



Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Aryna Sabalenka

Press Conference

A. SABALENKA/C. Gauff

6-2, 4-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Fifth-ever woman to win the Sunshine Double. Talk about what that achievement means for you and these two weeks as a whole for you.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, it means a lot. My goal always been to put my name in the history, and I just did it. It just sounds so unreal. I don't know how I was able to achieve that, but I'm super proud right now. Of course, of course, super happy with this beautiful trophy.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Well done. Through that match, how did you feel? Watching you, and there were a couple of crises like losing the second set, losing serve, et cetera, but what came across is how composed you were from the first point to the very last point. How did you feel actually playing that match?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, I felt really great. I felt that the level was incredible. Yeah, second set wasn't ideal at the end, but I knew that she's gonna try her very best to fight in this match, to try to get this win.

Yeah, couple things didn't work really well in that last game in the second set, but I was just trying to keep a positive mindset going to the third set.

I'm super happy how well I handled my emotions, and yeah, how well I stayed focused from the very beginning till the very end.

Q. Congrats. Big trophy. I saw on Tennis Channel that you said after the Australian Open you had a lot of talks with your team about being more composed and trying not to get too stressed in those moments in the third set. Could you talk a bit more about that, like what solution you found this time?

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, it's a deep one, and it's going to sound super easy, but my mentality really going into this final, like there is no way I lose it, trying to bring this tough mentality that I'll be there fighting for every point, there is no way I'll let anything get to me, and I'll be staying focused, I'll be fighting for every point, I'll be trying to find solution if needed or I'll be just, like, I'll keep constantly remind myself how strong I am and that I got it.

That's been working really well, and it's so easy but so tough at some point, like when you get emotional and then you forget everything. And in the last couple of finals, I have just been really strong inside and really positive mentally.

And also, we did really great preparation. I worked so hard. So whenever I felt like doubting my ability, I was, like, bringing myself back and reminding myself, No, no, no, no, no. You're strong enough to get this.



Q. Congrats. On that line, I wanted to ask, how do you manage with the crowd? Coco had big support, but also, the lady yelling, all of that.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, it was a bit of frustration over there (smiling), but, yeah, I apologized, but at the same time, she was also wrong, but probably I should have controlled myself a little bit better.

But actually, when I screamed that, I felt so relieved and so loose, and even if she would be keep yelling, I wouldn't hear her.

But, you know, I really felt people were super respectful to me and they were cheering for great tennis. Of course they were supporting Coco. I knew what's gonna happen in this match, but I've got huge Brazilian community cheering for me, so I felt a lot of support. I really enjoyed the atmosphere and people cheering for their player. That was incredible. To see the full stadium, it was also something incredible, and I really enjoyed time out there today.

Q. Really well done. Very impressive. How do you keep the motivation up? I know winning is fun and it makes you hungry for more, but, you know, you keep going deep and you're winning a lot, but at some point, does it get tiring, or does it get, okay, I have to wake up tomorrow morning, and tennis is relentless, there is another tournament in two weeks probably? What are you doing to keep yourself motivated so that every time you do show up, you really show up?

ARYNA SABALENKA: I hate losing. I hate that feeling when you lose the match. I cannot sleep, I dream tennis, I hate myself for making several mistakes that might cost me a match, so I hate that feeling.

Just because of that, whenever I go out there, I just really try my best and I try to do everything that is possible and possible to get the win.

Motivation, guys, I'm not even, like, close to the legends. Like what's my motivation? I'm just trying to go as far as possible in this sport and to inspire next generation and to be good example for next generation and show this balance, you know, like off and on the court live and to just to help people to be healthy in this really tough and challenging environment.

Q. Let's do a recap of this month. You got proposed, you got a dog, you got the Sunshine Double. I have to say a bunch of Brazilians have messaged me saying, Tell her we love her. So we love you.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Obrigado (smiling). Eu te amo.

Yeah, what a month. Really tough to keep up with this month in my life: dog, engagement, Sunshine Double. Yeah, that sounds surreal, right?

Yeah, once again, thank you so much for Brazilian support. It's been incredible to see, like to feel the support. It's something I have been dreaming a lot in my life to go in these big stadiums and to feel support and feel this atmosphere.

So right now I feel like I'm just living my dream life.

Q. Congratulations. Obviously Coco has become quite the rival for you, 6-6, I believe, going into this. If you could name one standout quality for her in those matches and her journey against you, what would it be?

ARYNA SABALENKA: If I could...



Q. One standout quality from her in those matches that you guys have had against each other, what would that be from Coco? And what makes her such a tough rival for you?

ARYNA SABALENKA: One good quality she brings on court, you mean?

Q. For Coco against you.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Oh, my God. Her movement is something else. Going into matches against her, I know that there is always going to be an extra ball, and it's all about stay focused and be ready for an extra ball to come back.

The movement is something else, you know. I wish I could move, I mean, even like 70% from what she has would be enough for me (smiling).

But, yeah, she's incredible player and a fighter. It's always challenging playing her, and I really enjoying this rivalry lately, and I hope she'll stay consistent, and hopefully we'll meet in many more finals.

Q. You mentioned you hate losing. Congrats again. Legendary. What stands out just winning this tournament again back to back? Because that's something that isn't an easy feat.

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, that's for sure. But I think what's really been working for me in the past is not really focusing on the past and just like staying in the moment. And going into this tournament, I didn't really think about, like, defending title or something. I was just trying to take it one step at a time.

I think staying in the moment, that's been a key for me to be that consistent.

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