

August 17, 2011



J. JANKOVIC/J. Zheng

4-6, 6-3, 6-1

An interview with:

JELENA JANKOVIC

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How you think you did today?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Um, you know, I felt pretty good, you know, throughout the whole match. Then I had a big lead in the first set. I was up 4-1 and then, you know, I thought I had some bad calls. There was like three or four bad calls from the umpire.

I really didn't agree with those. But unfortunately we didn't have the challenge there, and so I had to just go, you know, with it, you know, and just kind of focus.

But anyway, I lost that first set, and then I kind of regrouped and then started from the beginning. Then, you know, I started playing better and I continued with my tactics. You know, I thought I did the right things.

Then in the third set, I just had to still stay strong, especially in the heat. It was not easy. It was pretty hot out there, and I think I got a nice tan being in the sun for, I don't know, three hours or something.

But the most important thing is that I got a win, so I get to go to the next round.

Q. Were you happier with how you served today?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, I served pretty well. I think Zheng is a really good returner and she really picks up those balls. Even though sometimes you hit a really good serve, then she can come up with even better returns.

So you have to be alert and ready that anything can come back. And as well from the

groundstrokes. She can just pick those up like, I don't know, very few players can do what she can do. You really hit a deep ball and she stays so low and returns such a hard and flat ball.

So, I mean, she really, you know, gave me a hard time. It was a battle out there. But I was, you know, at the end the luckier one.

Q. In Canada and here we've had a lot of upsets. Why do you think that's happening?

JELENA JANKOVIC: You know, I can speak on my behalf, because, you know, I'm one of those players that the more I play the better I get. I haven't competed in a while, so obviously, you know, when I was in Toronto I felt like I haven't played any matches in the year. That's how I felt.

I had no idea what I was doing on the court, and I made bad decisions and kind of was thinking too much and all of that. So it's completely different playing and practicing and being under pressure and doing the right things in the important times of the matches.

So this tournament I'm doing better. I'm happy that I'm in the third round. I thought I played better today than I did yesterday, so that's a positive thing. Hopefully I can keep improving.

Q. Looks like we have a familiar face back in your box. Talk about working with Ricardo Sanchez again.

JELENA JANKOVIC: He's here doing some business, so we are good friends and he's helping me out here a little bit. So we'll see. You know, we know each other for a long time and, you know, it's nice to see him here as well.

Q. What do you think you're doing better and worse than when you were No. 1 in 2008?

JELENA JANKOVIC: I think, you know, obviously when I was playing and I was No. 1, I was maybe moving better than I am now. But I think I'm starting to move good again, so I don't want to put myself down and say that I'm not

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moving well.

I think my serve is better maybe than when I was No. 1 in the world. But I think overall, you know, it has as well to do with the confidence and motivation and a lot of other things, not just the tennis game.

So with all that said, your game can kind of fall apart at times when you don't feel 100% motivated or you don't really have the confidence, you haven't played many matches and all that.

But, you know, I don't want to complain right now. I'm doing well in this moment, this tournament, so I want to continue. There is still, you know, almost, you know, maybe three months of playing, and anything can happen.

You know, I can be even better than I ever was; that's my goal. I still have a lot of things to prove, not just to other people, but to myself. That's why I play this game. I still enjoy it.

The most important thing I enjoy competing. I'm not too crazy about practicing, and sometimes I wish I could just go and compete, because I always have been a good competitor.

But in order to compete well and do well in tournaments, you've got to put a lot hours of training, even though I'm talented and all of that. You can't do it without hard work.

So there was times when I was kind of being lazy and stuff like that, but now I'm back on track. I really am working hard again, and I'm willing to do whatever it takes to come back to the top again.

Q. What changed the match? First set was close and then you started rolling in the second and third sets.

JELENA JANKOVIC: You know, I was up 4-1 and I kind of thought I lost my focus. I got a few bad calls. I hit an ace and then some lines. And I don't know what the rule is when the girl calls the ball out during the point and then she continues to play. I don't know if that's allowed or not? Is that allowed? What are the rules?

For example, she was running to hit a ball and nobody called anything, but she said, Out, my opponent. Then, you know, I was standing and looking, and then all of a sudden she's running, she is continuing to play.

Q. I thought you had to stop play.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, then I asked the umpire. You know, I mean, she called it out. When you call the ball out you have to stop. The

point is over. Then she goes, No, no, it's my decision.

I said, Okay. Somebody can just talk to you during the point and then you can just continue I guess. Okay. I learned something new. (Laughter.)

I have no idea.

Q. Did you pick up anything on her serve? You were breaking her a lot more frequently.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, I tried to -- I was serving well and holding my serve pretty well, but then on her service games I tried to put some pressure on her serve when I'm returning.

But as well when I would come up with some good shots I would hit them flat and hard, and she would come up with an even better one with her groundstrokes. She has those really flat and low groundstrokes that are tough to return.

So I had to stay low myself and kind of pick those up and kind of hold my ground, which was not easy to do during those three sets. But I managed to do it, and I'm happy with the win.

Q. You said you felt like you got a couple bad calls. Do you think she did as well?

JELENA JANKOVIC: You think?

Q. I'm wondering if you did.

JELENA JANKOVIC: I think they all went her way, especially in that first set. Did you watch?

Q. I watched, yeah, the second and third.

JELENA JANKOVIC: No, the first.

Q. I missed the first.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Oh. Maybe there was one bad call, but that's 4 to 1. But that doesn't matter anyway. When you don't have the challenge, really it can go either way. Those calls are so close, and obviously we didn't play on the court that had a challenge.

So, I mean, it can go either way. You just have to go with it and try to focus and forget about it. If you thought there was a bad call, that it should have been your point, you still have to go and continue and fight and focus and do your job. I mean...

Q. At the end of the third set, you were

up by quite a lot but you your body language seemed like it was so-so.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, you know, maybe because I really wanted to win and I sometimes got frustrated with myself because sometimes I would kind of, you know -- I don't know, I would lose my intensity and I would kind of relax a bit.

At this level, you know, you cannot really relax. You have to be on the top and really ready the whole time. As soon as you relax and kind of your body language goes down and your game goes down a level, your opponent can see that and pick up her game and gain confidence.

That's my mistake sometimes of showing that. Kind of you know, sometimes being, you know, in that kind of, you know, mood. But I changed that and I won, so that's what matters.

Q. In the third set, right after you broke her the second time to start, she got really frustrated. What do you do as a player to capitalize on that when you know your opponent is really getting frustrated? Is it increase your focus? Do you do anything differently?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, I mean, when you're playing, it's a roller coaster out there. She gets frustrated; I get frustrated. She's happy with the way she's playing; I'm not. Then the opposite. So.

It's the way it goes. We're there battling, and obviously we all want to win, whoever is in this tournament. It's not like we're in a picnic just hanging out there having a nice time. And especially we're fighting in like 100 degrees out there. It's not easy at all.

But obviously when you see your opponent, you know, having a hard time, you kind of know you're doing the right things and you want to continue, you know, to finish and kind of knock your opponent down. Like in a box ring when you have him like falling, you want to do the last punch and kind of finish it off.

That's what you kind of try to do and focus on. You don't want to let the opponent come back into the match, especially her. She is one of the greatest fighters out there. She never gives up; she's always there until the last ball; she's not going to give you much; you have to earn everything; she's really solid off the ground.

So, I mean, it was a tough match overall.

Q. Has the weather helped you this year? Last year was extremely hot.

JELENA JANKOVIC: I remember I think for me one of the worst memories was playing the finals here in 2009. I remember I was warming up for the finals, and I went on court and I only practiced for 15 minutes; I came off the court and I was red like a tomato.

I thought, I don't know how I'm going to play the finals. Really I felt like dizzy and it was like I went in a sauna and I came out and I just felt like the whole world was turning. But then I went on court and I felt like fresh as a daisy.

So I mean, it's really -- I don't know how to explain. I mean, sometimes with the will and you know you want to do something really bad, I think you can do anything. Doesn't matter how hot it is outside or whatever the circumstances. I think if you want it and you're willing to do whatever it takes, I think you can achieve.

Q. Is the weather here better this year?

JELENA JANKOVIC: So far it has been pretty good, but I'm getting darker and darker and getting burned every day. But I don't care, you know, as long as I'm winning.

Q. Caroline Wozniacki, the pressure she's under right now, can you empathize with her?

JELENA JANKOVIC: I don't know, you know, it's tough to say. From my opinion, I don't think she should feel any pressure. She has achieved quite a lot, especially at a young age. She will have a long career, and she still has a lot a lot of time ahead of her to prove herself and to do whatever she wants to do in her career.

Because at the end of the day, you know, she plays tennis I guess for herself, not because some other people are going to say this or that about her or about any other player.

You know, she just, I think, lost today and she had a hard time, but, you know, I think she's as well one of those players - like me - that she has hasn't competed much, hasn't played the amount of tournaments she likes to usually play and the matches she likes to play.

Maybe in this moment she's having a bit of a hard time to get into her rhythm and get the confidence. Like I said, you know, it's not the same, you know, hitting balls in practice and doing that millions of times.

But then when you get in the match, you kind of don't have the security, you know, you don't have maybe the belief in your shots. You haven't been competing for a while, so you kind of having some doubts here and there.

That all shows. That's, I guess, the way it is. But I mean, it happens to everybody. It's not like she's the only one or I'm the only one. That's part of the sport. It's just a matter of how you get back and how you -- I mean, you move from there and try to get better next time.

Q. We're getting close to the US Open and the first time Serena has been back there since her episode. What do you remember from when you saw that for the first time?

JELENA JANKOVIC: When I saw Serena coming back?

Q. When you saw her have her outburst two years ago against Clijsters at the US Open. What were your thoughts when you first saw that? Remember when she was...

JELENA JANKOVIC: Oh, I don't want to comment on that. Yeah, I don't want really want to say anything about that. That's the way it was, and I prefer not to say anything.

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