

FAMILY CIRCLE CUP

35th Anniversary

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@ Daniel Island

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A Family Circle Magazine Premier Event

A POST-MATCH INTERVIEW WITH:

MARIA SHARAPOVA

**Serena Williams defeats Maria Sharapova
Quarterfinals
7-5, 4-6, 6-1**

Q. Maria, just the match overall and then that third set in particular.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Well, I thought the first two sets were pretty good quality of tennis. You know, there were a few key points in the match which I think could have obviously made the score line a little bit different and a couple in the beginning, in the middle of the first set where I had more chances to make it a couple of breaks, didn't take those and obviously the chance in the end of the first set, when you don't take your chances -- that's what I was

sort of talking about yesterday. When you don't take your chances against a player like her, you know, it's difficult to keep that intensity up for, you know, three sets. And in the third set, I just, you know, I gave it all I had in the first two, and in the third I think I ran a little bit short.

Q. You were talking about taking chances, and yesterday you predicted it would be kind of a match of big shots.

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Uh-huh.

Q. Would you have preferred to take any more chances or big shots or do you think maybe you took too many or are you pretty satisfied with the strategy there?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I mean, look, if a few points went my way, like I said, the score line could have been different and we wouldn't be talking about taking those chances because I would have taken them, but obviously you can't turn back time, and you know, I can only take the positives out of this match. I think going into this match, considering the success she's had on clay court, she's obviously the favorite today, and you know what, if I did take that set point or if I did take a couple of those important points and I would have won the second, the match would have been over in two. Instead I lost in three sets, so you know, that's the way

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it goes. That's the beauty of tennis.

Q. Serena said that you're playing great tennis on clay. Can you at least leave here knowing that your game's improving on clay?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Absolutely. I've been saying it for a while now. I think with every year I'm improving. One is because I'm physically stronger with every year. My body is adjusting to the clay faster. I'm moving on it a lot better than I used to, and that takes time. It's not just -- I'm not saying I'm perfect at it. There's still a lot of room for improvement and maybe that's not going to happen this year, but hopefully the work that you put in throughout the year, not just on the clay courts, and experience as well will help you for future years. And at the end of the day, I mean when you win or lose a match, you want to take the learning experience from it, and I think from today's match I will only take the positives.

Q. Would you still consider this a worthwhile trip to Charleston or was it too short?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: No. It's fine. You know, like I said, if you don't take your chances in tennis, you can outa here really fast, so you know, it's fine. I can at least celebrate my birthday like a normal human.

Q. How are you going to celebrate it?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I'm going to be with my friends and my parents tomorrow.

Q. Staying in town?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: No, no. No.

Q. After that first set went very long, did you kind of have to, I guess, readjust your strategy, since you both kind of expended so much energy in that first set. Did you find yourself not being so aggressive in the second set or did it not matter after that?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: No. I thought I was doing a lot of the right things in the first set. I just came a little bit short in the end. And like I said, it was just a matter of a couple of balls here and there, and in the second set I just stayed aggressive. Maybe I served a little bit better, had a higher percentage of first serves in. You know, I didn't give her too many looks on that second serve, and against a top player like her you don't want to give her that confidence that she's going to be able to swing away on those second serves. Yeah.

Q. In the third set when she went on that run and she started screaming and cheering and getting emotional, how tough is it for you on the opposite side? Is it possible to kind of come back when she really had the emotions going there in the third set?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: No, because I have my emotions going as well. Yeah, we're both pretty expressive on the court. I think that's what makes it so entertaining is we never let down. We keep fighting and we keep trying, and I mean that's why our matches are so entertaining at times. But no, I just try to take care of my side of the net and not worry about what's going on across the net or around me and so forth.

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Q. Serena commented on how well you're sliding. How important is that on clay and how are you developing that?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: You know, I don't think I'm ever going to be a clay court specialist, you know. I don't know how to term it, but like I said, I think the more you play on it, the more preparation you can -- the more matches you get to play and be in match situations, the better you're going to get, the more comfortable you're going to feel on court. You can do as many foot work drills or sliding or training or gym workout, leg strength, whatever you want to do, but it's never going to be as effective as when you go out on court in front of a crowd and compete against an opponent. So I think the matches that I've had in Amelia and here are definitely going to help me towards the European clay.

Q. Maria, do you think that the kind of fight you had, especially in the first set, you can take some positive aspect for the following weeks, especially for the French?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: Yeah. Absolutely. I mean even though I would have loved to win today, I think most importantly is if I'm in the same situation in a Grand Slam, you know, you learn from today and you learn what you could have done a little bit differently, and hopefully you change that to the Grand Slam. Like I said, this is a complete learning experience. At the end of the day, win or lose, all these matches and all these tournaments is basically a buildup. You work

your way towards the big ones, which are the Grand Slams. So you hope, and when you are in the same position next time in a big one, you take your chances.

Q. From your perspective do you think Serena's playing well enough to take it all?

MARIA SHARAPOVA: I'm sure, yeah.

END OF INTERVIEW

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