

FAMILY CIRCLE CUP

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A Family Circle Magazine Premier Event

A POST-MATCH INTERVIEW WITH:

JELENA JANKOVIC

Jelena Jankovic defeats Alexandra Stevenson
2nd Round
7-5, 6-0

JELENA JANKOVIC: Jelena Jankovic is here. Go ahead.

AMY BINDER: Questions, please.

Q. That's the exact kind of match you wanted, isn't it, to start off the tournament?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah. In the first set I had a little bit of trouble. I was a little bit kind of cold and then stiff, and I was making a lot of errors, and Alexandra played quite well in the first set. She was hitting great serves and hit the right balls, so I made all these mistakes, but after the first set I came back a little bit. I lifted my level of

play and was able to finish it stronger.

Q. Hi, Jelena.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Hi.

Q. You are an emotional player. The first set you weren't smiling very much.

JELENA JANKOVIC: I was not playing good tennis, so I was a little bit -- it's my first match on clay and I didn't know what to expect from myself. I didn't know how I was going to perform with the sliding, and the court plays so much different, and the last time I played was in Miami. And last week I didn't play Amelia, so it takes time to adjust. And first matches are always tough, and I was able to play a little bit better in the second set, but hopefully throughout the tournament I will play better and better and get adjusted to the surface.

Q. But you're feeling okay?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yes. I'm feeling okay.

Q. You're just getting your momentum going?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah. Yeah. I'm just trying to get my timing and trying to see how to play on clay. It's a different game. The points are longer. You have to really know how to move well, and we will see. I will try my best, and I look forward to competing in the next round.

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Q. Was that the first time you played Stevenson?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, it was. Actually, I only know that she played semis once in Wimbledon, which was many years ago, and that's about it and I haven't seen her play for many years, so I didn't know what to expect from her. I didn't know how she plays, and that was another -- you know, when you don't know your opponent, so I had an opponent which I didn't know and also clay court, first match on clay and as a defending champion, of course, it's different. You have expectations from yourself, but I'm enjoying it. I'm having fun, and it's great to be back here, and the fans are really great. I have a lot of supporters, and I look forward to having a good week hopefully here.

Q. It almost seemed like you adjusted to her backhand, for instance. The first set the backhand is unique.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Her backhand was really good, and I kept hitting on the backhand, which was wrong, and that's what happens when you don't know the player well, but then I found my way. I saw how she's playing, what are her strengths and weaknesses, and I was able to play the tactics a lot better.

Q. As the returning champion, any extra nerves? You don't want to come out match one and lay an egg.

JELENA JANKOVIC: No. For some reason always in the first round I feel a little bit nervous, just starting the tournament, just getting a good match in, and then afterwards I'm fine. It doesn't

matter if I'm coming in as a defending champion or just as a normal, you know, player who comes in and plays a tournament. So it's always tough for me for some reason, but after that I'm fine.

Q. Any special preparations for your next match?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Who am I playing against? I don't even know.

Q. Rodionova.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Rodionova? I played her actually last year here, this tournament, and I thought that was I think a very easy match, but every match is different, and I need to play my game. I'll just try to have to go and play a lot more aggressive than I did today, go for my shots and play a lot more freely.

Q. Jelena, I heard Bud Collins ask you about your mom and she talked you out of quitting tennis at one time, but I couldn't hear your answer. Could you just tell that story, and how old were you?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah. It was in the beginning of 2006. I had some virus, and then I got sick, and for two months and a half I couldn't recover. I was just always tired, always down. I didn't have energy, and I'm naturally an outgoing person, you know, very full of energy. I always have to do something. I can't sit in one place, and at that time it was just a bad period for me.

And then I finally recovered and I started to play, but I was not ready. I was losing one match after another, and I didn't enjoy my tennis anymore. I was not smiling. I was not happy being on court, and I wanted to go back and

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I wanted to study. I wanted to be a normal, a regular girl, you know, not having to do so much traveling and all this that I do on the Tour. And then my mom was there, you know, too, in general, my parents were there, very supportive when I was negative in those times. That was the biggest problem because I was so negative. I always found these bad things that are there. I never looked at the positive side, and she always taught me to be strong and things will always somehow happen for me and she believed in me and she helped me stay in there, not with the game and then here I am.

And when they said I'm No. 5 player in the world, I was like, "I was No. 3. How come I like fell to No. 5?" I don't know. It's like they took off the points before I even had a chance to defend these points? Right? It's not fair. But I have a chance to bring them back, so it's okay.

So my mom is always really good. She's always in my box, and she's always there supporting me, and just I love having her around. She's been with me through the good and the bad times, and I appreciate everything that she has done for me because I think without her I wouldn't be where I am now.

Q. So have you been successful in trying to be a regular person, regular girl? You're anything but that really.

JELENA JANKOVIC: I think as soon as I step off the tennis, you know, when I leave the tennis court, I think I'm a regular girl. I'm just like everybody else. I like to do everything girls my age

do, so I'm not anything different except that, you know, maybe once when you're going somewhere people ask you for autographs, to take pictures with you. But other than that, I like to live a normal life. I try to, at least.

Q. I was also wondering what you thought the first time you saw that big poster of yourself.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah. It's really cool. It's quite big, and I'm like, wherever I turn around, I see myself, on the magazines, on the brochures, and it's like my sparring partner was joking, "I'm getting sick of you already. Wherever I look, it's your face."

It's really fun. It's really nice to see myself next to all those champions, next to Martina Navratilova, Chris Evert, Justine, all these women who have won this tournament, and I'm one of them, so it's great to be part of that.

AMY BINDER: Any other questions? Thank you.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW

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