



WTA 500

Thursday, April 2, 2026

Diana Shnaider def. Leylah Fernandez
6-3, 6-0
Round of 16

An Interview With Diana Shnaider

THE MODERATOR: First, happy birthday.

DIANA SHNAIDER: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Also, congrats on your win. Just can you walk us through the match?

DIANA SHNAIDER: Well, like overall, very happy with the performance today. Just feel like I just played very well today, very solid, smart, aggressive at the same time. I didn't have a lot of unforced mistakes. I mean, Leylah is a tricky opponent. So, yeah, very glad and satisfied with the win today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Do you like playing on your birthday? I feel like you did this last year here as well.

DIANA SHNAIDER: Yeah. I did it last year. I actually won, but it was second round. So I think it's actually my first time going into quarters here. So definitely it feels special, especially doing it on a Thursday.

But it kind of adds a little pressure because you don't want to do bad on your own birthday. If you lose, it still kind of like ruins your day just because it's, like, yeah, great. You cannot go and celebrate when you lose a match, unfortunately. So it's definitely a little bit of pressure just because you want to win and you want to just finish the day on a good note. But it's nice. It's nice. It has pluses and minuses.

Q. Congratulations and happy birthday. It was an amazing match. After having six break points in the opening -- in other opening service game in the first set and you were unable to convert, I thought that after the changeover at 3-2 when your leg was taped and looked at, that you maybe upped your aggression, and I was wondering if that was a tactical decision based on your leg because in the 8th game of the opening set, you had another six break points and you converted with an incredible running forehand on the run down the line. And considering the way you looked, I was just wondering if that was a tactical decision on your part to up your aggression.

DIANA SHNAIDER: Not really. That was a lot of thinking overall. But to be honest, yeah, I felt a little pain and then I went to my box, asked about what are you thinking, what are the solutions, because I knew that at some point I would coast easier, and I decided rather it's going to be sooner just because the pain cannot just go away randomly.

For sure, like six break points in the opening game and definitely a little bit of frustration just because you cannot convert it. But she did play good on the important shots. So, yeah, nothing I could have done there.

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Kelly A. McKee
Savannah Court Reporting, Inc.
Savannah, GA
kadmcr@yahoo.com



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And I feel like just the first time when I did a break point, I just tried to stay cool and just stick to the game and just try it again and again and again, just all over because, yeah, she can play maybe five times, six times good, but at some point if I would just continue keep pressuring her, like I can do it. So, yeah, I just tried to stick to my game and play aggressive.

Q. And that was a great shot.

DIANA SHNAIDER: Thank you.

Q. Looks like your birthday present is a matchup with the defending champ.

DIANA SHNAIDER: (Laughs).

Q. Happy birthday.

DIANA SHNAIDER: Thank you.

Q. Just talk a little bit about what that challenge will be like.

DIANA SHNAIDER: I mean, Jesse is a very solid player, very consistent. So it's never easy to play her. I feel like we're going to play each other for the third time. So looking forward to that. It's another challenge for me.

She's defending champion. So, for sure, she also has pressure. I feel like it's going to be our first meeting actually on clay. So I'm looking forward to that. It's going to be tough. I know that she never backs down, so yeah, definitely expecting a tough match and a grind on the clay. So good chance for me, and I will just try to accept it tomorrow and go for it.

Q. The bandana that you wear is such a signature. I was wondering since you switched to Yonex earlier this year if there's been any discussion to customizing it and making it more of a monetizable dressing.

DIANA SHNAIDER: Well, for now I will keep my own. Who knows what brings the future.

Q. Does your mom design them? How do they come together?

DIANA SHNAIDER: It just comes from childhood when I found out my first one, like my mom find out the first one was just polka dots, and we just kept it for the whole time, and I just didn't want to change it, basically.

Q. This is kind of a home court for Jesse because she kind of grew up playing down here, but it's a little bit of a home court for you in a way. Does it feel that way for you? I know Moscow is your favorite place, but you would have probably some great memories from this part of the world.

DIANA SHNAIDER: Yeah. It feels, for me, yeah, it feels special. Obviously it's close to North Carolina where I went to college. I have a lot of fans here. It's my birthday week, so I'm trying to come here and play, and just playing on green clay, it's the only tournament on green clay. So definitely I have special memories here, and I love to play here and I love the atmosphere here. The people are amazing and coming to cheer for all of the players just to see the matches.

So definitely for us it's a pleasure to play here, and I feel like, yeah, just looking forward to playing on the stadium tomorrow, I guess.

End of Interview

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Savannah Court Reporting, Inc.
Savannah, GA
kadmcr@yahoo.com