

Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Miami, Florida, USA

Simona Halep

Press Conference



S. HALEP/C. Garcia

3-6, 6-4, 6-0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What can you learn about yourself from a victory like tonight, especially one where you came from behind against Caroline and came on very strong in the last set?

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, it's been a good match, in my opinion. She started very well and her serve bothered me a lot, the kick. So I needed time to get used to it and to get the rhythm.

I struggled with my serve. I struggled with my shoulder a little bit. So the attention was a little bit on the pain.

So then I started to relax myself, to try to not think about the result, just to loosen up the arm, the body, and then I started actually to move her a little bit more to the forehand. Then I started to get confidence that I can come back.

Q. I understood tonight was your 400th main draw victory of your career. What stands out from achieving a milestone like that?

SIMONA HALEP: Sorry, it's my 100th victory?

Q. Your 400th main draw career victory tonight.

SIMONA HALEP: Oh, that's impressive (smiling). Thanks for letting me know.

Q. Yeah. What stands out from achieving a milestone like that?

SIMONA HALEP: Well, I'm really happy to hear that. It's impressive that I won so many matches on main draw.

I have many years there in the top also, and I can feel a little bit tired of all the pressure that I had, but also, you know, I feel like more with experience. Now when I face

some tough moments during the matches, I know what to do. So it's from those 400 victories.

Q. Did you feel that you needed that type of match to really get your feet wet into the tournament?

SIMONA HALEP: If I feel what? Sorry, I cannot understand very well.

Q. If you felt that you need to get your feet wet to really get into the tournament?

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah. I felt like in the second set I start moving better. I relax my legs and I could work more with my legs.

I needed a little bit of extra power with her because she's a powerful opponent, and I have always to push her back.

Q. If I can ask about the nagging shoulder or the arm, how are you feeling now?

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, I just got a treatment before coming here. It is painful but it's not that bad. Only when I serve I feel it, so I hope to recover until the next one.

Q. How do you think about your next match against Sevastova or Gauff?

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, it's going to be a big challenge no matter who I play. I played against both, so I know what to expect. But first I'm focusing on my recovery. I want just to be fit to play the match and then to try everything I can to win it.

Q. Going back specifically about Gauff and Sevastova, you played both of them. What specifically makes them very tricky to beat? You played both of them and they have very different game styles.

SIMONA HALEP: Well, Sevastova is cutting the rhythm a little bit more. You never know what ball to expect from her. Sometimes she plays flat, very flat. Sometimes she can go high, sometimes slices, dropshots, many. So it's tough to play against her all the time.



Gauff is more powerful. She's moving very well. Her serve is strong.

So different styles in my opinion. So I will just think about -- after I will know against who I play -- I will think about the game and then I will see.

Q. It's been a tricky and unpredictable year. Are there things you are doing in your off time as you prepare for tournaments to keep a routine and keep rhythm and block out some of the crazier things that are happening around you?

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, it's always tricky when you don't have the same rhythm of what we have been used to. But I cannot complain.

I had good conditions home to practice. Here the conditions are great. Just the bubble is a little bit heavy, but, you know, we have to respect the rules and we have to be thankful that the tournaments are still on.

Q. I wanted to find out, is Darren Cahill along on the trip this time to coach you up close?

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, he's here. He will come also after this tournament more with us, because he cannot get to Australia, so I'm happy now (smiling).

Q. That's good. I wasn't sure, because the cameras never focused in on him.

SIMONA HALEP: No, he's here.

Q. I was curious, since for so long he was in Australia and you're on tour and back home in Romania. What are the challenges like in staying in touch and getting coaching from him when you all are worlds apart?

SIMONA HALEP: I have Romanian coach, as well. They get very well together. They talk a lot. I talk a lot with Darren even if he's in Australia and I'm home.

It was a little bit tough to be like three, four months without him, but, you know, if we understand each other well, then I have a big plus to keep going. Also he was watching me on the camera when I practice back home and makes it easier. So we are in a good place for the moment.

Q. How concerned are you about the shoulder? When did you start feeling the pain and what's kind of the issue? Do you know?

SIMONA HALEP: Yes, I know. Actually in Australia I felt it in the second round against Tomljanovic. That match I

won't forget.

And then back came back and I had problems with the back, and so when you have an injury some other places from your body, they are not good as well, you try to force something else and that's why you can hurt yourself.

When I came here I didn't feel pain anymore. I was really good. But then I practiced some tough sets with other players and I started to feel again.

And now it's getting a little bit worse. But I just feel it when I serve, so I'm trying just to do the recovery as much as possible to serve better, because today it was very slow.

But, you know, I'm a little bit afraid of this pain of course because it's an injury, so I have to be careful. I will see how it's gonna hold next days.

Q. Looking ahead, if you play Gauff who I think is leading Sevastova at the moment, what are your thoughts of playing her? I'm curious for you as a top player, veteran player, you have played her before, but is there an extra pressure of playing a 17-year-old and not wanting to lose to a teenager? That's a different thing than playing, I don't know, Kvitova in the third round.

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, it's true. Yeah, I felt that pressure in Wimbledon when I faced her, because she was super young and she was playing super good in Wimbledon that year.

But now I don't feel that anymore. I know her. I know what to expect. Of course she's a very tough opponent. She's moving very well. She's powerful, so it's gonna be a big challenge for me for sure.

But I'm ready. I will focus on my serve as I do every time. I don't pay attention that much against who I play. I just want to give my best.

I have that level to just stay cool and to try to play the best game against every opponent.

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