

August 12, 2010



M. SHARAPOVA/A. Radwanska

6-2, 6-3

An interview with:

MARIA SHARAPOVA

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. The last match played you against her in Stanford you went the distance, and today looked like you were in total control. What did you do differently this match that maybe didn't happen in Stanford?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I started really slow in my previous match, and that really hurt me. I didn't break her once in the first set of that match, which, you know, is not a really good sign.

But I was able to change things around, and won pretty comfortably in the next two sets. So I went on the court today with a similar frame of mind, where I really got to have a good beginning if I wanted to have a chance today and not spend three hours out there.

Q. You broke all but one of her serves in the first set. Were you really confident with your returning today?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Um, I think, you know, I really had to be, because her return is one of her strengths. You know, she's makes you run a lot balls back, so it's really important if you can get a good hit on the first ball.

Q. Only one of the top eight seeds is left in the draw now. Does what make you more excited or more sort of, you know, excited about the prospect of making it to Sunday?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I've got my own side of the draw to worry about, and my next opponent. That's the only way I can look at things.

Q. So it doesn't change your mindset at all, what happens in other matches?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: No, absolutely not.

Q. What does that say to you, though? Does it speak to the balance of the draw or of women's tennis when that many seeds are falling so early in the tournament?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Um, I think it just speaks a lot about the depth of the game right now. And as I mentioned in my previous press conference, I think the depth of the game is a lot deeper than it was, say, a few years ago, where maybe in the first few rounds you could have gotten a few easy matches, easy scorelines.

I think now from the getgo you really have to be ready for the first round. You're facing really tough opponents, and some of them are not seeded or dropped in the rankings. But to be honest, at the end of the day, that doesn't really matter. You still have to go out there and face them.

Q. Talk about the set up the Olympus Shot-of-the Day, that gorgeous overhead lob that she did. Talk about the point construction. Seemed like a spur of the moment thing that you decided to do. Take us through this point, because it was pretty critical?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah, I think that was to break her, right?

Q. Uh-huh.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah, I was all actually up Love-40 in that game, and she got back to 30-40, so, you know, it was a crucial point, and it was fortunate I made it. I was pretty far back behind the baseline.

But, you know, I actually didn't really know if she was moving forward or not. I was really on the defense.

Q. Also looked like you really crushed a lot of return winners deep in the court. Is that something that you didn't do as much in

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M Sharapova - 08 12 10

Stanford on her return?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Probably not. Not enough, obviously. I didn't break her in the first.

Q. But you kept the pressure on her a lot.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: You have to, because she can run on the court all day long and just retrieve balls and get them back. You have to play the game, my game.

Q. Your presence and your face have been used to market a lot of tournaments and sell tickets around world. With that in mind, do you have any thoughts on Ana Ivanovic -- I don't know if you know about her dispute with the Montreal tournament next week -- being denied a wildcard, and saying that she thought she would because she had helped promote the event. She thought she would be able to get in because of that. As someone who's done a lot of promotions, do you think players should earn goodwill in tournaments to use in the future?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Obviously it's up to the tournaments to decide. At the end of the day, it's their decision. At the end of the day, it's the ranking and it's about how you get in. It's on your own -- I mean, things are on your own terms basically. That's women's tennis. It's an individual sport. Everything is on your terms.

Ranking usually says a lot of things about your results, whether you're No. 1 or whether you're 100. That is the way things go. Maybe sometimes you're a bit unfortunate and you feel like you need a little luck on your side.

But, I mean...

Q. How much do you look at statistics, and do you have any rules of thumb in your head? Like if it's more than ten double faults or three aces, unforced errors, anything like that?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Um, usually the percentage of first serves. A lot of the times the stats are -- it's pretty tough to look at a match based on stats. I mean, maybe if there's a crazy amount of unforced errors or something like that, but it's based on the winners as well.

The only thing I usually look at is percentage of first serves.

Q. After each point, seems look you walk around behind the baseline about ten feet

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or so. Are you reviewing the point you just played? Are you setting up the next point? What exactly is going through your mind when you do that?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Just concentrating. Telling myself to focus and not really thinking about what happened and just moving forward, whether I won or lost the point. Just trying to keep myself going.

Q. You play Marion Bartoli in the next round. She's a unique player on the tour. What are your thoughts about her game and what it'll be like playing her?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: We haven't faced each other in a while. Like you said, she plays a different type of game: two hands on both sides. She's a really aggressive player and someone that likes to take the ball really early and goes for her shots. A little bit different than my opponent today.

I'll have to be ready.

Q. A nontennis question. When is the last time you remember getting asked a question in one of these things that you haven't heard before?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I can't tell you.

Q. That's pretty sad.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: No, I wouldn't say it's sad. You know, it's part of the deal. I guess it's what we're here for. We're here to play the tennis matches; we're here to answer questions about the match and so on.

We do press conferences after every match, so you're bound to ask the same questions. Not your fault.

Q. On that note, since you do have so many press conferences a week, is there anything that you'd like to talk about that you never really get the chance to?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Oh, goodness. All the pressure on me. (Laughter.) Goodness, I don't know. Something off the top of my head I have to think of.

Um, I'm not sure. I think a lot of us spend so much time committing ourselves to not only the game of tennis, you know, with tennis comes a lot of things. We're very fortunate to have what we have, and a lot of us are able to give back. I think it's an incredible thing.

M Sharapova - 08 12 10

Many men and women on the tour are able to help with their time and money all over the world to causes. That's something that we like to create awareness of.

Q. How did you relax off the court? Like the tournament here there isn't as many things to do as there is in New York obviously. Do you go to a movie?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: To be honest, there really isn't that much time. I woke up today and got treatment.

Q. Go to the Waffle House?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: No, not today. Got treatment, went here and warm-up, played. By the time I get back it's gonna be late. I got to go do treatment again, and by the time you know it, you have to sleep.

Maybe, I don't know, watch something on the computer or movie or read a book. It's pretty routine.

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