

August 11, 2010



M. SHARAPOVA/A. Petkovic

6-3, 6-1

An interview with:

MARIA SHARAPOVA

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please. .

Q. You seemingly broke her serve at will today. Seven breaks. What was it about her serve that made it a little bit easier for you to read tonight?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Um, yeah, I mean, I thought it was really important to just be aggressive on the return and put a lot of pressure on her from the beginning. It was the first time we played against each other, so from the getgo I wanted to play my game and figure things out quickly and figure out her game as quickly as I could.

I think did a good job of that.

Q. Playing someone for the first time, how did you prepare? Do you do the scouting yourself? Do you get tips from your coach?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Um, I've season her play a couple times on TV just randomly. You know, it's pretty rare to play against somebody for the first time. So when you do, it's just about trying to figure their game out when you're playing them.

It's much different than seeing and knowing they're results. She's had some pretty good wins this year, and I knew that she was tough, and also quite a different opponent than someone I played last night.

Q. Do you work on situational hitting in practice? For instance, your second return game showed a big improvement from last night to tonight.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Um, well you have to as the tournament goes on. Improvement is

what it's all about. I played a pretty scratchy match yesterday, got out of it, fought through, and you have to work on the things that can help you in the next few rounds and ultimately later in the tournament.

Q. How would you rate your defense tonight?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: It was pretty good, but I played against somebody that plays a pretty aggressive game. You know, if I was the one on the defense, I would probably not be doing the right thing from the getgo. She plays pretty flat and tries to take the first ball on the rise, so my goal was really not to be on the defense.

Q. You talked last night about control of the ball and control of your strokes. Do you feel like you improved on that tonight?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah, I did. I was supposed to kind of play a day match today, but it almost turned out to be another night one. And tomorrow I have a day match, so it's good, you know, all types matches that I can get.

And like I said, today was an a little bit different opponent, so I dealt with a little bit of a flatter ball than yesterday, someone that hits a lot of heavy spin. I thought I adjusted pretty well.

Q. Seemed like your second serve was a little bit off today in terms of at least the points you won. You only 16% of your second-serve points?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah, that's low.

Q. Was that you being so aggressive or maybe her being to aggressive on your second one?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Um, I think maybe it was just about the placement and maybe not being smart enough on the first serve. You know, sometimes that gives your opponent a little bit more confidence on the second serve to swing away.

As I got in the rallies, when the points got a

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little bit longer, I felt like I had the advantage. I think her goal was to be aggressive, because that's her game and what she wanted to do.

You know, today those were the points that she won.

Q. How much can you tell about an opponent just from hitting with them in the warm-up?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Not too much. Not at all.

Q. Were you happy with the way you served in general? You were only broken three times tonight, but last night was two in two sets.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah, I think I could be still a little bit smarter, you know, in the way we're just mixing it up a little bit more and things like that.

But overall, it was all right.

Q. And then it looked like you had some trouble converting some breakpoint opportunities. You were only 7 of 18 tonight. Why do you think you missed so many chances to break?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah, that's low. Just didn't happen. Yesterday's percentage was a little bit better, and today's was low. The score was also different, so I don't know. The stats sometimes don't tell too much about the match.

Q. When you're playing a point, do you like longer rallies, or do you want to kind of quick and just to put it away?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Usually when the rally is longer, that means that from the beginning you're doing something wrong. Especially me, because I'm a pretty aggressive player. I like to take the first ball and be in control of the point and not stand 20 feet back behind the baseline and play defense. That's not really my game.

So if I'm in a long rally, it's not really about panicking, but about trying to get out that point and doing the best you can about winning it and going into the next one and being a little bit smarter.

Q. This isn't about your game tonight, but earlier this year I think you came out with Maria Sharapova clothing line with Cole Haan. Do you get to design your own outfits when you play, and did you design your outfit for this year's US Open?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah, I have an accessories line with Cole Haan that I actually started a couple years ago that I enjoy very much, and I also help design the dresses that I wear on court every tournament that I play at.

It's really fun, because ever since I was young I love being creative and playing around with materials and making things in shapes and forms and stitching and all that.

So to be able to work with incredible, talented people with Nike and Cole Haan and make things that come from a sketch to reality, to see people wear it is a lot of fun.

Q. The only question I was told to ask you is nontennis about your handbag. Where did you get it?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: About my handbag? This is actually my Cole Haan bag. Yeah, it's the fall collection.

Q. Do you prefer day or night matches, or does it not matter?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I played a bunch of all of them pretty much.

Q. Any preference?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I think the night matches are special. They're quite different, and a lot of them are during the summer, especially during the US Open series. You prepare a little bit different because you have the whole day to yourself and then go out and play at night, and kind of the excitement is on that night match, which is fun, especially at the Open.

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