

Miami Open presented by Itaú

Thursday, March 21, 2019

Mari Osaka

Press Conference



W. OSUIGWE/M. Osaka

6-2, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. (Question off microphone.)

MARI OSAKA: It was my first time playing at a tournament like this. So having a lot of people watching and cheering, it was (indiscernible).

Q. What were your thoughts when you got the wildcard here? What were your sort of expectations coming into this new level for you?

MARI OSAKA: I was super excited. I was excited for, like, the past half year, you know, that I knew that I would get it. It was just super exciting and new for me, you know. I'm super thankful that I actually got it, you know.

Q. (Question off microphone.)

MARI OSAKA: The people, there were so many people watching. The atmosphere, like, even just walking around the halls here, it's just completely different.

Q. (Question off microphone.)

MARI OSAKA: Yeah, yeah. I was super nervous. But it was fun. It would be funner if I had won, but...

Q. (Question off microphone.)

MARI OSAKA: Did she?

Q. (Off microphone.) ...showed up too early for the match. She poked some fun at you, I guess I would say.

MARI OSAKA: She called me a baby, and then that's it. What advice was that? I didn't get any advice.

Q. Did you ask for any?

MARI OSAKA: Huh-uh.

Q. How ready did you feel for this level, coming in? You had some losses earlier this year in a couple of tournaments you played. This is a big step up, I guess, in kind of the level of tournament. I'm just wondering if you were nervous before that for that reason or just nervous for the whole new experience or where that came from.

MARI OSAKA: In the beginning of the year, I was

fighting some, like, injury with my shoulder. So I played two tournaments and then took, like, three- or two-month break.

This was the first match back. Yeah, I was super nervous, but I think I played well, despite that. I wasn't going to miss this tournament, you know. It was a good experience.

Q. (Off microphone.) ...that you won all the matches between you guys and that she said you had the edge, like, a million to one or something, she said.

MARI OSAKA: I think (indiscernible).

Q. What do you remember about the, you know, the first time that she caught up to you? What do you remember about that? Because you were dominating for a long time.

MARI OSAKA: Sometimes I think she was throwing the matches on purpose just so that we could finish practice quicker.

So the moment she started trying, I was getting pissed off. I was, like, Come on, do you want to get through this? Because we'd spend, like, hours on the court.

But, yeah, I mean, it was frustrating, but what are you going to do? Just keep playing. Plus, it wasn't like she was beating me every single time. It was more about (indiscernible).

Q. What's it been like watching her sort of last year? She came into last year, like, 70th and now she's No. 1. Obviously she gets more attention. Whole family has been getting more attention. What's it been like for you from your vantage point seeing it up close?

MARI OSAKA: The one word that comes to my mind is, like, "amazing," that she's doing so amazing. Like, it's almost our dreams coming true that we have been working for our whole life. I'm really proud of her.

Q. (Question off microphone.)

MARI OSAKA: My own journey is separate, but of course I come to compare a little bit, so it's frustrating. But, you know, not much I can do about that.

Sorry, I just came off the court.



(Tearing up.)

(Comments off microphone.)

(Player exits interview room.)

MARI OSAKA: Sorry.

Q. Wondering what positives you took out of today's match, now having this experience of playing at this level for the first time, if you feel differently about it?

MARI OSAKA: Positives I feel is that I played this match with no pain, which I haven't done in such a long time. It feels really good, like I can keep moving forward from here.

Q. It's rare for sisters to get to be together in a tournament. How much time did you get to spend together? Naomi said that it was nice just to be able to spend whatever time it was that you spent together, that you helped loosen each other up and just enjoying sister time together. How much did you get to do that?

MARI OSAKA: We spent not that much together. Just dinners. We'd go out to dinner. Because she's usually busy around here. Our practice was separate. We only practiced once together. So I didn't see her that much.