

WTA Website: www.wtatennis.com | @WTA | facebook.com/wta
 WTA Communications: Alex Prior (aprior@wtatennis.com)

ABU DHABI WTA WOMEN'S TENNIS OPEN – SEMIFINALS

[9] MARIA SAKKARI (GRE #22) vs. [4] ARYNA SABALENKA (BLR #10)

Sabalenka leads 3-1

Sabalenka prevailed over **Sakkari** at both Dubai and Doha in 2020... **Sakkari** has hit 20 aces combined in her past two matches... **Sabalenka** bidding for 14th consecutive win

MARTA KOSTYUK (UKR #99) vs. VERONIKA KUDERMETOVA (RUS #46)

First meeting

Kudermetova was two points from defeat during upset over Svitolina on Monday... **Kostyuk** produced 41 winners during her QF victory... **Kudermetova** appearing in biggest SF of her career

SEMIFINAL RECORDS

PLAYER	LAST FINAL REACHED (final result)	CAREER SF W/L	CAREER F W/L
[4] Aryna Sabalenka	2020 Linz (WON)	12-6	8-4
[9] Maria Sakkari	2019 Rabat (WON)	2-7	1-1
Veronika Kudermetova	-	0-4	-
Marta Kostyuk	-	-	-

POTENTIAL FINAL HEAD-TO-HEADS

	KOSTYUK	KUDERMETOVA
SAKKARI	First meeting	Kudermetova leads 1-0
SABALENKA	First meeting	Sabalenka leads 1-0

RANKING PROJECTIONS

- After Abu Dhabi*, there will be no changes among the WTA's Top 5
- **Aryna Sabalenka** could rise to No.7 (from No.10) if she wins the title
- **Maria Sakkari** is projected to rise to No.21 by reaching the final and back into the Top 20 by lifting the title
- **Veronika Kudermetova** and **Marta Kostyuk** are guaranteed to improve their career-best rankings by reaching semifinals:

Kudermetova

SF = No.41, F = No.36, W = No.33

Kostyuk

SF = No.78, F = No.67, W = No.57

*The points from Abu Dhabi will be added to the rankings on Monday, January 18

[9] MARIA SAKKARI (GRE #22) VS. [4] ARYNA SABALENKA (BLR #10)

Head-to-head: SABALENKA leads 3-1

2020	DOHA	HARD O	R16	ARYNA SABALENKA	6-3 6-0
2020	DUBAI	HARD O	R32	ARYNA SABALENKA	6-2 4-6 6-1
2019	ZHUHAI	HARD O	RR	ARYNA SABALENKA	6-3 6-4
2019	CINCINNATI	HARD O	R16	MARIA SAKKARI	6-7(4) 6-4 6-4

SAKKARI		SABALENKA	
Career Prize Money	\$3,540,619	Career Prize Money	\$6,804,310
Plays	Right-handed	Plays	Right-handed
Date of Birth (Age)	July 25, 1995 (25)	Date of Birth (Age)	May 5, 1998 (22)
Singles Titles	1	Singles Titles	8
Tournament W-L (MD)	4-0	Tournament W-L (MD)	4-0
YTD / Career W-L (MD)	4-0 / 96-86	YTD / Career W-L (MD)	4-0 / 130-62
3-Set W-L (YTD / Career)	0-0 / 30-36	3-Set W-L (YTD / Career)	1-0 / 45-23
Tie-Break W-L (YTD / Career)	1-0 / 30-17	Tie-Break W-L (YTD / Career)	1-0 / 28-26
Hard Court W-L (YTD / Career)	4-0 / 59-56	Hard Court W-L (YTD / Career)	4-0 / 105-40
Top 10 W-L (YTD / Career)	1-0 / 11-13	Top 10 W-L (YTD / Career)	0-0 / 12-13
Top 20 W-L (YTD / Career)	2-0 / 19-34	Top 20 W-L (YTD / Career)	1-0 / 26-18
Coach	Tom Hill	Coach	Anton Dubrov

SAKKARI:

- Along with lucky losers Grammatikopoulou and Papamichail, was one of three Greek players to start the main draw of Abu Dhabi WTA Women's Tennis Open
- Competing this week at No.22, just two spots shy of her career high of No.20; can break back into Top 20 by reaching the final
- Broke serve nine times across wins over teenagers Potapova in 1r and Gauff in 2r, then fired 11 aces in victory over No.15 Muguruza in 3r
- Reeled off the final 10 games to defeat No.4 Kenin in the QFs, her fifth career victory over Top 5 ranked player – previously beat No.5 Svitolina (2020 Ostrava), No.5 Bencic (2020 St. Petersburg), No.5 Kvitova (2019 Rome, via ret.) and No.5 Ka.Pliskova (2018 Rome)
- Also faced Kenin this week in Abu Dhabi in doubles along with partner Vekic, falling to the American and Toljanovic in a tight three-set match
- The last time she won four matches in a row was during her SF run at 2019 Rome (as qualifier, l. Ka.Pliskova)
- Reached the final four on two occasions in 2020: at St. Petersburg (l. Rybakina in SF) and Ostrava (l. Azarenka in SF)
- Faces No.10 Sabalenka today in their fifth career meeting. Recovered from 7-6 4-1 down to win the first of these encounters at 2019 Cincinnati
- Last season, began her campaign with 1r exit at Brisbane (l. Osaka)
- Secured best year-end ranking of No.22 in 2020; broke into Top 20 on February 24 for first time at No.20
- Scored third and fourth Top 5 wins of her career last season, over No.5 Svitolina at Ostrava and No.5 Bencic at St. Petersburg. Previous wins came over No.5 Ka.Pliskova (2018 Rome) and No.5 Kvitova (2019 Rome, via ret.)
- Upset No.10 seed Keys to reach the R16 for the first time at one of the four Slams, at 2020 Australian Open (l. Kvitova) – would later tie result by reaching R16 at US Open (l. S.Williams)

- Qualified for WTA Elite Trophy Zhuhai in 2019 for first time in career (fell in RR stage). That season won maiden WTA title at Rabat, recovering from a set and break down to defeat Konta in final
- Highlights of 2018 were reaching her first tour-level final at San Jose (l. Buzarnescu) and scoring maiden Top 5 win over No.5 Ka.Pliskova in 2r at Rome
- Notched first Top 10 victory of career over No.6 Wozniacki en route to first WTA SF of career at 2017 Wuhan Open
- Broke into Top 50 for first time at No.49 on October 9, 2017
- At 2016 Australian Open, by reaching 2r (d. Y.Wang, l. Suárez Navarro) became the first woman from Greece to win a main draw match at a Slam since Daniilidou d. Ka.Pliskova at 2013 Australian Open
- Reached first career WTA QF at 2016 Istanbul (as qualifier, l. Kovinic)
- Fell 1r on WTA main draw debut at 2015 US Open (as qualifier, l. Q.Wang)
- WTA qualifying debut came at 2012 Palermo
- Made debut on ITF Circuit in 2010; owns seven ITF Circuit singles titles and five in doubles

SABALENKA:

- Has posted wins over Hercog, Tomljanovic, Jabeur and Rybakina here in Abu Dhabi
- Win over Jabeur was revenge for a three-set loss at last year's Roland Garros, which was also her last defeat in singles – since then has posted a perfect record, riding a career-best 13-match winning streak into today's SF clash, having captured titles at last two events of 2020: Ostrava and Linz
- Won 13 of 15 service games to see off No.19 Rybakina on Sunday; went 4-3 against fellow Top 20 players last year, falling only to the Top 10 trio of No.8 Bertens (Billie Jean King Cup), No.2 Halep (Dubai) and No.5 Svitolina (Strasbourg)
- Faces No.22 Sakkari in today's SF, their fifth meeting in past 17 months; also beat the Greek in back-to-back weeks last February, at Dubai and then during Doha title run, as well as en route to the trophy at Zhuhai in the final event of 2019
- Posted 3-2 record in SF matches in 2020, including Adelaide (SF), Doha (WON), Strasbourg (SF), Ostrava (WON) and Linz (WON)
- Has enjoyed success in the first week of the season before, having captured the title in Shenzhen in 2019. However, failed to defend this title in 2020, falling 2r (as No.2 seed)
- In her last event in the Middle East, won the third Premier 5 title of career at Doha last year (d. Kvitova in F)
- Beginning a season inside the Top 10 for the first time, having finished 2020 at No.10 courtesy of a nine-match win streak and back-to-back titles – at Ostrava (d. Azarenka in F) and Linz (d. Mertens in F)
- After also taking home the silverware at Doha (d. Kvitova in F), was one of two players (also Halep) to lift three singles titles during disrupted 2020 season
- At Ostrava completed the sweep of titles by teaming up with Mertens to win the doubles
- Ended as World No.11 for the second straight year in 2019 after capturing three WTA singles titles at Shenzhen (d. Riske in F), Wuhan (d. Riske in F) and Zhuhai (d. Bertens in F)
- Having also won Wuhan in 2018 (d. Kontaveit in F), became first player to successfully defend Wuhan title
- Made Top 10 debut on January 28, 2019 following 3r run at 2019 Australian Open

MATCH NOTES: ABU DHABI WTA WOMEN'S TENNIS OPEN

ABU DHABI, UAE | JANUARY 6-13, 2021 | USD \$565,530 WTA 500

- Ended 2019 at No.2 in WTA doubles rankings after capturing first Grand Slam doubles trophy at US Open (w/Mertens, d. Azarenka/Barty in F). Earlier in the season, the pair claimed the 'Sunshine Double' by winning back-to-back titles at Indian Wells (d. Krejčíková/Siniakova in F) and Miami (d. Stosur/ Zhang in F)
- Qualified for WTA Finals Shenzhen in doubles (w/Mertens), going 1-2 in the round robin stage
- Enjoyed breakthrough season in 2018, lifting two titles, at New Haven (d. Suárez Navarro in F) and Wuhan (d. Kontaveit in F), winning 46 matches and finishing at No.11 in the rankings
- Also in 2018, was R-Up at Lugano (l. Mertens) and Eastbourne (l. Wozniacki), made SF at Cincinnati, reached five QFs and produced a career-best Grand Slam run to R16 at US Open
- Entered Top 50 on April 16, 2018 (after Lugano) and Top 20 on August 27 of same year (after New Haven)
- Broke into Top 100 at No.76 on October 16, 2017 after reaching first tour-level final at Tianjin (l. Sharapova). Also in 2017 made SF run at Tashkent (l. Babos) and lifting WTA 125k Series title at Mumbai (d. Jakupovic)
- Made Grand Slam main draw debut 2017 Wimbledon, falling in 2r (as qualifier, d. Khromacheva, l. Witthoeft)
- Fell 1r on main draw debut at 2017 Dubai (as qualifier, l. Ka.Bondarenko)
- Member of Belarus Fed Cup team that lost to USA in 2017 final – scored first Top 20 win of career with defeat of No.13 Stephens during 2017 Fed Cup final in Minsk
- WTA qualifying debut came at 2016 Rabat
- Made debut on ITF Circuit in Minsk in 2012. Lifted first three ITF Circuit titles in 2015, including a 13-match win streak towards the year's end, bringing back-to-back trophies in Antalya, Turkey

MARTA KOSTYUK (UKR #99) VS. VERONIKA KUDERMETOVA (RUS #46)

Head-to-head: First meeting

KOSTYUK		KUDERMETOVA	
Career Prize Money	\$640,502	Career Prize Money	\$1,676,537
Plays	Right-handed	Plays	Right-handed
Date of Birth (Age)	Jun. 27, 2002 (18)	Date of Birth (Age)	March 24, 1997 (23)
Singles Titles	0	Singles Titles	0
Tournament W-L (MD)	4-0	Tournament W-L (MD)	4-0
YTD / Career W-L (MD)	4-0 / 12-14	YTD / Career W-L (MD)	4-0 / 49-40
3-Set W-L (YTD / Career)	2-0 / 2-7	3-Set W-L (YTD / Career)	2-0 / 20-13
Tie-Break W-L (YTD / Career)	0-1 / 3-2	Tie-Break W-L (YTD / Career)	1-0 / 18-11
Hard Court W-L (YTD / Career)	4-0 / 8-6	Hard Court W-L (YTD / Career)	4-0 / 30-25
Top 10 W-L (YTD / Career)	0-0 / 0-3	Top 10 W-L (YTD / Career)	1-0 / 5-3
Top 20 W-L (YTD / Career)	0-0 / 0-4	Top 20 W-L (YTD / Career)	1-0 / 6-8
Coach	Talyna Beiko	Coach	Sergey Demekhine

KOSTYUK:

- Recovered from losing a 25-minute opening set to beat Sorribes Tormo in QF
- Earlier in the tournament, saw off Top 100 players Hsieh and Zidank in straight sets – yet to face a seed
- Prior to this week, deepest run at a WTA tournament was QF showing at 2019 Strasbourg
- Faces No.46 Kudermetova in today's SF; owns five career Top 50 wins, most recently upsetting No.45 Sevastova en route to 3r at 2020 US Open
- One of five teenagers in the Abu Dhabi draw (also Fernandez, Gauff, Potapova and Wang Xiyu) and only one to make it beyond 2r
- By reaching SF is guaranteed to break into Top 80 for the first time
- Broke into Top 100 at No.97 on November 2, 2020, after reaching back-to-back finals on ITF Circuit in US
- Made 3r at 2020 US Open (l. eventual champion Osaka in 3s)
- In February 2020, picked up third ITF singles title of career, at a \$60k event in Cairo
- Season highlight in 2019 was reaching first WTA QF, at Strasbourg (l. Garcia)
- Made Grand Slam main draw debut at 2018 Australian Open and reached 3r, having received a WC into the qualifying event by virtue of winning the junior title there in 2017 (d. Masarova in F). Was first player born in 2002 to play in a Grand Slam main draw. Was also youngest player to reach the 3r at a major since 1997 US Open when Mirjana Lucic-Baroni (15 years, 182 days) reached this stage
- Scored two Top 50 wins in 2018, over No.27 Peng (Australian Open), No.26 Gavrilova (Fed Cup)
- Won first ITF Circuit title of career at \$25k ITF/Dunakeszi-HUN in 2017 (d. Pera in F)
- Played first WTA qualifying at 2017 Mallorca (l. Kalinskaya in 1r)
- Ukrainian Fed Cup Team 2018-20
- Won 2017 Australian Open girls' singles title (d. Masarova in F) and ITF Junior Masters event in Chengdu, China in October 2017; also won 2017 US Open girls' doubles (w/Daniilovic) and rose as high as No.3 in junior rankings in June 2017
- Played first professional event at \$10k ITF/Kharkhiv-UKR in August 2016 (fell in 1r)

KUDERMETOVA:

- Has advanced to fifth – and most prestigious – WTA SF of her career at the Abu Dhabi WTA Women's Tennis Open
- Recovered from a set and break down to upset World No.5 Svitolina in QF. Came within two points of defeat in the final set before bouncing back to complete third Top 5 win of her career, having previously beaten No.5 Svitolina at 2019 Moscow and No.3 Ka.Pliskova at the 2020 Western and Southern Open
- Also upset No.10 seed Kontaveit in 1r and saw off qualifier Turati in 2r and Badosa in 3r
- Sole Russian remaining from a tournament-leading seven started the main draw here in Abu Dhabi
- Faces 18-year-old Kostyuk in today's SF; posted 1-1 record against teenagers in 2020, beating Yastremska (Dubai) and losing to Swiatek (US Open)
- Owns 0-4 career record in SF matches advancing to the final four at 2019 's-Hertogenbosch (l. Riske), 2019 Hiroshima (l. Doi), 2019 Tianjin (l. Watson) and 2020 Hobart (l. Zhang)
- During last year's Middle East swing, made 2r at both Doha and Dubai
- Began 2020 season with qualifying exit at Brisbane and then SF run at Hobart
- Scored first win over a Top-3 ranked opponent by upsetting No.3 Ka.Pliskova at 2020 Western & Southern Open. Other highlights in 2020 included aforementioned Hobart SF and closing out season with back-to-back QFs at Ostrava and Linz
- Won 27 main-draw matches during 2019 – had previously won six across entire career – to rise over sixty places in the WTA rankings, making Top 100 debut on February 4 and Top 50 debut on September 9
- Singles highlights in 2019 included reaching maiden WTA SF at 's-Hertogenbosch (l. eventual champion Riske), 3r at Roland Garros (d. No.13 Wozniacki in 1r – her maiden Grand Slam main draw win and also first over a Top 20 opponent – l. Kanepi) and winning WTA 125K Series title at Guadalajara (d. Bouzkova in F)
- Posted first two Top 10 wins of career in final weeks of 2019, over No.10 Bencic at Wuhan and No.4 Svitolina at Moscow
- Fell 1r on Grand Slam main draw debut at 2019 Australian Open (as qualifier, l. Kenin)
- Won career first WTA doubles title at 2019 Wuhan with Duan (d. Mertens/Sabalenka in F); also in 2019 was R-Up at Charleston (w/Khromacheva) and Lugano (w/Voskoboeva)
- Posted maiden career WTA QF runs in 2018, first at 's-Hertogenbosch (l. eventual champion Krunic) and then Gstaad (l. Bouchard)
- Reached 2r on WTA main draw debut at 2018 Stuttgart (d. No.25 Suárez Navarro, l. eventual champion Ka.Pliskova)
- WTA qualifying debut came at 2014 Moscow
- Made Billie Jean King Cup debut in 2014 vs. Australia (l. Stosur – her first Tour-level match)
- On ITF Circuit, owns four singles – most recently at 2018 \$25K Keito-JPN – and 16 doubles titles
- Made professional debut at \$50K ITF/Kazan-RUS in 2014

Dhabi WTA Women's Tennis Open - Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Head-to-Heads

Semi Finals

SAKKARI, MARIA vs SABALENKA, ARYNA

SABALENKA, ARYNA 3 - 1

Year	Tournament Name	Surface	I-O	Round	Winner	rank _ seed		rank _ seed	Scores
2019	CINCINNATI	HARD	O	R16	SAKKARI, MARIA	33	*	9	9 6-7(4) 6-4 6-4
2019	ZHUHAI	HARD	O	R1	SABALENKA, ARYNA	14	4	22	9 6-3 6-4
2020	DUBAI	HARD	O	R32	SABALENKA, ARYNA	13	7	21	* 6-2 4-6 6-1
2020	DOHA	HARD	O	R16	SABALENKA, ARYNA	13	9	20	15 6-3 6-0

KOSTYUK, MARTA vs KUDERMETOVA, VERONIKA

There are no head to heads

Head-to-Heads

SAKKARI, MARIA vs KOSTYUK, MARTA

There are no head to heads

SABALENKA, ARYNA vs KOSTYUK, MARTA

There are no head to heads

SAKKARI, MARIA vs KUDERMETOVA, VERONIKA

KUDERMETOVA, VERONIKA 1 - 0

Year	Tournament Name	Surface	I-O	Round	Winner	rank _ seed	rank _ seed	Scores
2019	ISTANBUL	CLAY	O	R32	KUDERMETOVA, VERONI	76 *	43 8	6-3 6-4

SABALENKA, ARYNA vs KUDERMETOVA, VERONIKA

SABALENKA, ARYNA 1 - 0

Year	Tournament Name	Surface	I-O	Round	Winner	rank _ seed	rank _ seed	Scores
2015	ANTALYA 12	HARD	O	R32	SABALENKA, ARYNA	1215 *	341 1	6-3 6-3