

National Bank Open

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Naomi Osaka

Press Conference



E. MERTENS/N. Osaka

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Who has the first question for Naomi?

Q. Obviously you've returned to working with Wim Fissette, and you guys have been working with each other and have had good success over the years. Curious what makes this partnership so special, because obviously when you chose to return to the tour you wanted to team up with him once again.

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah, I think for me, like trust is a really big thing. I take a while to get to know someone, and, I don't know, I like the way he coaches. I like the way he lets me think by myself sometimes and then gives his inputs, I call them suggestions (smiling), because I don't do them 100 percent all the time, but, yeah, I think we have a really good chemistry.

Q. She's a tough opponent especially when she digs in from that baseline. Curious how you kind of saw the match today and what was the difference do you think for you?

NAOMI OSAKA: I think, honestly, I feel I could have put a little bit of, a little bit more into the ground strokes. I think I got a little bit caught up in being consistent and being, I guess, in the rallies. I think, I don't know, it's tough because playing against her, you don't necessarily hit winners right away, you have to open up the court, and I feel like I kind of got into the rhythm of potentially not hitting winners and, yeah, I maybe started playing her game a bit more, but not too mad at it, actually.

Q. I'm curious what your plans are, I guess, from here through the US Open.

NAOMI OSAKA: Well, I'm playing Cincy, and then I guess there's no other tournament.

Q. So you are playing Cincy, that was my roundabout

way of asking it.

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah.

Q. What happened in your last service game? It was like your back was against the wall, it was like you suddenly went into beast mode and you won, like she didn't get a point.

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah, that should have happened the entire match (laughing). You know, I feel like for me, the process of the match, like towards the end of the second set, I finally figured it out, and then I just felt like I ran out of time, like if we played more, like maybe if we played another set, I think I would have, like it would have been mine. But I don't know, I feel like I haven't played that many matches this year, while playing the most amount of tournaments I've ever played in my life.

I think I'm figuring things out constantly. I had a really long talk with my team just now and everyone's pretty positive. I'm pretty happy with how much I fought today, even though I didn't win, but I feel like I definitely learned a lot, so...

Q. When you look at your play, you realize that you're still, I guess, well, coming back, I'm a man, so obviously I have no idea what it looks like to recover from pregnancy physically, physiologically, emotionally, but when you see the brilliant sparks and the way that you've dominated, like even the last match yesterday, you came out and you dominated right from the start, you realize that you're going to be back, back up in the No. 10, like the No. 199 ranking means nothing.

NAOMI OSAKA: Is that a question or a statement?

Q. I'm asking, like, you can see that that's coming?

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah, I mean, you know what, shoot for the stars, yeah (laughing). I, unfortunately, have always suffered from, like, perfectionism and I doubt myself a lot, but I think going through this process and having really tough losses that I've learned a lot about myself and I learned that I really love this game and am willing to do whatever it takes to get to where I feel like I deserve to be.



I know there's going to be a lot more tough losses, but hopefully, yeah, hopefully I'll be back in the top 10.

Q. Wanted to touch on, you said you had a nice long talk with your team. I mean, I won't ask necessarily the exact nature of that conversation, but you said a lot of positives to take away. What are some of the positives maybe you take away from this tournament to build on for Cincinnati and then the US Open?

NAOMI OSAKA: Some of the positives I take away from this tournament? Well, Canadians are lovely (laughing). Everyone was so nice, and it was such a great atmosphere to play on that court. I haven't, you know, been here in a while, so just to be playing a night match, it felt like I was getting ready for the US Open, like Arthur Ashe, so it was nice just to experience that.

I think playing Ons the other day and playing Mertens today, I played two really quality opponents, they were both quite different, but I'm hoping that I'm able to establish my game and grow more confidence in that. I think the hard court for me is where I feel the most comfortable, and honestly, I had a lot of fun.

Q. This whole week we talked about obviously your love of the hard courts, but I'm curious because you also played like a pretty big schedule this year, playing on clay and playing on grass. How much is motivating in this second phase of your career to kind of show that you have the game to thrive on those other surfaces as well?

NAOMI OSAKA: You know, that Iga match did wonders for my confidence, I'm not going to lie. I'm optimistically looking forward to clay next year.

Grass, I'm looking at it from a distance (laughing), but I'm willing to learn, I'm going to watch a lot of tapes of Serena. That's kind of a next-year thing. I think for me now I'm really focusing on US Open, Asia, that's kind of the areas that I thrive, so I'm, I don't know, looking forward to it.

Q. You mentioned your love for Canadians. Wondering if there was a specific moment in the time that you were here of whether it was on the court or off the court that you think will really stand out in your memory.

NAOMI OSAKA: Honestly, yesterday I was saying some things in my post-match interview, and I was saying, I don't even remember too well, but like how my life has had like ups and downs and, like everyone, just trying to do their best to get through it the best way that they can. After that I was signing autographs and a mom came up to me and

she said that she's been having a really tough time, but she came out to watch the match, and the words that I said really encouraged her. So, for me, I remember that quite vividly. Then also just having so many little kids out there supporting me and, yeah, it means a lot.

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