

April 14, 2009



An Interview With:

VERA ZVONAREVA

VERA ZVONAREVA defeats ROSSANA DE LOS RIOS
6-3, 6-2
1st Round

DANNY KENDALL: Questions for Vera, please.

Q. How do you feel today? Congratulations, first of all.

VERA ZVONAREVA: Thanks. You know, I felt pretty good. It was my first match on the clay, so I didn't expect myself to play my best game, and you know, a little bit of a struggle on a few points, a little bit -- maybe a couple of wrong choices, but overall it was pretty good.

It was a bit windy, so a little bit tough, so I'm happy to get through this one.

Q. How are you feeling health wise, fitness wise?

VERA ZVONAREVA: You know, feeling pretty good. I've been playing lots of matches since the beginning of the year, and so far, so good.

I had a minor like injury throughout Indian Wells, Miami, but right now it's much better.

Q. Are you feeling as strong as you did last year, and do you feel poised to make a run, after the way you saw yourself play on the clay today?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Well, it's tough to compare today to the last year. It's very difficult to remember, but you know, I've been playing pretty good since the beginning of the year, and I know there are lots of things I want to improve on the clay.

It was just my first match, but yeah, I'm feeling pretty strong, and we'll see what's going to happen.

Q. Vera, when you come back to a place where you lost in the finals, does that boost your confidence or does that give you more motivation for you to go ahead and win this?

VERA ZVONAREVA: You know, any tournament I'm coming to and any match I'm playing I'm trying to win, no matter what, and I'm trying to do my best every time I go out there.

But I have good memories from the last year. I played lots of good matches here, and previous years, so I sort of like this tournament. And of course, I think it gives you lots of confidence to remember all those great matches and great wins.

Maybe I lost in the finals last year, but it was still a good match, so it definitely will give me some confidence.

Q. I was wondering if you could comment on anger management in respect to Federer breaking his racquet recently when he was frustrated with his play. Do you feel as though that's a natural thing, as Federer said, you know, being angry, smashing a racquet?

VERA ZVONAREVA: You know, it's a sport. It's a game. You have to get angry sometimes. You have to push yourself.

You cannot just -- you know, because you obviously care how you're doing, and you know, some players it's better they try to keep it inside and some players let it out. Doesn't matter. Whatever makes you play the best.

Q. How do you deal with anger then? How do you manage it?

VERA ZVONAREVA: You know, it comes through the experience, knowing yourself. You know, sometimes I know for myself it's better if I

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throw the racquet and break one. Sometimes I know it's better to calm yourself down.

It's just what you -- I think you have to know yourself. You get to the place where you become a player that knows yourself better. That's the best way, and then that's how you can help yourself to improve.

If you don't know yourself, what's the best reaction for you, then, well, you can't manage it. But if you know yourself, doesn't matter if you have to throw the racquet or you don't have to.

Q. Have you broken a racquet before?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Of course. Many times. (Laughs).

Q. How important to win fairly quickly today and save a bit of energy for the week or did it really not matter that you won fairly quickly today?

VERA ZVONAREVA: You know, I'm happy to get through in two sets, for sure. It's always good to -- well, to win the match first, and it's always good to win it in two sets rather than three sets, but I'm not really thinking about it this way. I'm thinking about that I have to improve a lot in order to be able to win the next match.

Q. Do you mind commenting on the state of the economy? I'm just curious, being a professional tennis player, you're doing really well. There is a soft economy worldwide. Do you feel it personally? I mean have you had to adjust any of your spending habits?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Well, being tennis players, we always spend a lot on traveling, coaching and stuff, and I think it's tough for everyone, but the better you play, better living you will make.

But I'm sure everyone feels it, you know, the sponsorships in general, any sport, and tennis is not an exclusion. It's very important, crowd supporting us here is very important.

So of course, everyone feels a little bit of maybe a slowdown, but I think it's always going up and down with the economy, and I'm sure if someone feels it, and we as tennis players, we are the same human beings. We feel it as well.

DANNY KENDALL: Okay. Thank you very much.

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