

# National Bank Open

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Marina Stakusic

Press Conference



M. STAKUSIC/E. Andreeva

6-7, 6-1, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Who would like the first question for Marina?

**Q. You've had some big ones over the last year, I think back to Billie Jean King Cup, but how does this compare being at a WTA 1000 event in your hometown in front of a crowd like that?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: Yeah, I'm obviously very happy. Playing in front of the home crowd here, it was really special, it was nice to have all the support from everybody. I'm just very happy that I was able to pull through today.

**Q. After the first set you were able to regroup. Curious, you had that conversation with Rob on the sidelines, what kind of advice did he give you at that point?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: He was just kind of telling me to think of it as a practice and just work on the things that we were working on leading up to this tournament. Yeah, I don't know, it was kind of hard to hear him. I'm blanking out completely now. He told me to just trust my shots and, yeah, just believe that I can do it.

**Q. What were you kind of telling yourself in the roller coaster of emotions in that third set as it played out? It seems seemed like sometimes you were exasperated, then you locked back in, and then were frustrated. How did you kind of manage how you were feeling as the scoreline was ticking the way that it was?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: I was just trying to tell myself to keep fighting, to keep pushing, and make the most of this opportunity that I got. Yeah, I know I let out some frustrations at times, but I tried to, just as quickly as possible, get back to being focused and ready for the next point.

**Q. How did you feel coming into the match today? Was it a tough night getting to sleep last night, was there some nerves as you approached this moment, or were you feeling pretty calm about it overall?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: I actually had a great night's sleep last night (laughing). I woke up nice and refreshed. Yeah, obviously I was a little bit nervous, like as every other tournament, but I was really excited to play here on center court. I'm happy that a lot of people came out to watch and, yeah...

**Q. Do you know who you're playing in the next round?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: Yes.

**Q. Tell us, what do you know about Taylor Townsend and what you're going to have to bring for that match tomorrow?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: I think the only thing I know is that she's a lefty. I don't know anything else about her (laughing). That's a question for Rob, probably. But, yeah, I know she's going to be a great, a tough opponent, and anybody here is good, so it's definitely going to be another battle tomorrow.

**Q. You've had another tough three-setter earlier this year at the San Diego Open against Donna Vekic. How did a match like that kind of help you in a match like today where you had to obviously go the distance in order to get the win?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: Yeah, I mean, that was also another good match. Now she's doing really well, so it definitely gave me confidence coming into today, knowing that I was neck and neck with her, someone who got a medal at the Olympics. Yeah, I mean, I learned a lot from that match and I'm glad I was able to do what I did today here.

**Q. I want to ask you about the Billie Jean King Cup ceremony last night and what it was like to have that experience here in front of the home crowd, and what do you think of the bling and where are you keeping that ring? Where is the safe spot to put that aside?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: Yeah, I mean, it was really nice of



Tennis Canada to organize that for us. Yeah, being on the court with the team again, it was nice to all be back together again, and have the crowd there as we walked on the court, it was really nice.

I'm probably going to just keep that somewhere in my room in the nice little box that they gave (laughing). It's actually a really nice ring, like up close, but I'll probably never wear it just because I don't want to, like, potentially drop it or something, so it will just sit in my room nicely.

**Q. Could you talk about your partnership with Rob Steckley and give us some insight into how the team dynamics are working out.**

MARINA STAKUSIC: I mean, I really like working with Rob. He's got a lot of experience. He's been on the tour for awhile now. Yeah, we work really well together. We get along. We have similar personalities, same kind of humor. When we're on court we both work really hard and, yeah, it's been really fun so far working with him.

**Q. A doubles match coming up today. Curious, getting the win in singles, does it take off any pressure for this upcoming match, and have you and Rebecca played before together?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: No, we haven't played together before. Yeah, I guess it does take a little bit of the pressure off, for sure. Yeah, it's going to be fun going out there with her this afternoon.

**Q. What's it like when you take to the court with someone that you've never played with before as a partner, how is that going to work out?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: I mean, it's going to be fun I think. I know Rebecca pretty well. Yeah, she has a great serve, hopefully that's going to help me at the net (laughing). Yeah, I mean, with her, I've known her for a few years now so it's going to be fun, for sure.

**Q. You took the medical timeout. What were you feeling and how are you feeling now?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: I mean, I'm feeling okay now. I still haven't gone to the physio. I had to shower, eat, and stuff (laughing), so I'm going to see how it is after. Yeah, I didn't have much time to go and check it out after the match.

**Q. You do visualization. Just wondering, I'm sure you kind of thought about this moment before, playing in your hometown, how did the reality kind of match the dream?**

MARINA STAKUSIC: I mean, yeah, it was really nice today to, especially after when I got the win, to see everybody cheering. It's something that I for sure saw myself doing, especially leading up to this tournament. Yeah, I mean, it was amazing just to have the support from everybody and to be in position today. It was amazing.

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