

# Miami Open presented by Itaú

Thursday, March 27, 2025

Miami, Florida, USA

## Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference



A. SABALENKA/J. Paolini

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THE MODERATOR: Aryna, congratulations. Into your first Miami Open final. Can you give us your thoughts on your performance today?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I'm super happy with the level I played today. Of course super happy to be in my first Miami Open final. Yeah, just super happy at the moment.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Well, you played a super match today. How does that rank in your matches this year possibly? Because she's a tough out, you know, and you were tested in that second set, two breakpoints, and boom, you delivered the serves, which overpowered her.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I definitely say that this was one of the best matches in the season so far. I don't know. I was just so focused on myself, on the things I had to do today.

Yeah, and it felt like everything was just, like, going smoothly my way. Yeah, super happy with the performance.

**Q. In the zone?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I felt like I was in the zone.

**Q. Outside of February, you have put in a pretty consistent year so far. How does this level that you have now, even though there was a couple very tight losses in there, how do you think it compares with some of your best tennis that you have played in, say, the last year and a half?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I'd say that -- I don't know, you know. It's very tough to bring your best tennis every time you're playing there. Like anyway, you're struggling with something.

I think the way that I was able to adjust to different, let's say, issues of the game, and the way that I was able to fight no matter what, I felt like I'm definitely on the pretty high level right now.

Yeah, outside of February, that's incredible season, even though I had those tough finals. You know, we never lose. We only learn lesson. I'm really happy that I was able to give myself another opportunity, another final to learn the lesson finally and to get the trophy.

**Q. What are those lessons? Do you feel completely comfortable over here more than some of the other places from this year?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I don't know. I felt pretty good in Australia (smiling). It's not about the way you feel; it's about the way you are adjusting to the different conditions.

And the lessons, well, I believe focus on myself, not on what's going on on another side. Because, you know, sometimes players just go out there and they have nothing to lose and they just go crazy on the shots. Sometimes you're, like, What's going on? Like they just making unbelievable shots.

I think in those finals I was more focusing on my opponents than on myself. Yeah, I think I just have to bring the same attitude, the same mindset that I had today, I think I have to bring it in the finals.

I really feel this time I'm going to do better than I did in the last two finals.

**Q. So there is a possibility that you could face Alexandra Eala. She's been quite a surprise as the wildcard in this tournament. Could you talk to us about how do you see her? Maybe if you have been able to see her play, how do you see her game?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, she's definitely playing really great tennis right now. As I said before, like, some of the players just go out there and they have nothing to lose and they bring, like, the best tennis.



I think even Iga, they were focusing too much on what's going on on other side. So if it's going to be her, I will make sure that I focus on myself, not on that side. Yeah, I hope I will be able to bring my best tennis and get the trophy.

**Q. On the other hand, Jess is waiting. US Open final, tremendous match. She gets everything back. She hits it hard. You hit it a little harder maybe. Take us through that possible matchup.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, yeah, we had a lot of tough matches against each other. It's always great battles. Cincinnati was a great level for me probably but maybe not really from her. And then final was just like crazy match again. Yeah, she fought really hard in that second set, and that was tough match.

Yeah, always great battles, and I'm always exciting facing her. So if it's going to be her, I'm super excited about another final. That's crazy, yeah.

**Q. What do you think you could do better than her?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I mean, I don't know. I don't want to talk like that, that I do something better than her, but I think maybe -- I don't know. She's a great player.

It's, like, if we think about serve or groundstrokes or even, like, volleys, like, everyone can play great shots. I think it's all about mental part of the game. Maybe mentally in some of the moments I'm a bit tougher than her.

But also, you know, you cannot say that, Okay, I'm just tougher than her, that's it, that's done, you know?

You have to bring that mental toughness every time.

**Q. It's the last match of the night. Do you stay up and watch it on television, or do you go out in Miami? What's your philosophy on that?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I usually go for dinner, but other than that, it's always tennis on my TV, actually (smiling). I don't know why.

I'm actually enjoying, like, watching tennis lately. That's crazy. I'm getting old. (Laughter.)

**Q. Getting back to something we were talking about the other day with turning around from, you know, the emotional ending of Indian Wells, do you think at this tournament, if your next tournament was not at home, it would have been more difficult? Did it help sort of**

**coming home in terms of being able to reset and get yourself ready for another one like this?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I think it definitely give me some benefits being at home. Like, everything feels like really chill and cozy and comfy. But I think if it wouldn't be home, I'll still be able to bring my best tennis. I'll still be able to bring my fight, my fight spirit there.

So honestly, I don't know what I say on this question, but I think definitely being able to be at home having this peaceful mindset, you know.

**Q. You just said that you are recently enjoying watching tennis on TV. Is that something that you changed, kind of habit you changed since you are young? When you are watching tennis on TV, do you try to analyze a player, or do you try to not steal but use your thought techniques, or what kind of things you are thinking when you are watching tennis?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, when I watch men's tennis, I definitely try to see what they do differently. I mean, obviously a lot of things, but yeah, I'm trying to see something like what I could try to practice and try to get better at and try to bring on court.

When I watch girls, I mean, yeah, I'm just trying to see what are they doing, where are they struggling, trying to analyze a little bit. But also, I'd say that whenever I watch tennis, I more watch it from a mental side of the game, because I see some of the things and I'm curious, like, okay, how the player going to handle this pressure? Especially men's, like what they are going to do under this pressure?

So I'm, like, I think whenever I watch tennis, I'm more looking into, like, mental side of the game.

**Q. Is this something you didn't do when you were younger?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I think when I was young, yeah, I think I never really watched tennis.

You see, like, maybe if I would be a little bit smarter when I was younger, maybe I would be a little bit better player, like, I would become a better player earlier.

But it is how it is, so... I still have some time (smiling).

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