

Miami Open presented by Itaú

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

Miami, Florida, USA

Elina Svitolina

Press Conference



E. SVITOLINA/A. Sevastova

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. I noticed watching, especially when they were showing the highlights after the match, that throughout, you used the element of surprise quite well, using some well-timed dropshots. Was that something that was part of your game plan? If so, how do you know when is a good time to use a dropshot?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Well, it's, for me, always all the time try to find a good angle. It doesn't matter if it's a dropshot or it's a lob or a shot down the line. I just try to build the point and try to find the angles, try to find the opening.

So dropshot, for sure, it's I think underrated shot. Sometimes it works very good. I wish I could use it more (smiling).

Q. Is it kind of like a split decision where you kind of maybe see where your opponent is on the court, and if they are maybe playing too far back that it's a way to try and make them more honest out there?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Yeah, for sure when you're playing someone like Anastasija who gets a lot of balls back, you need to try to find better openings, you know. When you play someone who moves really good and who gets lots of balls back, that's I think very good option, you know, to keep them on their toes.

For sure it's one of the things that you do. But also, you have more time because, you know, she spins the ball. For example, like when someone is playing really flat, for sure, you know, you don't have enough time to do dropshots. It's probably more trickier to do that.

Q. I noticed especially early on where you had Anastasija kind of running back and forth, I guess what I'd call play east/west tennis where you're making her run from one side of the court to the other and you're never really hitting too many returns in the

same location. Is that something that you planned on or something you realized you could take advantage of?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Well, I practiced with her many times. I played against her so many times. That's her game style. I was expecting that.

She always tries to build the point, tries to use her spinny forehand slice. You know, she's a tricky player to play against. So I had to really adjust my game to not rush so much, because if you rush against her you can make too many mistakes.

It was important for me to build the point and, yeah, to find openings, as I said in the previous answer.

Q. I think this is like the biggest semifinal in a couple of years for you. How proud are you to win four matches in a row and be back at this level in these kind of tournaments?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Well, for sure it's a good tournament for me, but I try to take every tournament as a challenge, and this one for sure I was working really hard physically, mentally as well, to play at this level.

I beat very good players. I'm playing good tennis so I try to build on that. I try to focus, you know, on my semifinal right now, because it's a big match for me. I don't want to think so much about how the tournament goes right now. I just try to focus on my next match and to keep the same level.

Q. Talking about your semifinal against Barty, which do you think will be the key of that match? What's the toughest thing about Barty's game?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Well, I played her many times actually, even when she just was starting to play well. Now, you know, she's No. 1.

She improved a lot for the past three, four years. She's been playing extremely high level. So I'll have to bring my best game. I will sit down with my coach to go through that match. Right now just to try to recover and be ready for her.



Q. What do you remember of that match that you and Ash played at Indian Wells in 2019? It was one of the best matches of the season and very dramatic set by set. I'm curious, looking back on it, what do you remember of that match?

ELINA SVITOLINA: Yeah, it was extremely high-intensity match. I remember it was extremely hot (smiling). We were playing long rallies. Yeah, I was down in the third set but I was up in the second. So it was ups and downs, but I think we played really high intensity, and yeah, it was a really good match.

Hopefully we can bring the same intensity for the semifinal, and I'm really looking forward to that.

Q. What do you think in terms of your games, how they match up, especially in 2019? Because you guys had that intense match in Indian Wells and then you played the Shenzhen final. So two very big matches, important matches that season for both of you. What is it about your games, do you think, that that seems to create kind of interesting matches?

ELINA SVITOLINA: I think we are both big fighters. I think when you're playing a really high-level player, you try to be extremely focused, more focused than anything else, because if you're playing a big match like that, you're not giving any free points and you are more on your toes. You're trying to bring the best.

So for sure the match in Shenzhen was extremely tough for me after. I hate losing the Finals, and especially Shenzhen Finals, it's a huge event. I wanted to defend my title.

So it was extremely tough for me to lose that one, and hopefully, you know, I can play better and get the revenge.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports