

[Simona Halep](#) got revenge against [Ekaterina Makarova](#) on Thursday night, avenging a loss to the Russian at the [Australian Open](#) with a win at the [Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships](#).

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Makarova had taken Halep out in the quarterfinals at the Happy Slam, putting an end to Halep's perfect start to the season - the Romanian was 9-0 going into that match, and had won 18 straight sets.

Halep's revenge in Dubai wasn't straightforward, though. She lost the second set in just 34 minutes, and after going up 5-3 in the third she watched on as Makarova caught up to 5-all. But the No.1-seeded Romanian lifted her game just enough at the very end, holding at love for 6-5 and breaking one last time to finish off the No.6-seeded Russian, 6-3, 1-6, 7-5. She won it on her fifth match point.

"There were ups and downs tonight. It wasn't easy to be in control the whole match because she's a good player," Halep said. "I played really well in the first set, but then in the second set she started to hit stronger, and I think I was one step further behind the baseline, which wasn't good for me.

"But I just tried to relax and go forward in the court more and take the ball faster, and I'm really happy it ended up being a good match for me. It means a lot, because I need more matches now."

The World No.4 was asked about missing out on the first four match points at 6-5.

"Yeah, I was a little bit nervous to finish it off," she commented. "I don't know why, but sometimes you just feel like that. So you just have to stay very focused and keep fighting for every point."

Next up for Halep is No.3 seed [Caroline Wozniacki](#) , who reeled off eight games in a row from 5-all in the first set to completely run away with it against the No.10 seed, [Flavia Pennetta](#) , 7-5, 6-0.

Wozniacki lost nine points in those eight games - she won the last nine points of the match, too.

"I felt like we had some long rallies out there," Wozniacki said. "I think there was one point that took forever. I was like, 'Are you kidding me?' How am I supposed to play a full match like this?"

"But it was fun. I always enjoy playing her because we have a lot of long rallies and you feel like you have to get out every shot. Every shot you've learned, you need to pick it up and enjoy it."

[Halep and Wozniacki are tied in their head-to-head, 1-1](#) . They haven't played since 2013.

"Simona is obviously a good player," Wozniacki said. "She takes the ball early, she likes to play with angles - it's going to be a little bit similar to today. But I haven't played her for a long time, so I don't remember exactly how she plays. I've seen her on TV obviously. I'll need to ask my dad for a few tips."

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