

# Miami Open presented by Itaú

Friday, March 20, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

**Aryna Sabalenka**

**Press Conference**

A. SABALENKA/A. Li

7-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Aryna, congratulations. Into the third round here at the Miami Open. Give us your thoughts on the match and your performance today.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, super happy to get the win. Really difficult match. She played incredible tennis. I was just trying to stay there, was trying to find my rhythm, trying to adjust as best as possible to the conditions. Just happy to be through.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. How was the change from playing in the stadium that you were supposed to play there to the other court? How does that affect your game?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: You just asked about the switched courts?

**Q. Yeah.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I was actually shocked that they were considering canceling my match or giving me couple of options of the stadiums. And I was, like, but what's the problem for Alcaraz and Fonseca start later?

Because yesterday the night session start at 9:00, and then Mirra was playing. So was actually really shocked that, yeah, the idea of even canceling my match. But I just decided to play today, just so I have, if I win, I have a day off, and I have time to prepare, recharge, and everything.

Yeah, I was actually shocked, to be honest. But I'm happy that they gave me options so I could choose what's the best for me.

**Q. Why were you shocked?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I think I never, like, deal with something like that, so I think it's, like, a first experience. I don't remember anything like that. I just thought, like, it's not a big problem for me to play. And then for the night session to wait and start a little bit later.

But I guess that's what the tournament, tickets -- that's was better for the tournament.

**Q. Do you feel like that as the No. 1, you expect to be on the main stadium?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I mean, it's tricky, because Alcaraz was playing, so it's like two No. 1s and what they should do. I'm just happy that I had options.

**Q. But the crowd loves you here.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, that was amazing.



**Q. I wanted to ask about that. How do you feel maybe a difference from when you play on the stadium and when you play outside?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: You know what I love the most? It was a surprise for the crowd. They didn't expect probably the people who had ground passes. I believe, that's how it works, right? I feel like -- not I feel like. I know they didn't expect me there, and it was small surprise kind of like situation.

I felt like they really liked it and they enjoyed it and brought posters. Yeah, it was beautiful.

I'm just -- this is the only thing that I'm happy with, that people enjoyed it and they really had fun there.

**Q. What kind of surprised you about Ann's game today? What was tricky?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: She played incredible. She was serving really well. Like, most of her serves was on the line. Tough to do something with that. Also, she was super-aggressive. She was returning well, playing smart game.

I felt like I was on my back foot and always kind of defending. But I'm super happy that I managed that tennis and figured how to get the win.

**Q. There have been some unexpected or disappointing losses for yourself over the last month or two months, et cetera, so how important was winning Indian Wells for you, looking ahead for here and beyond?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, that was very important win. Was very important win. I just didn't want to lose third final in the row to Elena. And also, I'm super tired of losing those big finals.

I feel like, you know, in all of those matches I had my chances, which I didn't use. And then I just gave a lot of opportunities to the players. They played incredible tennis. It's very disappointing, leaving the court knowing that you had your chances and you didn't take it.

That match was very important for me. I wanted to prove to myself that it's okay, you can lose tough matches, but you can come back stronger and get the win.

Also, for the future, it just gave me extra confidence that it's okay. I'm there. It was tough losses, but they gave me so much. I'm stronger mentally, and yeah, mentally it was very important win.

**Q. You have had an amazing record in tiebreaks since the start of last year.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah.

**Q. At one point you won like 19 in a row. This year you have won five of the five you have played. Wondering how aware you are of these stats and if your opponents feel that kind of tiebreak aura that you have right now?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I guess it should be a game plan just to get to the tiebreak and keep scoring (smiling).

Honestly, I'm not focusing on the record. I'm just trying to play point by point and trying my best, and then somehow I keep winning them, and hopefully I'll continue in this way.

I don't know. I don't know if it's an extra pressure from our opponent, but if it is an extra pressure, then I love it (smiling).

**Q. I feel one of your signatures now is all the jewelry that you wear.**



ARYNA SABALENKA: Oh, I love it. That's my weakness.

**Q. I wanted to ask specifically what the pink stone is that you're wearing, like, the long one.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah. How do you call the pink stone? Is it just --

**Q. Is it like ruby or... It could be different like different pink stones.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Let me just double-check. I just asked for the color without knowing the name.

**Q. So do you pick them out...**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Someone said the name? I'll double-check. I don't even know in Russian, to be honest, so bad of me.

**Q. But do you pick them out yourself? Do you like stacking like that? It's a look, a style, it's signature to you. You also seem so comfortable playing in it, as well.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, we're just trying to be original and bring something new with Material Good. We always sit at the table. They always listen what I would like to see in specific tournaments, and then we come up with the design, with the idea, with the message behind, also just to match my outfits.

For Miami, we just thought that -- because most of them, it's like the yellow stone, we felt like it's going to be a beautiful look with this pink dress and also just do a little accent -- I'll figure the name, right? So bad.

But I love it. I'm comfortable. I'm trying new things. Before going on court, I try on the practice if I'm okay with that.

I don't know. I just like to be -- I just like fashion and I like to experiment with things and I like to look a little bit different, and I like to bring fashion on court (smiling).

**Q. There is a lot of Brazilians here tonight, obviously because of Fonseca playing. You got some attention, you used a Portuguese, Brazilian phrase on court in Indian Wells.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, it was a little one, a small one.

**Q. I wonder how much you enjoy adding Brazilian culture to yourself, and if you feel like an honorary Brazilian at this point?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I love Brazilian culture. I feel like we are so similar and they so passion, they're so nice, and if they fall in love with someone, they just go full.

I feel the support, I feel the love, and they're just incredible to see. I'm on Duolingo, I think it's 199 days. I try my best. But I'm on the app, I'm like fluent, you know. I can just talk, any topics you want.

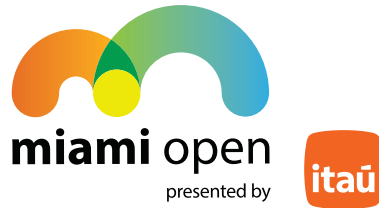
But then when I turn off my phone, I know nothing. But cursing? Oh, my God. This is the most beautiful language for cursing, guys (smiling).

I love it. And now it's naturally comes out of my mouth, and yeah. As long as they okay, they like it, I'm good with that.

**Q. I'm from Brazil, and we love that.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Good.

**Q. My question was about it. So why do you think cursing Portuguese, like, not Portuguese, but in Brazilian Portuguese are**



**better than cursing in English or in other language?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, because they know like Russian and English, when they go in the match, they listen just so I don't get -- the umpires, they know the language. And they just, like, don't pay attention when I speak for them random stuff. It's Portuguese, and, you know, I don't get any, yeah, any warnings. (Laughter.)

Smart. But now they know, so now I have to come up with some different stuff.

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