

**August 16, 2014**



**M. SHARAPOVA/S. Halep**

3-6, 6-4, 6-4

An interview with:

## **SIMONA HALEP**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Another tough three setter with Maria. What was the difference today?**

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, it was a tough match. I was very close and I had -- I was up always in three sets. I am very sad that I lost this match. I felt that I could win.

But it's tennis, and I have to accept, to go forward, and to continue my way.

**Q. Did you think that her level went up and yours stayed the same, or do you think your level in the third set, did it drop?**

SIMONA HALEP: I think this second set for sure I made a step behind the baseline and was a mistake.

Then in the third set I wanted just to stay aggressive. Now I don't know if I did this, but for sure she played really well. She was hitting the ball really strong. I made few mistakes, easy mistakes.

But I am okay. I played well, and I'm happy with the way I played today. So I have just to looking forward for the next one.

**Q. Even though you haven't beaten her, your matches are always very pretty to watch. Good style contrast when you're on court. Do you feel that, that the way you matchup produces nice tennis?**

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, I believe that we played nice match. I think the public enjoyed a lot this match. We made also winners and good rallies, long rallies.

So in this match I think the return was very important. My serve wasn't very good, but wasn't very bad as well.

So I don't know. I think she's a great champion. She knows how to manage the emotions and also the moments of the match. I have to work more and to play many more matches.

**Q. Did it feel like you were in Romania at the beginning of the match with all the fans?**

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, I heard the Romanians. They came, many people, on the public. It's nice to play with Romanians close to you.

But today I cannot show my happiness about this because I'm sad now.

**Q. You mentioned the other day that you hadn't played and took some time off since the Bucharest tournament and you didn't play last week. Do you feel you have enough match play on the hard courts coming into the Open?**

SIMONA HALEP: I have one more tournament next week in New Haven. Here I played good matches. I had tough match also with Safarova. Was a great match.

I feel prepared for the Open. First just to think about New Haven tournament, and then I will see.

**Q. Talk about the challenge that was overturned.**

SIMONA HALEP: I think was a big mistake of chair umpire. Is not possible. Was the second time. In French Open was the same thing.

The line umpire called after she hit the ball. But, yeah.

**Q. Was it tough at that moment, it was so late in the third set, it looked like it was difficult for you to stay calm?**

SIMONA HALEP: Yeah, it was very difficult because it's not normal. You feel like, Why

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it's happening like this? Because it was clear that the line umpire called after she hit the ball.

I was very nervous at that moment and I said that the story repeats after French Open. At that moment, at 4-All was the same thing, and I lost the match.

Here maybe if that point would be mine, maybe I could win to make 5-All. But still too far to win the match. Was my chance, and it left.

**Q. In the big picture this was just your third match on hard courts this summer. Were you happy with your level or disappointed with your level?**

SIMONA HALEP: No, I'm happy with my level. I think I played very well today, big level, high level. All my shots are going very well in the right way. And also my return. I have to work more to feel -- to have that feeling, but I need matches.

So in New Haven will be fine.

**Q. Of course Maria is a great champion, and you just said she knows how she should play in the important points and important moments. Technique or strategy-wise, what do you think makes her tough to play, makes her a great champion?**

SIMONA HALEP: I think it's about experience. Maybe you saw the match. At the important moments she was hitting the ball very strong. Maybe she's doing this every time and now it's working.

I was a little bit nervous at 4-3 for me. But, you know, I need experience. I need more matches, and then maybe I will play better in this moment. I feel okay. The match was good.

I just want to forget it and to take another one, the next one.

**Q. Being a French Open final rematch, this match, were you surprised or disappointed that it wasn't on the biggest court here?**

SIMONA HALEP: No, doesn't matter the court. Like I said yesterday, it was a big court today also, and many people came to support us, so it was fine.

**Q. If you were to play her fairly soon coming up, let's say at the Open again, would you incorporate the same game plan coming in or change some things up?**

SIMONA HALEP: I want just to try for the next time to be more aggressive. More, more,

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more aggressive. Because if I play fast, it's better for me.

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