



Miami Open presented by Itaú

Monday, March 23, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference

A. SABALENKA/Zheng Qinwen

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Aryna, congratulations. How do you feel the match went for you today?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I feel great. I think it was great match. I felt like the rhythm is back. The serve is much better. Everything worked much better than the previous matches. So super happy with the level and with the win today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What are your thoughts about Qinwen's form right now? Where did you think her level was at?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I mean, I feel like she's getting back on her top level. Of course, probably she's not in her best, best shape. But I can see that she's working hard. She's trying her best.

I'm just happy to see her back healthy and building her level back.

Q. Don't know if you saw, but Coco said that she saw a tweet that was helpful for her, like she should go to the net. She went to the net and won the match. Are you used to seeing these kind of things?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Of course, I see some of the things. For some reason I see more negative than positive about myself (smiling). So I try not to really look deep.

Whenever I see my picture or something about myself, I go to the next one because, I don't know, like sometimes people just being rude and mean to all of us. I feel like it just doesn't really worth reading and going through.

Well, it helped, it helped. I mean, we all different, right? If it helped... Thanks for telling me. Now I'm going to be ready that she's coming to the net (laughter).

Q. The other day we were talking about you being obviously unhappy losing so many close finals. With this year's Australian Open, how long did it take you to get over that? Was it a bit easier this year compared to last year or is it still maybe in the back of your mind, in other words, really pushing you?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I think all of those tough finals that I lost, they pushing me because I don't want that to happen again.

But this Australia Open was kind of like - how you say it - the final line or something. I felt like I was playing really great tennis. I was 3-Love up. It felt like everything was in my hands.

I felt like Elena in that point of the match, she didn't really confident or anything. I just felt like I



basically gave it, just gave that final. Of course, then she stepped in. Then she felt, okay, I still in the match, all of that.

But yeah, that one was very painful. As soon as I left Australia Open, I kind of like forgot it. We just spoke with my team. We did some let's say mental changes the way I approach the finals now. We changed some preparation.

I mean, it's always a work process. You win, you lose. You never lose actually, you learn. You just try to do better next time.

Q. More painful than last year?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Australia Open, you mean?

Q. Yes.

ARYNA SABALENKA: I mean, they all super painful (laughter).

I would say that this year was more painful than last year because last year Madison just overplayed me. She played incredible points. I couldn't do anything. Was basically in her hands.

This year, yeah, I think I just screw up myself.

Q. You mentioned earlier you had made some kind of adjustment to your racquet before Indian Wells. Can you share anything about those changes? In general, what's the challenge of making equipment changes in the middle of the season?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I'm not going to open all of the cards.

I just felt like there's few things in my game where players were trying, you know, to aim, trying to, I don't know, beat me through few things. I felt like there is couple things that I

could do in the racquet to feel more confident and feel more comfortable in those particular shots.

I changed, I adjusted the racquet. It really helped a lot.

Q. It's the first time for you here in Miami as an Indian Wells champion. That means the first time you are chasing the Sunshine Double. Can you explain how difficult it is to achieve that in tennis, comparing it to winning a Grand Slam?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I mean, yeah, that's definitely super tough. Grand Slam is two weeks. These tournaments are, what, four weeks, almost four weeks. Playing a great tennis for four weeks in different conditions, that's really tricky and tough. Not easy at all.

I mean, I kind of like chasing, but I'm trying to take it one step at the time and not really looking that far. I think that's the best approach.

But it's definitely not easy at all.

Q. What's tougher?

ARYNA SABALENKA: What do you mean, what's tougher?

Q. Sunshine Double or Grand Slam?

ARYNA SABALENKA: It's so different. Uncomparable.

Q. You're playing Hailey Baptiste the next round. What is your view on your opponent? Do you have a game plan already?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I feel like my team already have a game plan. But yeah, tomorrow we definitely going to watch some tennis. We're



going to have a hit and prepare as good as possible for the match.

I've been watching couple of games of her. Yeah, she's playing great tennis. Great variety in the game, great serving. Yeah, great tennis. I'm really excited facing her.

Q. When you're in the middle of a match and things are going well, what does it feel like for you to be playing?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Whew... Like that (laughter).

Honestly, like, it feels great, of course. You know that things are working. You're doing the right things. You're making the right decisions.

All I do when everything works well, I'm just trying to not stay too long in a good points, and also not stay too long in the bad points, because they can destroy you the same way.

I'm just trying to stay in the moment and focus on each point and try to, yeah, build each point as good as possible and win every point.

Thank you.

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