

**August 11, 2010**



K. CLIJSTERS/D. Safina

7-5, 6-2

An interview with:

## DINARA SAFINA

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Can you talk about what was going on with your hip? Was it hurting?**

DINARA SAFINA: Yeah.

**Q. Is that a new injury for you or something that's been bothering you for a while?**

DINARA SAFINA: Well, it's kind of side effect from my back injury. So the back injury is better, but they told me that now it's gonna -- because my hip was never working properly, so I'm gonna feel the hip.

It's not an excuse because I can practice and play, but it's there the whole time and it's a little bit like stopping from some thoughts, like some points. Like I'm not playing like pain -- you know, I don't know how to say -- the mind is not free, just on the point. It's a little bit like, Okay, let's see how is this point gonna be the hip.

**Q. Do you think the rain delay helped at all? You had the injury timeout before the rain delay, and none after that.**

DINARA SAFINA: Yeah, well, obviously it helped, but not for much. Because once I finished the warm-up before the match started to continue, I started to feel it again. I was like, Okay.

Bu, um, I cannot say it's not painful for me during the play. I can play forehand, backhand, serve. This is not pain. It's more like when I stop the point, and then it's like it shocks me a little bit.

**Q. Do you think it's also just a mental thing, Oh, my God, is it gonna hurt?**

DINARA SAFINA: A little bit. You know, like I say, it's there, so it's like, Come on. Once I turned to my coach and I said, Listen, is it ever gonna go away from me? Because I feel like I can play, everything is there, it's just that my mind is more on how I walk or something like this.

**Q. I know you don't want to use it as an excuse --**

DINARA SAFINA: I don't like to use excuse, because if I'm playing on the court it means that I'm there and I'm 100%.

**Q. So what do you think was the key difference then between tonight's match and you played her here last year here with a different result: you won?**

DINARA SAFINA: Yeah, but just look how many matches I played last year and look how many matches I played this year.

**Q. It's been a tough year for you since you last played here. What are your thoughts on this year and how you've slipped in the rankings, and how tough has it been for you?**

DINARA SAFINA: I mean, I would say it's a year of lessons, many new experience, many new changes I made. So, I mean, it's you know, like from one thing that -- like the career change 180 degrees. You know, like completely the opposite.

Well, now for me the main thing it's, as I said, to be healthy. This the most important thing. I will keep on working hard day by day. And I feel like my game is getting better. Like the first was very close. I had chances to win. In second set I was 2-Love up.

So it's just a matter for me now to continue to try to play as many matches as I can. Because last year I had hundred matches, and this time -- I would say now I'm coming back, not that I came back in Stuttgart. Now I would say I'm coming

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back.

**Q. What are the positives you can take out of this match?**

DINARA SAFINA: I think the game was overall I would say not bad. I think it was, I mean, very solid. She played some good points. She was -- I would say she was better in some crucial moments. She served very well at 5-All; it was Love-30 on her serve. I had chances there, but she played some good points.

So, you know, just to keep on working hard and keep on going. There's not much I can change.

**Q. Is the injury something that can only get better with rest?**

DINARA SAFINA: No, this is the hip, it's not the back. Hip, it's just opposite. I have to use this muscle that it starts is to activate it, you know, to start working properly. This is the problem. It's not that I'm gonna rest and it's gonna get better.

So, yes, it's gonna get better. But once I will start to play, as I'm gonna start to use it again, it's gonna come back. So for me, it's to keep on using it, to start to use these muscles.

**Q. So it's nothing that would keep you out of the US Open?**

DINARA SAFINA: No, no. It has nothing to do. This is the problem. Like doctor told me, Okay. So rest or play; it's gonna be the same. Once you're gonna come back it's gonna be the same.

**Q. What about the tape on your back? Is it just precautionary?**

DINARA SAFINA: What?

**Q. In the picture on their website it's like taped.**

DINARA SAFINA: They put me yesterday, or before yesterday, just to -- it's Kinesio tape just to relax the muscle, but nothing.

**Q. You served very well. You had a first serve of 70%; that's pretty consistent.**

DINARA SAFINA: So that's what I'm saying. The game is getting better. I'm feeling like it's not anymore the disaster that it was. So this is the positive thing.

Everything, it's solid everything, so now I just have to continue to work hard, you know, to make some adjustments. You know, once I'm

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break up to close the match, you know. Or what I have to do like to maybe be a little bit more aggressive.

So this is like everything is there, but just I have to within matches to find myself more.

**Q. So are you playing Montreal or New Haven before the US Open?**

DINARA SAFINA: Montreal. New Haven I doubt in case, because -- in case some reason, but I don't think it's gonna be make any sense.

**Q. Ana Ivanovic was in here earlier today, and she talked about the friendship you two started recently.**

DINARA SAFINA: Yes.

**Q. Can you talk about that? You have things in common obviously, both former No. 1s.**

DINARA SAFINA: Well, actually, the funny thing, we been so long on the tour and we never talked with each other, because I thought that she was more protected. But then we had a practice with her in San Diego -- in Stanford first, then San Diego. I mean, I didn't knew her, so this was the problem.

And then like, Okay, so let's go like for a drink or dinner. So we went for dinner, and really she's a very nice girl. I'm surprised, because really I felt she was much more protected or like closed. But not really. We had so much fun. We went for dinner together.

I just wish her like really good luck. I knew she been going through tough moments, so that she comes back because she's really playing good.

She also has a coach that I used to work a little bit, so that's why we're practicing many times together. I saw she's playing much better, so just that she keeps on going and that she comes back.

**Q. I'll do a quick nontennis one. What happened to the dog? Are you getting it?**

DINARA SAFINA: Yeah, I'll get it when I will finish this season, because I need time to go and to find it. I was about to buy it. I went to the lady who has the dog, but she just -- I went with a doctor, veterinarian, because I have no idea about the dogs. They can sell me whatever is it and say, This is the best dog.

And I went, and she was more jumping on

the doctor than on me. So I said, There is no connection to me. They say like dog has to come to you, so I took her in my hands and she was like -- she was few minutes and she left. I was-like, Okay. Thank you.

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