, yeah, very happy with the win. It was unreal match today.

Q. Going into the semifinal, this has been a very big match that you have played today, a long, tough match and you're in a semifinal. What do you do now to stay at that level and maybe not dip a bit? I appreciate you've got a lot of experience behind you with years on the tour, but when it's still something new, there is that risk. How do you maintain that level and not dip?

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: Yeah, well, normal, because I try to take it as another match that I won in this tournament, and I'm not going to change any routines. So tomorrow I'm just gonna go do my cooldown, treatment, and tomorrow I've got a doubles to play with Elena, so we gonna warm up together and play normal doubles, and nothing's going to change for me.

Yeah, it's good for me to keep on sort of moving, working. It's not good to just stop and rest, yeah.

Q. Can you just talk through the match itself? Obviously she started off very well, and you seemed to be able to reel her back in over the course of the match. Just talk to that and then the third set as well, seeing your lead kind of slip and get it in the end.

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: Yeah. The way she started, it didn't surprise me because obviously I have watched her matches before, the previous match, and we practiced a lot. So I kind of expected it could happen, like she would just serve bombs and play hard, so I'd be,



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like, no chance there.

But then, yeah, the only thing you can do is hang in there. That's what I did. I believed in my chances. I believed in my game overall. You know, I know I'm a fighter, so I will fight till the end. Yeah, that's what I did.

The third set, 2-0 up serving, yeah, I slowed down a little bit there. I don't know if maybe she played a little bit more loose there as well, combination of both. I was rushing a little bit.

Q. I hear that some players or some coaches saying that maybe you are too nice or too humble to win a big title. But as you said, you showed that you are quite fighter. So do you think that like being very nice and being fighter, competitor, can co-exist?

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: No, I hide it really well. I mean, I'm nice to people but I'm not nice at all (smiling). No, I mean, obviously I'm respectful. I've got education from my parents, and I'm very respectful to people in general. That's why I turn out to be very nice. Unfortunately most of the time people don't have education on tour to be nice to people and say hello, but that's all.

When I'm on the court, I'm doing my job and I fight, and I want to kill my opponent every time I play (smiling). So that's the difference.

I think I have always had the game. I have always played good. It's just my mental wasn't there. I wasn't fit enough and mentally maybe not strong enough, where I'm working on this aspect, working with a sports psychologist now quite recent, and already I feel like it's starting to pay off.

Q. After the match, it looked like you wrote "Meow" on the camera lens. Some people think it's a message to your cat. Others think it might be a nickname. Some are saying because right now you feel unbeatable, just like a cat with nine lives. What's the real answer?

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: That's amazing, guys. It has to be so boring, like I have to say, Oh, my God, I'm so happy or thank you to my parents. I just wrote "Meow," because I don't even have cats. I don't like cats. So I wrote "Meow," because that's how I talk. I use it a lot in my conversations. It's like a playful way.

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I'm, like, Meow, see you later. Meow.

So I have a tattoo on my leg. Like, guys, come on, be a little bit open minded. I just sometimes don't know what to even write on the camera. So I just came up with "Meow."

Q. I would like to know how do you explain the fact, I remember one year ago you had more than 32 wins against top 10 but you were never a top 10. That was quite strange. How do you explain it? You have the quality, the ability to beat top-10 players, but for some reason you never reach the top 10.

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: I think you are on mute right now.

Q. I notice that the first quarterfinals you reached, it was 2011 and it was Roland Garros, so this is the perfect place for you, I guess?

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: I don't know if it's a perfect place. I just like clay. To be honest with you, like, I don't know how to answer that question to you why I was never top 10. Maybe because I wasn't ready to be top 10 before.

Now, again, I repeat like I'm working on my mentality. Now recently started to do that, and hopefully it's gonna help me to achieve my goals.

Q. Do you think your appreciation for this accomplishment is maybe greater because of how close you have come in the past and not been able to get past the singles quarterfinals?

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: I actually have always wanted to be in the semifinals so much before that I think I have achieved it now and I'm sort of, like, neutral reaction. Of course I'm happy, but I feel like I'm doing my work, I'm doing my job, and there is still matches to go through, still work to be done.

So I just look at this like that. Trying to enjoy this moment as much as I can but not giving so much importance as well right now. Just, yeah, take in the present and enjoy this moment now and then see.

Q. How do you go into the match against Zidasek? What are your thoughts, playing the semifinal against her? What do you have to do besides win the last point?

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: Yeah, I really don't know yet. I will start thinking about it probably after my doubles match tomorrow.

Right now, just trying to recover as much as I can from this match, and then, yeah, I'll prepare for my next match

probably later tomorrow.

Q. Reuniting with your brother as your coach, and then also as you said right now starting to work with a sports psychologist relatively recently, I'm curious how those two decisions do you think play into this result this week? I know it's not as easy to say "cause and effect," but those are two pretty significant changes that have happened in the last few months. Curious how you see that.

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: Yeah, like I have been putting a lot of work in, and I really, really wanted the results so badly, like since the clay court season started, but I didn't expect that it would come sort of so quick, because I have already had right away the good run in Madrid and now it's here, you know, my best result so far at a Grand Slam.

Definitely everything helps, for sure. And also my brother, even now we were talking a bit, he teach me how to play smarter, to read the game, which I actually like sometimes don't read the game well.

So that also helps, of course. So, yeah, just those few things sort of, yeah. Right now just I care about my body. I hope I'm like trying to hang in there and be in the best shape possible for my next match.

Q. Going back a little bit, you talked about wanting these big results, but was there a point in your career where you felt there was a ceiling between you and the top-top levels of the game? Was there a point where you felt resigned to that? Or is that something you were always trying to break through and then maybe that's what led to these changes and these decisions?

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: Yeah, sorry, what's the question exactly?

Q. Was there ever a point in the middle of your career, last few years, where you felt like the gap between you and the top players was maybe too big? Was that something that you maybe felt resigned with or comfortable with and just was happy to maybe be a top-20, top-30 player? Or was that something that was just kind of a constant source of frustration that led you to these decisions?

ANASTASIA PAVLYUCHENKOVA: Yeah, absolutely. Even beginning of this year I have had very tough draws and lost Australian Open to Naomi. Was quite easy match, 6-2, 6-1. I felt like I have no chance.

Doha, Dubai, like big tournaments against big players. I didn't feel like -- okay, you know what? It always sucks to lose, but if you're feeling, Okay, it's very close match and I almost had it, it's tough. But it's like you feel, Okay,

it's fine. Next time.

But this time I felt like, Okay, I was really far. Then it makes you think, like, are you really -- I'm not there at this level? Like, What am I doing? So you question yourself a lot. So, yeah.

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