

Porsche Tennis Grand Prix

Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Saturday, 20 April 2024

Marta Kostyuk

Press Conference

M. KOSTYUK/M. Vondrousova

7-6, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Marta, well done on your result today. Just talk us through your thoughts on the match and how pleased you are to be in the final here in Stuttgart.

MARTA KOSTYUK: Well, definitely was shorter match than the ones I had before today (smiling). Yeah, it feels great. Obviously to be in the final of this tournament, it's amazing. Really looking forward to tomorrow already. Yeah, was a very good fight today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about the recovery process from yesterday evening, like at what time you went to sleep and how you were able to prepare to go on court and play like this again?

MARTA KOSTYUK: So I was going to sleep two nights in a row at 3:00 in the morning. The whole time I was recovering or, like, shower and eating and stuff. So really had very short nights.

Usually I would have a nap before, one more sleep before the match in the afternoon, but today was much earlier so I didn't. But today I will be able to go to sleep earlier than other days, thank God.

I mean, it's process and it's always different. You try to recover mentally, physically, as much as you can and let go as soon as possible of the match so it's out of your head.

Q. I received a lot of messages and calls from my Ukrainian friends and colleagues, so everybody is very excited with your achievements here. The question is you had so many tough games here with tough opponents. Tomorrow one more game. Do you still feel good? Do you still have physical reserve for tomorrow?



MARTA KOSTYUK: Sure. I mean, today, as I said, today was much easier match than all the previous ones, so really, like, I was joking when I came off the court. I said, Wow, it felt like I had a day off today comparing to the other days, because really the match was much twice shorter than the match with Laura.

So your body feels this. It feels the difference. Yeah, I mean, I honestly feel pretty good and ready for tomorrow.

Q. What, if at all anything, has surprised you about what you have done this week?

MARTA KOSTYUK: That I'm in the finals, definitely (smiling). Yeah, you know, I came here on Saturday and I practiced four days before my first match, and really I was playing worse and worse with every day.

I was, like, Okay, time to play some matches because I don't want to practice anymore.

Yeah, I was not feeling great at all. I'm not talking about, like, physically but generally I didn't feel good on court.

Then, you know, like in tennis everything is very close. It's, like, you can really feel very bad but then have the best week of your career, like it happened to me.

Yeah, I think it's trust the process, really, like I really excelled this week and I tried in every match to just do as much as I can, and yeah, things are getting better. I think this is the most important thing for me.

Of course I'm very pleased and very happy and surprised that I'm in the finals, but, you know, tomorrow is another match, so I'm getting ready.

Q. How far does this final tomorrow have also a political component, or how do you face your opponent, Elena? She never expressed her attitude to the situation in Ukraine.

MARTA KOSTYUK: I mean, this is her opinion. Nothing I can do about her opinion, really. I expressed my opinion about what's happening. If other people don't want to do it, it's not my responsibility.



Q. Marta, yesterday you were talking about this match, saying that it's gonna be a different story. Remember it?

MARTA KOSTYUK: Yes.

Q. Because she's a clay specialist. What were your expectations, and what was the reality on the court?

MARTA KOSTYUK: I mean, I lost to her a year ago really badly and very quickly. So I think that really helped today, because I didn't have any expectations. I was, like, okay, this really cannot be worse than last year, so I'm already fine. It's definitely going to be better.

Yeah, I think this was really the key from the beginning that I didn't have expectations. The only thing I remember from last year is that I should really have this good balance of offense and, like, just, you know, trying to structure the point, and it worked out really good today, and I was not rushing in my head.

You know, I had enough space, you know, to just kind of create, because you really cannot rush with someone like Marketa, especially on clay, because she just -- I tried to do it couple of times today, and I think she loves it, like when the ball comes fast to her and she just plays it back and makes you look like you are really -- not nothing, but she makes it look like your speed is nothing.

So I think this was the key today, and the reality is definitely better than my expectations. I can tell you that.

Q. Yesterday you had a couple of match points that you didn't convert. Today, the 5-1 lead and it's 5-All. A lot of players I guess they would lose it after that, they would break down. What's your mental state? How can you be positive after that?

MARTA KOSTYUK: You know, I was losing it so many times before in my career that I feel like it's time to just not do it anymore that much (smiling).

Yeah, I mean, even today it was like a very questionable call that was made on my set point, because I don't really agree with it, but nothing I can do. Yeah, it was going quickly.

But I was just, you know, I was just trying to stay in the match and keep going point by point and not really focusing on the score and how many set points I lost or what was the score before, because I lost a set like this against Coco, and I was -- not that I was thinking back then about the score, but I was more lost in my head, like, oh,

you know, I had these opportunities, how did I not win this set? I was much more emotional, in a way, much more tense.

So I had that experience already, and luckily I went, like, I left it behind me pretty quickly. I didn't even, you know, a couple of weeks after Australia, you know, I didn't even remember I was up 5-1 against Coco in the first set. So really it's, like, I think the final result is what matters at the end.

Q. We had a lot of Polish fans and flags but also some Ukrainian fans. Did you have any encounters with Ukrainian people, maybe refugees here, during these days or with other nice people, whatever?

MARTA KOSTYUK: I mean, I know that there are a lot of refugees that live in Germany generally, the most in Europe are living in Germany. Definitely I think couple years ago we wouldn't see so many Ukrainian fans in the stands probably, which, you know, I'm really happy to see.

You know, it's great, and a lot of people cheer for me and support me. Some people I know, but really, I know less. So I know a little bit, only a couple of people. But the rest is just fans. But very happy they are here.

Q. Looking forward to tomorrow, what do you expect in this matchup with Elena on clay, especially this clay? And are you surprised to see her in the final?

MARTA KOSTYUK: You know, we were, me and Sandra and sometimes George, my husband, we are, like, making bets on who is going to win, and Sandra is, like, Oh, yeah, I'm always wrong. Every time she says someone is going to win, always this person is not to win (smiling).

So today was the same. Actually, we both said that Iga is probably going to win. I don't know. I just had the feeling. I thought it, because even though Elena beat her in Rome last year, but Iga was injured, but anyways, I was, like, Iga likes to play here. I think she's going to win this one.

But, you know, as I said, it's tennis. So anything can happen. They both are amazing players. Yeah, I cannot say I'm, like, very surprised, because I think people are more surprised that I'm in the final, not Elena. Let's start there (smiling).

Yeah, I think it's going to be a great match. It's clay, so we will see. It's different.

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