

**April 3, 2019**

**A. SABALENKA defeats K. Ova  
3-6, 6-3, 6-3  
Second Round**

**An Interview With:**

**ARYNA SABALENKA**

MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Aryna, that was probably tougher than you were expecting. What was the key to getting it done in the end?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I just looked at my coach when I was 0-2 down, and he just said like "look at your arm." There is a tiger. It means like keep fighting, like forget about everything else, just fight for each point. That's what I did. There is my key.

**Q. Aryna, just in terms of getting it done, and obviously I think you went back out on to the courts after the match to hit? Did you go back to the practice courts?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah. I served a little bit. 11 double faults, it's not what I expect.

**Q. So are you finding that -- I mean are you practicing in general well and then finding it more difficult on the match court?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Of course, it's some pressure on the match court. It's a little bit different because in the practice I serve like really well. I just need to find this feeling in the matches because I really have -- I have good serve, and this is just like -- I just need to bring it on the match court.

**Q. Now that you've played your first match in Charleston, what are your first impressions of the tournament, the surface?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Well, I really enjoyed to stay here. It's unbelievable tournament. It's so quiet, like home, you know. And the court is



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unbelievable. It's my first time to hit on the green clay, and it feels really good. And I am so happy to win this match, the first match on the clay court.

**Q. Aryna, I want to go back to you're talking about how well you serve in practice and that you need to transfer that. Do you do any kind of mind, body or mental work that would help you make that transfer?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, of course, I work with a psychologist, and this is a woman. She helped me a lot, and I am trying to improve my mental, like my mind to be stronger on the court. Well, it's, of course, actually everything about your mental preparation, because, yeah, in the practice everyone can do everything, but it's all about what you can do on the match court. Yeah, the serve is actually what I need to, like you said, transfer from the practice to the match.

**Q. You said you work with a psychologist. Did your coach recommend that or did you look out for one?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I actually worked with her like for two years, and it's really helped me a lot, because two or three years ago I was like really deep -- like really crazy. Like if you look back, like try to find some matches, ITF tournaments, you'll see the big difference. Right now I am still crazy. I'm still get pissed like really easily, but it's better. (Laughs). Still need to improve.

**Q. Aryna, just in terms of the clay season, obviously everything kind of clicked on grass and onto the hard courts for you in Eastbourne and the rest of the season. So what's your expectation or your comfort level on clay, and do you feel pressure going into this section of the season? Do you not?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: No. I don't really feel pressure on the clay court, because I just really want to improve my game on the clay court, because it's completely different with grass and the

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hard court. So I'm just trying to improve my game here, so no pressure.

**Q. What do you think is the key for you on clay? What do you need to adjust?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I just need to adjust for the long rallies, because the hard court you can finish the point with two or three balls and on the clay court it's like twice or three times longer. And I just need to keep in my mind that you need to stay in the rally, so I don't need to rush on the clay court.

**Q. Do you feel like it's a surface you can do well on?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah. I actually feel that, because I'm moving okay on the clay court, like much better than last year. And I just need to be ready for long rallies, because sometimes you are trying to finish the point much early, and it's a slower game actually here. So you just need to go there and play, play long rallies.

**Q. Well, I asked because powerful players who in the past may not have felt like they could do well on clay they would just wait for grass. But Petra won Madrid last year. Pliskova won Stuttgart. Madison Keys made the semifinals of the French Open. I mean power can do well. So I'm just kind of trying to get a sense as to whether you truly believe that or whether it's so far off.**

ARYNA SABALENKA: Yeah, just to be honest it's more time on the clay court, so you can prepare for the shot much better and adjust for the ball really good, to make sure that you can hit whatever you want. It's just all about the long rallies. Anyway, it's slower, so it's not three shots, it's six shots. But I mean look at Kiki Bertens, she's aggressive player, but she really do well here, so we need to learn from her how to play really well here.

**Q. Next opponent for you, Monica Puig. Are you familiar with her? I don't know if you've played her, but what are your thoughts on that match?**

ARYNA SABALENKA: I never played against her, but she's, again, she's a good player.

Like everyone here is a good player. And I don't really have expectations. I just I will go out there and fight for each point from the beginning of the match, not from 2-0 down.

End of Interview

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