

US OPEN

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Barbora Strykova

Press Conference

K. KANEPI/B. Strycova

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THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. A couple years ago you talked about your big farewell being at Wimbledon. A bit of a longer farewell tour. What does it mean to be back here?

BARBORA STRYKOVA: It's not actually true. I said it's going to be, like, a farewell of many tournaments. I will be finishing at the US Open. But the most important one would be the Wimbledon, which happened that we won, which is great.

But, yeah, this was my last match ever, like professional one. I don't know my feeling yet. Is that all right (smiling)? We finished, like, 30 minutes ago.

First of all, I enjoyed it a lot. I didn't have a good preparation coming here because of injuries and I didn't really feel well, I didn't hit the ball well. I was kind of, like, nervous if it's going to be like really bad, what I should expect.

I really enjoyed myself. It was a good match. Kaia is a great player. We know each other. We are both very old. Yeah, I just have to say that I had fun, even though it was my last match. I wanted to have fun.

Q. Did it feel like your last match?

BARBORA STRYKOVA: It didn't because I felt this more during Wimbledon and also the tournament in Prague. So coming here was more about enjoying myself on court, enjoying the city, enjoying the family around me.

So, yeah, I cried after because, I mean, Marketa came for the whole match, Andy came. There were some friends who obviously made me cry after.

But I had strong emotions in Wimbledon, yeah. So it didn't really feel like my last match because we still have the



doubles, still the mixed, yeah.

Q. In terms of enjoying it and soaking in the experience, you were laughing and crying.

BARBORA STRYKOVA: Yeah, I was like at my son, I was crying, at the same time I was laughing. I didn't want to cry because it was kind of a happy moment, even though I lost the match.

But the emotion takes over you. You kind of like realizing, Wow, it's really my last match here. I won't be coming back here ever. Maybe like a spectator, but...

Yeah, it was both, but more I felt like I'm happy, yeah.

Q. In terms of looking back, I don't know if you're going to write a book...

BARBORA STRYKOVA: I had so many, people asked me already. If I write a book, the whole WTA will be...

I'm joking (laughter).

Q. In terms of what your story is, if you can encapsulate it from deciding to play tennis, pursuing it, what do you think is the nugget?

BARBORA STRYKOVA: I had many obstacles during my career, but I wasn't sure if I want to really come back after giving birth. I am so happy that I kind of decided to do so because I didn't miss tennis at all. I didn't want to come back because I was missing it, I just wanted to come back because I was feeling like I need to close this chapter from my side. I feel like the tennis, I need it, and also my tennis needs that. I did it. It was challenging, and it is still challenging.

I am happy that I'm done. I love tennis. It's a great sport. Also I love my life without it. I have so many things what I want to do, what I did, with my son what I want.

I can't wait to come back to my life without tennis. Maybe I will one day write a book about a lot of things, yeah (smiling).

Q. You've seen other players retire. Did seeing other players retire prepare you for how it is for yourself or



something you couldn't be compared...

BARBORA STRYCOVA: I don't think you will be prepared. I'm so okay with it. I'm okay to be done. I'm fine. I mean, somebody is having a tough time to leave the sport, which is normal. I think I had a little advantage that I was already away for three years and I know how it is. I know what it's like to live a life, like normal life, not in a bubble, in a tennis bubble.

For some players can be very challenging to live a life without tennis. But for me was fine. Also I think it's very important to have a good people around you who kind of navigate you through life without tennis because it can be tough.

Q. For the year-end championships, if you qualify for doubles...

BARBORA STRYCOVA: We would have a chance. We talked about it after Wimbledon.

Q. Would you play?

BARBORA STRYCOVA: No.

Q. Even if it's in Prague?

BARBORA STRYCOVA: No.

Q. You wouldn't play?

BARBORA STRYCOVA: No.

Q. Why not?

BARBORA STRYCOVA: I am so ready to be done (laughter). I mean, no. It's going to be in Prague?

Q. It's one of the bids.

BARBORA STRYCOVA: Well, I wish it's going to be in Prague because we have four players in top 10. We would deserve it. But I would not be one of them.

Q. Winning Wimbledon would maybe make someone coming become keep playing. Maybe it made things easier.

BARBORA STRYCOVA: I had so many thoughts about finishing already in Wimbledon because we won. Somebody, a lot of people told me, Finish here.

No, I want to play this US Open because I love this tournament.

It didn't change my mind for a second that I want to continue. It just gave me the feeling that we won Wimbledon. I mean, who would say, right, before? Yeah, it didn't change my thoughts about finishing my career. I could play Australian Open. I made my ranking, but no.

Are you going to miss me? You're asking like you want me to stay (smiling).

Q. Did it feel like unfinished business to get the second title?

BARBORA STRYCOVA: You mean Wimbledon?

Q. Winning Wimbledon the first time, then the pandemic, being away...

BARBORA STRYCOVA: Four years we didn't play with Su-Wei on grass. Coming back to Wimbledon, even for me just to come back, was a big victory.

But then I didn't believe that we could win two rounds. Then we won two rounds. Then I'm like, Maybe we can win the third. When we played the semis, I'm like, For sure we are losing, for sure. We were playing, like, unbelievable.

When you arrive to the final, you don't want to lose the final. We played unbelievable two weeks. I can't still believe we did it after four years not playing.

Q. In terms of New York and the US Open, you're here because you love the tournament, the city... What does this tournament mean to you in your career? What is your favorite singles moment here?

BARBORA STRYCOVA: Here?

Q. This one.

BARBORA STRYCOVA: You're asking what is my favorite moment here in New York?

Q. Yes.

BARBORA STRYCOVA: Oh, well, I don't say it's my favorite. It's my worst favorite. I was playing Lisicki 2016 or 2017, third round, maybe fourth. I was leading 5-1 in the third. I lost that match. That hurt a long time.

I like the tournament because it's a show. It's always so loud and it's always busy. It's about the nights. It's just so different compared to other Grand Slams.

I don't say it's my favorite, but it's one of my favorites. So I'm very happy to finish here.

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