

Roland Garros

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Paris, France

Karolina Muchova

Press Conference

I. SWIATEK/K. Muchova

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THE MODERATOR: Karolina, obviously a tough result today but an incredible run you've had through this tournament. What were your emotions playing out there in your first Grand Slam final today?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Thank you very much. Yeah, no, the feeling is a little bitter, because I felt it was very close, a close match. But overall, I mean, to call myself Grand Slam finalist, it's amazing achievement, and for sure big motivation for me to work in the future and to get a chance again to play for these big titles.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. Congrats on a great tournament. What do you think was the difference in this match ultimately?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: The difference, well, you could see the difference in the first set and a half, I think. I felt I was little slow, I would say, and Iga, obviously she usually has these great starts to the matches, I would say. When she's on a roll, it's tough to break in.

But I was trying to continue to change the rhythms and to get her out of the rhythm, and then in the second set, with the one break that I managed there, I came alive a little bit.

I felt that then in the third set the difference was not so big. We both had chances. Yeah, I didn't use them as well as she did.

Q. You mentioned that she can get on a roll and she had never lost a set in a semifinal before. What did you learn about trying to stop that momentum and hang with her when she's playing at such a high level?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, I think as well when I play, when I play slices and try to break the rhythm, it takes a while, I would say, for other player to get out of the rhythm.

So I think that mine would be that. I just stepped in and I



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played more aggressive. I think that worked. Yeah, I could see that she was a little bit struggling, a little bit more tense and as well start to do some mistakes.

Yeah, then I took the chances in the second set, and I was, I felt like, the momentum went a bit on my side and I started well in the third set as well.

Yeah, I mean, she's the World No. 1. I had to still push more and more. Yeah, it was very close.

Q. It's been quite emotional after the game. Can you tell us a little bit the feelings you had and what Chris Evert said to you?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, she said really kind words to me. Yeah, I probably will not even say that. I don't know if she would want me to tell it to you, so I'll keep that for myself.

Yeah, obviously when you finish this whole two weeks, I'm pretty exhausted, I have to say. Then everyone is clapping for you, yeah, it was a lot of emotional there.

Q. How different was this match to any other match you played before? Did it feel very, very different? Did you feel more nervous than you otherwise might playing in a first Grand Slam final?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I actually didn't feel that nervous. No, not really. I mean, I tried to be focused. I knew I played for the big thing, but I didn't kind of let it go to myself. Yeah, I just tried to play as I always do, as if I would play first round or the final.

Obviously I knew it's a final, but I was not really nervous on the court.

Q. Thanks for taking us on a really exciting journey over the last few weeks here. At the start of Roland Garros, how much belief did you have that you could get to a final? Now you've had the experience, how much belief have you got that you can get to another final?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Thank you. Well, I always believe when I go to the Grand Slam, but yeah, you know, I believed in every Grand Slam I played before and I've never played final. So the belief is there, but that I actually achieved it, it's a very nice and warm feeling for me.

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Yeah, it's good for the confidence. It's good for kind of, it says to me that I'm able to do this, to do this big results. It's very motivational, and now I feel I can do it and I will for sure try to get there again and to put up a fight for the title on the next stages.

Q. Having achieved this on clay, I just wonder how much confidence will that give you for other surfaces, and especially going on to Wimbledon where you have a really good record.

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah. I wouldn't expect it that much on the clay, honestly. I look forward to playing on the grass, on the fast surfaces, that's for sure the surfaces I prefer and I like more. So yeah, I look forward to that, that I played a final on the clay. It's just nice to know that I can play on the clay great as well.

Yeah, this was my last clay tournament. It could have end up a little bit better, but it was still pretty great. I look forward to play now on the grass (smiling).

Q. Congratulations on a great tournament. I just wondered, obviously for you, for every player, winning a Grand Slam is what you dream of, what you're hungry for. I just wonder after today's experience, getting so close to it, does that make you even hungrier to actually taste it?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, I think this is pretty soon after the match. I still didn't kind of like soak it up. But yeah, it's very, it's a big motivation, now that I know that, you know, Iga is World No. 1 and I was so close. I think now that I can do it. Obviously I know it's not like, you know, just like that (snapping fingers). It's a lot of work and effort to do, but I'm willing to take that.

Yeah, I'll try my best in other two slams this year and next year, and I hope I will again get a chance to play for the title again (smiling).

Q. It's a huge effort on your part to get to this final, and that must be very satisfying in one sense, but obviously there is disappointment at the moment. Do you think in a few weeks you'll look back on this as a very big positive for you when you consider all you have been through with the injuries and what happened here last year and the good aspects of what you have done?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Yeah. Yeah, I mean, it's not in a few weeks I look at it. Even now obviously I'm a little sad, but even now I can look at this tournament. You know, I gave my everything on the court today, so I have nothing to regret or however to say that.

Yeah, I -- sorry, I lost... I don't know what I'm saying. Sorry. Blackout (smiling).

Q. Congratulations on your run.

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Thank you.

Q. A tough question: If you could summarize these two weeks in just one word or one phrase, what would that be?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Special.

Q. Because?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, because I played a final of a Grand Slam for the first time, so it's pretty special to me.

Q. I just want to ask you, going back to the match itself, there were two points in the third set where you were obviously a break up, 2-Love and 4-3, I wonder what was going through your mind at that point, was any of it, Crikey, I've just got to hold serve twice here and I can win the French Open? Did that go through your head or were you laser-focused on the specifics?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: I didn't have in my head like, yeah, I play two games and I can win a slam. I was aware of or I wanted to put a good serve, first serves especially in to help me to get a fast points.

Then it didn't work that well as I planned it but I guess we'll to say that Iga then stepped in and she played unbelievable games on the returns and didn't miss a point, didn't give me any easy point or anything.

So it was tough, yeah, but I wanted to -- the thing there, I wanted to focus on the serve, and I didn't, I don't think now I put many first serves in, and that was a little bit, yeah, what I tried to change there, but it didn't happen.

Q. Just looking ahead, obviously you were playing a lot of maybe more tournaments than you would have liked to because you were trying to get your ranking up and be seeded at slams. You have taken care of that. But with the grass right now, do you feel like you need an ice bath for three weeks and then go play Wimbledon? Do you feel like you want to get back on to the court immediately and play? Kind of where is your head at with respect to that?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: My head now is I need some rest, for sure, to take care of the body. You know, between clay and grass, we don't have much time. I actually supposed to play in two days in Netherlands tournament, but I'm not going to play that one.

I want to do, for sure, good preparation. It's so different, the grass, for the body and everything. So I'll see about

a plan. I didn't plan it yet, but maybe one tournament and then Wimbledon. I don't think I'll be able to play two and the Wimbledon, but the main focus is obviously Wimbledon. We'll see if I manage to play one grass tournament or if I will not play any and will just go for the slam (smiling).

Q. You hadn't played Iga in four years in a match. I know you have practiced with her, but what does it feel like to play her in the style that she brings, which I imagine was somewhat different than it was in 2019?

KAROLINA MUCHOVA: Well, actually, we didn't practice, I don't know, year and a half together or maybe two, so I didn't really play with her a long time. But to play against her, you have to be ready. The balls are coming fast. She's not doing any easy mistakes, and you always know that you have a chance and you have to take it, because maybe there is no other chance.

Yeah, that's why she's World No. 1 and you have to bring your best performance to be able to beat her.

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