

# National Bank Open

Friday, August 9, 2024

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Diana Shnaider

### Press Conference



D. SHNAIDER/C. Gauff

6-4, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Diana, congratulations, what a great match from you. What was your game plan and how did you think you did today?

DIANA SHNAIDER: Well, I think I did very good job today from the mental side and keeping the focus during the whole match. It was a little bit tough with the wind today, but we need to adjust to conditions, so I think I did a great job today adjusting to conditions, adjusting to Coco's game. Just playing first time on center court I was also a little bit nervous, but very proud of myself and how the match went today for me.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

**Q. In terms of the milestones that you hit tonight, first top-10 win, first WTA 1000 quarterfinal, you mentioned a few others as well, what is the one that is most meaningful to you from tonight?**

DIANA SHNAIDER: I think my first top-5 win is like one of the milestones. I had a few matches that I lost in three sets, but they were close, so it was very important for me today.

For sure making the quarters of a 1000 event is also a milestone for me. I'm very happy with this season and how the game was today going for me.

Coco is a very experienced player, she had a very good season last year on the hard courts events, so, yeah, just great win for me, and I hope I will just keep it up.

**Q. Playing against Coco can be challenging, so how did you prepare yourself mentally for this match?**

DIANA SHNAIDER: I just went today and I was like, I will just try my best today, and I will keep it cool with my emotions, just there is no any minutes or seconds to waste it on any negative thoughts. I just went there and I was

like, Okay, I will just keep fighting for every ball, and if it will go my way it will go my way, I just will work for it and fight for it. If Coco play better today than me, then she will need to earn it and win me, so it's like she need to beat me today. I just tried my best to stay focused for every point, and if I have a chance I will go for it. If no, then I knew it was going to be close match, so I was preparing myself for a three-setter today, honestly.

**Q. In your game do you think the mental preparation is as important as technical and physical preparation?**

DIANA SHNAIDER: I think, yes, it is very important. I think it's like a puzzle, if something you are missing, you're not going to be feeling and playing great today, so for sure it's coming up together.

**Q. Coco was in here and she was talking about somehow she felt you were playing really steady tennis throughout the match, you were really making her hit a lot of balls, and she was making a lot of unforced errors. Was there something in particular that you felt you were doing really well tonight or you were particularly targeting with Coco's game that you felt you were able to take advantage of throughout the match?**

DIANA SHNAIDER: I think I was honestly very surprised how I was putting a lot of balls in. I mean, I know Coco is very physically prepared for everyone on tour, and she's running very well, she's covering all of the balls and all the angles on the court. So when there were long rallies and I was winning them I was like, Wow, I just beat Coco in long rallies. I am good today, okay (laughing). I mean, I tried to play it cool, but inside I was like, Yes, I made it.

So, yeah, I feel like, I mean, I noted that Coco had a lot of unforced errors today, so I really tried my best to keep long rallies as much as I can, and also not to do a lot of unforced errors. So if she will made a winner, so, good job, she made a winner, and it's nothing else I can do. I was trying my best to keep long rallies, and if I have any moment that I can be aggressive I tried to use it.

**Q. You've had an incredible summer and a really incredible season to begin with, with your first three titles. Is there something in particular that you feel like**



**has clicked for you in your game this season, is there something that you think you're doing really, really well when you're competing at a higher level now than you were maybe a couple years ago?**

DIANA SHNAIDER: I think it's all coming just from a bit of experience. I missed a couple high-level tournaments last year because I was in college, but this year I'm playing a full year in professional tour, so, yeah, it's coming with all of the experience to playing against players like Coco and competing more in events like here and Grand Slams.

I think for sure it's, as I said, like a puzzle, it's coming all together, and then you actually will not notice it, but then it clicks and you're just like, Okay, I'm here and we can go for more.

**Q. You said earlier on the court that this was your first win here, so, and then coming from Olympics you also did win a silver medal in doubles. I'm curious to know, at what point today in your game did you see your momentum shift and that you could take the thing, and what are the things that you're going to take from this game for your next tournament?**

DIANA SHNAIDER: I don't think I noticed like shifting while I was on the court playing. I just knew that Coco can fight back any time, so I just tried to keep focus and keep my game at the same level. I saw that Coco was a little bit frustrated with the game and how it was going, so I just tried to stay in that moment and to push it even more.

But until the end, until I won I was very focused. I knew that anything could happen on that match.

**Q. Looking back on this year, how do you sum it up? There's still a few months to go, so there's a lot more that you can do, but three titles, a silver medal, all this sort of stuff, how do you sum up what has happened with your tennis this year?**

DIANA SHNAIDER: I mean, it's amazing (laughing). I mean, it's been a wonderful season and I'm very excited for the upcoming tournaments. After my first title I was like, Okay, I won, like, my goal is to have a second title this year. I already achieved it, but, you know, for sure I'm hungry for more.

I've been playing one of the greatest seasons so far, and it's a nice feeling, but I think it's a lot of things that I still can improve, and I will be working on them with the coaches, with my team. It's definitely a long road to go, but I feel like I'm on the right way and I will push it forward.

**Q. Are you a player who has had to struggle with self**

**belief and believing that you could be top 30, top 20, top 10, and where is your belief right now, is it still weird to see the number next to your name, or are you used to it now and you see yourself even higher?**

DIANA SHNAIDER: I think, yeah, I think every step for me was like, Wow, I'm here, it's honestly like a disbelief. When I was like 100, I was like, Oh, my God. I was surrounded by all of these top players, it was something new to me coming from juniors. Then top 70, top 50 this year, it was very fast, and now it's like top 30.

Today, beating Coco, I mean, honestly, I was going on the court, and I was like, I mean, I will try my best, but I'm playing against Coco on hard courts, so, I mean, it's okay, we will see how it will all go, coming from clay courts, but I will do my best, I will fight, and we will see how it will go. But I'm very proud of myself, I hope I will just keep working on my belief a little bit more in myself, in my game and how I'm playing, how I'm competing, and, yeah, it's still a little bit missing piece in my puzzle.

**Q. I was wondering if you could talk about your college tennis career and did that help you become who you are now, can you just talk about that.**

DIANA SHNAIDER: I think for sure it helped me so much, because while I was in college I didn't think about anything except tennis, except my game, how I can progress, where I can shift something to play better. It was a year where I was, my target was only tennis.

I mean, for sure I was going for, like visiting all of the lectures, and I was playing still in college, but there was just nothing else in my mind, just playing, improving. Playing a lot of matches for sure helped me to get in the good shape and to see that what I'm capable of.

**Q. I was curious what you made of that college experience, because a lot of players who go through that system talk about the match toughness, the grit that they have. What are some of your takeaways from, I guess, competing, yes, on your own, but also you're competing with a team at the same time.**

DIANA SHNAIDER: Yeah, it gives you some good pressure when you have a team, fighting for the team, but also at the same time you're fighting for yourself to kind of give the team a point. I feel like now when I'm playing for myself in these tough moments with the pressure, it definitely reminds me how I was handling that pressure while I was in college playing for the team, because it's a little bit more pressure. When you have a team it's different mixed feelings, but it was great experience. I'm very glad that I made the decision to go there, it was very

exciting, and I had so many supporting people, from USA, from college, my teammates, coaches there, they're supporting me, so I'm very glad and enjoyed every moment there.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports....

