

Omnium Banque Nationale

Monday, 28 July 2025

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Ariana Arseneault

Press Conference

N. OSAKA/A. Arseneault

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THE MODERATOR: Just talk us through your experience of playing on Centre Court here in front of Canadian fans today.

ARIANA ARSENEAULT: I mean, yeah, it was my first time playing on Centre Court here or Toronto. I played on Grandstand last year making the quarters of the doubles, but my second time playing singles at the National Bank Open event. First time in Montreal.

It was a great experience. The fans were awesome, as always. I love a home crowd. Yeah, and then playing against Naomi, you know, a four-time Grand Slam champion, was a surreal experience. A lot to learn from. A lot to take from it. Just a great experience overall.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English, please.

Q. Further to that, what was your initial reaction when you saw you would be facing Naomi, and what was she to you when you were younger and you watched her?

ARIANA ARSENEAULT: Yeah, I mean, coming into here, obviously I got into the draw last second for my qualifying. When I was able to qualify, I feel like I deserve to be in the main draw, so I had a lot of confidence coming in.

Then seeing that I was playing Osaka, first initial reaction was just excitement, I think. I think the nerves came along after, but first initial was excitement. You know, playing a champion like her, I knew it was going to be an incredible experience, a lot to learn from at the end of it. Just the beginning of my career, so yeah.

Q. You talked about the nerves when you saw that you're going to play against Osaka, but during the match, were you nervous?

ARIANA ARSENEAULT: No, I don't think so. I think I was stressed because it was my first time on Centre Court. I kind of, like, wanted to focus on myself, not do anything



wrong, you know, take in all the moments.

I don't think I was nervous about who was on the other side of the court of me. It was more just taking every moment, do what I can that's in my control. I think I prepared well mentally for that.

Q. Playing a player like Naomi, you coming from the (indiscernible) ranks. What do you think separates you from players like her? What do you think you need to work on to get to that level eventually?

ARIANA ARSENEAULT: Yeah, I mean, I've been on tour for about a year now. I did four years in the NCAA, graduated from Auburn University. Definitely a different experience from the pro tour.

Again, I've been playing a lot of more ITF events. Not many WTA. So I'm still, you know, making my way up, learning a lot.

I think just working on staying aggressive, you know, building my game to simplify it and working on my powerhouse, you know, my serve, my returns, everything that works for me in matches. So I think I'm definitely getting there, getting the experience, and I'm excited for the next tournaments to come.

Q. Just a follow-up on that, were you surprised or taken aback by her precision, especially along the lines and on the deep balls? She was ultra precise most of the match.

ARIANA ARSENEAULT: Yeah, it was definitely a difference in all the matches I've played and playing against her. It was good to see the depth on her balls, the power, but then it's also nice to see that I'm able to stay in those matches and figure out ways and use my variety in my game to break them down sometimes.

But it was good to see the difference in the tournaments I have been playing and college as well.

Q. I was wondering if you talked to your brother yesterday after the game, and what did you tell him? What did he tell you before your match?

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ARIANA ARSENEAULT: Yeah. So my brother -- before my first qualifying match, we FaceTime every time before just kind of like -- we kind of just yell at each other through the phone and motivate each other, you know, saying like, You can do it, lock in. I think he was really hyped about the fact that I was able to qualify and be in the main draw with him.

Then before his match, we had the same little FaceTime. Then once he won his match, he was, like, You know, it's your turn, lock in like I locked in, it's your turn now. It's definitely a surreal moment for the family, both having first main draw Masters 1000s for both of us. My parents are definitely thrilled.

Again, it's only up from here.

Q. We were actually here in the same exact room a couple of months ago. I think you remember.

ARIANA ARSENEAULT: Yep.

Q. How does it feel now to be, one, in a real press conference playing against Osaka here in Montreal in a 1000 event? How does it feel?

ARIANA ARSENEAULT: Yeah, I mean, like you said, we were here in March, I believe. I was playing the 15K here in Montreal. Yeah, I mean, being here in a main draw, the experience is amazing.

I mean, the progress that I'm making, all the matches that I'm playing, all the hiccups that I'm overcoming, it's part of the road, it's part of the experience. I'm grateful for the experience and for what's to come.

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