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E. VESNINA/M. Oudin

6-2, 6-3

An interview with:

ELENA VESNINA

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. This match went really similar to your match against her in Ponte Vedra Beach. What was the game plan coming in?

ELENA VESNINA: It wasn't easy match for me. Today was very tough conditions for both of us. It was like in a sauna. When I came become from the locker room, I felt like I'm in a sauna.

But definitely today was a pretty similar match, you are right, like in Ponte Vedra, two sets, but it wasn't easy.

My game plan was maybe not to play in one way with her, like similar way, like only flat. So I was trying to mix a little bit and trying to play wide so I can open the court and dominate the game.

Q. She was only able to hit one winner today in the whole match. What were you able to do to make that possible?

ELENA VESNINA: Yeah, I saw on the screen after the first set that I have like ten winners or eight winners or something, and she has not even one. So, for me, I was surprised, because I didn't remember that on the match because I was so focused.

Yeah, maybe today she didn't play her best tennis. But I think I was playing today pretty well and I was dominating through the whole match and trying to be aggressive.

On the other way, I was trying to play smart today, not to be, you know, so she can read my game. Because she's very smart player. She

can read your game and be everywhere on the court.

So for me, today the question was try to be smarter than her. (Laughter.)

Q. Were you happy with your first-serve percentage? Seemed a little low: 42%.

ELENA VESNINA: Yeah.

Q. What do you need to do to improve that?

ELENA VESNINA: Today was really hot, and when I was serving for the match on the 5-2, I was like, I think my brain was start to melt. (Laughing.) I didn't see anything. I didn't see the ball. I think I did two double faults in a row. It was very tough today to play.

Yeah, of course I need to improve my serve, percentage on my first serve, because my next match is gonna be...

Q. Do you think you might want to slow it down a little bit?

ELENA VESNINA: Yeah, I was trying today even to slow it down, but it --

Q. So fast points to get out of there?

ELENA VESNINA: Yeah.

Q. Do you remember the last time you played when it was this hot?

ELENA VESNINA: Actually, I played in Istanbul the week before. It was also very hot, but I think humidity was less than here. I think today I was maybe one of the hottest day in my life on the court. (Laughter.)

Q. You played very well in Istanbul. You made the final and lost a tough final there. How much momentum do you think you can bring from that run into Cincinnati? You play Schiavone in the next round, and she's been having some trouble since the French Open. Is that a match you think you can win?

ELENA VESNINA: French Open was almost two months ago, and Francesca, she's a very good player and I have a lot of respect to her.

Yeah, it's gonna be tough match, especially if it's gonna be the same weather like today. I think it even doesn't matter against who you're playing on such conditions. Question is like you need to stay alive at the end of the match. (Smiling.)

Yeah, definitely the final in Istanbul bring me some good emotions, some positive emotions, and even losing in the final. I was a little bit upset, of course, especially on my birthday. It was tough moment for me. But still, I get through that.

I'm here and I passed the first round, and I'm really happy with this.

Q. You haven't played Schiavone in four years. Such a long interval between matches, does that pose some unique challenges versus somebody you're more familiar with that you've played with recently?

ELENA VESNINA: Yeah, when you played four years ago it doesn't make any sense when you're playing now. It's like she's a different player that she was four years ago; me also. I think I improved my game since four years ago.

So it's just the way, how we're gonna play against each other. Like it's totally different match, different tournament. I think I beat her on the hardcourt also in Miami.

But, still, I mean, so we're gonna play second time on hardcourt. Just gonna be different match. I think both of us gonna try to do our best.

She didn't play that well after French Open, so right now she's very motivated to win some more matches before the US Open.

Q. You're victory against the Williams sisters at Wimbledon, where does that rank for you in your career?

ELENA VESNINA: This is one of the best victory in my life, even if it was in the doubles. In the Wimbledon, beat Williams sisters, it's something amazing and something incredible.

Even when we were playing with Vera, we didn't even think that we were playing against Williams sisters. We were trying to win every point. And then when we won, she said to me, We won? I said, Yeah, yeah, we won. (Laughing.)

It was actually very emotional moment for both of us.

Q. What do you think is the secret to beating the Williams sisters?

ELENA VESNINA: Even already one month left after Wimbledon and I have no idea. But actually, I think that was maybe battle of characters on the match, because maybe they were not expecting us to play that good and expecting that we're gonna be so like a team.

Because me and Vera, we were in the Wimbledon like a very good team. We were helping each other, we were supporting each other, and maybe that was the key for the victory.

Q. Aside from improving your serve, what other aspects of your game do you really want to improve prior to the US Open specifically?

ELENA VESNINA: I want to improve a little bit of my return also. Because today, Melanie, she didn't serve that hard, and I mean, she didn't have that flat, you know, fast serve.

But with other players, especially with the tall players who's gonna serve a little bit more stronger, I have to work out on it a little bit.

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