

Roland Garros

Tuesday, 6 June 2023

Paris, France

Karolina Muchova

Press Conference

K. MUCHOVA/A. Pavlyuchenkova

7-5, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Karolina, congratulations. First Roland Garros semifinal. Just talk about the match today and how you were pleased with your performance.

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Thank you very much. Yeah, I think today I played great from the start of both sets, and that for sure helped. Nastia was playing very aggressive and maybe here and there I would say pretty risky, and was going to the court and then here and there there was few mistakes that helped me, and as well I started well the sets and then I finished them well, as well.

Yeah, I'm pleased about that and great that I won in two sets.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. When you have had your runs to the semifinals of Australian Open, quarterfinals of Wimbledon, felt like you got there and kind of were a bit physically gassed in a few of those runs. How are you feeling physically as you head into your first Roland Garros semifinal?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: When I compare it to those before, I feel great now. I think that I played last few matches were just two sets, that for sure helped to save some energy. Yeah, now I have a day off tomorrow.

So I feel pretty good.

Q. Do you feel like you're a different player on this surface this year? The numbers seem to say that you are. You have a 9-2 record, reached your first Roland Garros second week now, and then all the way to the semifinals. Is there something different happening for you on this surface?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, I think year by year at least I'm trying to be a better player on all the surfaces. This year I had a great tournament in Rome. Before I had a great preparation. Here I started well and with matches I gained some confidence. Of course now I'm feeling better on clay.



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Q. As well as being a great tennis player, I know you like to sing, to play the guitar. So I would like to ask, are you any good? When you are on the tennis court, how do you make sure you hit all the right notes and you don't panic and fret?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: If I'm good playing on guitar? No, I think I can play a few chords. You know, with guitar, if you know, I don't know, five to seven chords you can play almost all the songs. So I for sure enjoy it. Yeah, it's a hobby for me.

Yeah, I just like it. It's nice, I think.

Q. And hitting all the right notes on the court, how do you do that?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I don't think I hit right notes all the time, but yeah, just trying to play my game and play the shot I think at that moment is the right one and going with that (smiling).

Q. You had a pretty crazy draw here starting your tournament against Maria Sakkari. I just wonder if you thought now in retrospect having such an important match in the first round, such a tough opponent, has actually helped you get into this tournament?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I think overall it helped. To beat such a great player, top-10 player, it always helps. It was really tough because it was the first round, and first rounds are always tricky. And to play Maria in the first, I think it was tough draw for both of us.

Glad that I was the one who left the court as the winner.

Q. Just speaking to a lot of commentators and pundits, everybody loves obviously watching you play and the variety and the way that you kind of play your game on the court. It seems a little bit of a throwback, kind of the style of play, serve and volley, all that sort of stuff. Can you talk about the foundations of that game, like did you look up to a player and want to play like that? Or was it purely, this is how you like to play? Did a coach teach it to you? Can you just talk about how you came to play this way?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah. Thank you. I think it



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was always a little bit like inside of me, like since I was a kid I was very, I liked the great game in everything. I was very competitive, and I liked different things.

Even though if we look back on videos when I was really young, you would still find me going to the net and playing dropshots. So it was, I would say, always there.

Of course then later when I was a little older I was looking up to Roger Federer. I think I'm repeating myself a little bit. But, yeah, I liked his aggressive game and coming to the net and slices. For sure I took something from that and from other players, as well.

Yeah, and now we just, I like that game, and then we tried to work on it to make it better. So yeah, it works on big stages and against great players. So, yeah, I think there are still a lot of space for improvement in that, as well.

Q. You always look really calm and composed, but what happens in your head when you win a point or lose a point? What happens during the match in your head?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: You want to hear like after every point (smiling)? I mean, I am pretty calm. I am calm even outside of tennis.

But on the court, even though I lose the point, I try to forget that actually and focus on another point in my head to build another point in my head. So that's what I'm trying to do after most of the points.

Q. You will make a big step after this tournament in the ranking. Where do you see yourself in the future? Where is the limit? Do you see yourself as a top-10 player?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I don't really think about these things, like where I see myself. I'm really glad for this run, and that I got my ranking a little bit better than it was. I mean, end of last year I was I think around 200, so this is very nice. It will for sure help me coming into other tournaments with the seeding and all (tournaments).

But, yeah, I mean, sky is the limit, you know. But I'm not really thinking like I can be No. 1, I can be No. 5. I just take it step by step, and I'm really glad where I am now. I'll try to push my limits for sure. And who knows where the limits are.

Q. I think earlier in the tournament you were talking about kind of reuniting with your old coach and that you guys were trying to, yeah, tap into the creativity of your game and kind of refine that. I'm curious, because players who are like that that have so many different options and so many different things, some of them try to put discipline on that to try and, you

know, make sure you're doing it in disciplined ways, and others are trying to kind of change their intuition so that they make the right shot, if that makes sense. How do you see that, and how have you and your coach approached that with respect to elevating your game?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah, you know, my coach is very, how to say it, we always communicate a lot about practices and we make plans together. It's not like he would really tell me to play this or that. So he always leave that on me.

For sure we are trying to get the focus better, and that's what I talked after the last match too, to take the first options, even though here and there it's not the best choice. That's why there is always a second and third, and then I pick it and, you know, it's not the best shot.

So we are just trying to play this in the practices, just to be focused on the point and go with the first thought. It's tough to work on this, but discipline for sure helps, to have discipline as well, like everywhere, and then to put it on the court, yeah, that I could for sure be better disciplined (smiling). Yeah, we're working on it.

Q. Aryna Sabalenka is currently serving for a straight-sets win against Elina Svitolina. Wonder your thoughts about potentially facing her in the semifinals. I think you met in 2019. What are your overall impressions of what she's been able to do this season?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, I don't have any thoughts. I didn't know the score until you said it now. Yeah, what can I say? She's very, very great player. Very aggressive. Tough match ahead. I'll try to do my best to, yeah, to find a way how to make it complicated for her.

Q. Because you're so calm, I have to ask, does this feel like a big deal, making the Roland Garros semifinals, or is this just, I don't know, is this just one additional step to your tournament? How are you kind of feeling it and approaching it?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I'm really, really happy with the semifinals, so it's not like I'm just, you know, like whatever. It's really great result for me, so I appreciate it a lot.

Of course I'm still in the tournament, so I'm trying to, you know, focus on another match, and the tournament starts here. So that's probably why I'm, yeah, look calm or however you would call it. But I'm super, super pleased with the way this tournament is going.

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