

Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Miami, Florida, USA

Ashleigh Barty

Press Conference



A. BARTY/A. Sabalenka

6-4, 6-7, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You defended your service games very well. In fact, I don't think you were broken at all during the match today. Is that one of the biggest differences do you feel between winning and losing today's match against Aryna?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: Oh, absolutely. I think we both had very few breakpoints. I think there were probably a couple of games, particularly in that first set, I was down Love-40 in one of them and even a couple of games 15-30s, 30-All points. At big points I felt I was able to produce some of my better stuff.

That's what we are after. That's what you're always trying to do. But on the other hand, as well, I felt like Aryna did that exceptionally well today. We were both able to serve our way out of trouble at times. To be able to just get a couple of breaks, that was all that the match kind of needed, really.

Q. It seemed towards the end of the third set Aryna was maybe flexing her abs, and the rest of the match did seem to go pretty quickly in your favor. Did you feel like there was anything physically wrong with her? How much is a win like this and also the wins earlier in the week a testament to the fitness and preparation you have put into this season?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: Yeah, of course I think at the end, last probably two games I noticed she was grabbing at something. Whether it was -- I mean, I'm not sure what it was, but she then tried to take a few more risks, but I feel like as well that was probably a buildup of pressure over the match and maybe physically, as well. I can't really comment on how she's feeling.

I mean, we all prepare in a way, we are all I feel like in pretty good nick to be able to come out here and play. I think it just comes down to a few points here and there. I

think that's all that match was today. I don't save a break point in the first set, it probably goes the other way, and there is very, very fine margins in that match today.

Q. We are doing a little work on Craig Tiley. If you could just go back. He went through so much, before and during the Australian Open, got a lot of criticism, stayed up for, I don't know, 50-plus hours or so, had to make changes with his family. Could you just talk about his role in getting the Open happening and just what he did for months?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: Yeah, I think there is no secret the amount of work that he put in behind the scenes. I think he put a lot of trust in the health experts and officials, I think, and particularly worked closely with the Victorian government I think to try and ensure that we could run the event safely.

I think overall the event was fantastic. I didn't hear any negative feedback from players or anything like that, but there is certainly no hiding the fact how hard he worked to try to get that across the line for us.

Q. One thing I have admired in watching you play is how so often you're able to wait until almost the very last moment to commit to a particular shot. Oftentimes your opponent is out of position because they don't know which way you're going to go with your returns. I'm just curious to learn how you're able to successfully make split-second judgments, and especially since you're one who likes to mix in dropshots and slice, it makes it even more effective in how you manage your points.

ASHLEIGH BARTY: It all comes down to practice, I think. At times I feel like I also want to be very clear with what options that I want to take, and I want to go with my instinct, my first instinct, my first choice.

Often when I change my mind or alter the shot I'm going to hit for my opponent I find that I make errors. So it's important for me to just almost pick my spot, pick my shot, and try and execute.

I think that's just trained over time. I do feel at times I have



more options with the slice and with a few different shots. But in saying that, most of the time I'm also choosing to me what feels like the obvious option, simple option, and I just try and execute.

Q. Your thoughts on your next opponent, will be determined tonight. The match against Elina in Shenzhen must feel like a lifetime ago, and also even more so against Anastasija, I don't think you have played since 2018. What makes them tough opponents and how you'll prepare.

ASHLEIGH BARTY: Yeah, I mean, obviously against Svitolina we have had some exceptional battles in big tournaments. I think that test will be no different, another big match. She's figured her way out through this draw very well. Obviously there is another hurdle to go tonight. If I do play her, it's another battle. I have to bring my very best to beat her.

For Sevastova, I had actually completely forgotten that we played before. I think that match was in Charleston, wasn't it?

Q. Yep.

ASHLEIGH BARTY: You have jogged my memory actually. I do remember that match. Yeah, she's got the ability to move the ball all around the court and probably a very different matchup to what it would be against Svitolina.

Both I look forward to. Both will be very, very challenging in different ways, and I have to kind of prepare and absolutely bring my best to be able to compete.

Q. If you win the semifinals you will keep the World No. 1. Do you think or need this an extra pressure for you?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: No, not by any means. No, it's an amazing thing to be No. 1 in the world at the moment, but I promise you that's not what makes me happy. That's not what makes me a happy person.

Whether I'm No. 1 or No. 10 or I'm anything in between or whatever number it is, that number for me doesn't determine if I'm a happy person or a happy tennis player.

I come out here and I just work hard. I try and do the best that I can. I know that if I do that I sleep well at night and the sun comes up tomorrow.

I mean, it's a focus of course. I want to try to do the best that I can, but it's not a distraction or a pressure in any

way.

Q. You reached the semifinal in Miami two years in a row now, two editions in a row. What is it about this tournament that you enjoy playing so much? Is it something about the conditions, or is it just you're in a better frame of mind right now at this tournament? Why do you enjoy playing so much in Miami?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: Yeah, everywhere in the world there are different conditions and at times it suits you more than other places. I feel like these are very familiar conditions for me. With the heat and humidity, it's very similar to Brisbane where I grew up and what I was born and bred and trained in my whole life.

I enjoy these courts. You know, I enjoy the balls and how they are responsive to spin. A lot of different elements. But, you know, there are a lot of places around the world that I enjoy playing, and here is one of them.

Q. We see you on court running and battling. Then you come in and sometimes speak to us about what's important to you is to be a happy person. What does that mean to you? What does that mean to you?

ASHLEIGH BARTY: What does being happy mean to me? I think it's a very simple one. I try and do the best that I can every day in every aspect of my life, and I try and grow every day, try and learn every day. Whether that's knowledge from playing tennis or kind of world knowledge or whatever it is, I just want to try and improve as a person every day.

Certainly tennis results are very low on the priority list for what does make me happy. Of course you go through highs and lows as a tennis player and as an athlete, but ultimately I'm just trying to be the best that I can be and live my life to the fullest and learn from all my experiences and not sweat the small stuff. That's a big one.

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