

FAMILY CIRCLE CUP

35th Anniversary

Charleston, SC

@ Daniel Island

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A Family Circle Magazine Premier Event

A POST-MATCH INTERVIEW WITH:

MARIA SHARAPOVA

**Maria Sharapova defeats Bethanie Mattek
2nd Round
6-0, 6-0**

Q. Congratulations.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Thank you.

Q. It looked kind of easy. When a match appears to be that lopsided, do you strategically decide to work on a particular stroke, kind of in preparation for the next match? And this is coming from a club player's perspective. You know, when something's that easy, you're like going, "okay, next one's not going to be this easy. Let's work on this stroke."

MARIA SHARAPOVA: No. You just try to get the job done out there and do it as fast as you can and hopefully get the W and leave.

That's everyone's job when you're out there. Obviously all these matches and all these tournaments that I'm playing before the French Open I just open that I can improve on all the things that I do and match by match take it to a different level.

Q. Was there anything challenging about tonight?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Considering that she's already played a few matches in this tournament and it was my first match, you're just never quite aware of how the atmosphere is going to be and how the court is going to play. Obviously every clay court is going to be a little bit different. It was a little slower than I played on last week, so I think the best thing to do then is just make the adjustments as quickly as possible.

Q. How big is under an hour for the rest of the week?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Oh, great. I've played a lot of tennis in Amelia last week, so hopefully I'll be making up for it this week.

Q. Maria, when you look at your game on clay from the French Open to where you are now, how much better are you and how much better do you need to get do you think?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I feel like I'm physically getting fitter every single year. I'm starting to grow into my body. I'm becoming stronger. I feel like I'm not slipping around the court as much

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as I used to, and that also -- I think that goes back to the time that you're able to spend on the clay. Obviously last year I only practiced a couple of weeks before I played a warmup tournament at the French, so this year I'm just really happy that I could start this preparation early, and I'm in a much better place than I was last year and that gives me that extra confidence that hopefully I'll be able to play so many more matches and get better and come into the French confident.

Q. Maria, just getting your thoughts on tonight. First big match in Charleston. Obviously it's been five years since you've played here, but just your stadium court debut, just thoughts about playing out there, about the fan reception and just being out there in general.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I'm always excited to go out and compete. It's been a while since I've been here, and I was walking around the grounds the other day and looked at some of the courts that I played on, some of the back courts that I played on five years ago, and I thought, oh, how things have changed, for the good. But you know, it's pretty incredible considering you look back and I was a qualifier then and had to scrap my way through the qualis. I don't even know if I won a round or I lost first round or what happened, but it seemed like a really long time ago. So this was my first time on center court and it was a good experience.

Q. Are you surprised how well you're playing on clay right now?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I'm just taking it one match at a time. You know, I'm going to be facing tougher competition as the matches go on, and like I said, right now is just a matter of learning out there and getting better. That's my goal, to get as many matches and to learn as many things at the end of the day, win or lose.

Q. What did you think of that call, that lines call when the ball was clearly out and it was called out and the chairperson came over and you circled it, but she went over about five or ten feet away from where you were.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I think it was my fault. I saw the wrong mark. Yeah. I think I did.

Q. That was kind of humerus, if nothing else.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah. I tend to make things a little humerus for myself, unnecessarily.

Q. What about on-the-court coaching? You know Michael Joyce sometimes comes out, but he didn't come out tonight.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah. I didn't need him tonight.

Q. What do you feel about on-the-court coaching?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I have mixed feelings about it because, one, I feel like the reason why tennis is so unique is because it's one-on-one and you compete against each other and you don't have teammates around you. You have your coach, but he's sitting there as it was before and you're not really getting coaching, and then all of a sudden -- we've had this trial for about a year and a half, so it's not a trial anymore, but in a way if it's there, it's a

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great opportunity to, you know, especially if you lose a set, especially if you're down, and now I think the rule is you can call the coach in the middle of the set. That I think is taking it a little too far because in my final in Amelia, my opponent called the coach at 2-1 in the first set and I was -- you know, you kind of look and you're like, really? So that's a little strange, but you know, I don't know. Either way. It's strange that it kind of happens during these tournaments and then the Grand Slam, because it's not WTA, it's the ITF, it's different. So it's like if in the Slams it's different and in these tournaments it's completely different as well.

Q. Do you get much out of it when the coach comes out?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: A few things here and there. My coach knows I like to keep it very short and sweet and simple. I don't like too much complicated things because I always play by instinct, and when someone tells me to do too many things, I just get angry at them, so it's better to keep it short.

Q. I noticed you didn't come to the net very much. Was it just a result of the opponent didn't require putting the ball away more quickly?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I thought I did what I had to do, and if that consisted of not coming to the net today, then I'll be fine with 0 and 0 not coming to the net.

Q. Did your foot hit the net last week on that first point of the tiebreaker?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I don't know because I didn't feel it, but the umpire was right there, so she must have seen it, so I guess I did.

END OF INTERVIEW

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