

April 13, 2010



Post-Match Press Conference With:

MELANIE OUDIN

Melanie Oudin defeats Jill Craybas
6-3, 6-1
Round 1

AMY BINDER: Questions for Melanie, please.

Q. Melanie, last year you had to qualify to even get in the tournament. This year they've got you playing the feature match at night. How does it feel?

MELANIE OUDIN: It feels really good. I thought I came out, did really well my first match here against Jill. She's a tough player. I think I lost to her last time.

We played pretty handily. I was really ready for this match tonight.

I really love Charleston, getting to play here. I did so well here last year as a qualifier. It was one of my big steps, I think. Everything started to click for me here, so I'm hoping to do even better here this year.

Q. In the first set you struggled in the eighth game. I think you saved like eight break points. How important was that game for the match?

MELANIE OUDIN: Very important. That's the thing, lately I've been up a little and then letting my opponent get back in the match, so being able to close out that game and then played a really good second set really, really helped me a lot.

Q. Melanie, how did your break-through last year sort of change your life and maybe your goals for this year?

MELANIE OUDIN: You know, I had a great year last year, but all of my hard work started to pay off and everything started to click. So I'm really just looking forward to doing even better this year, you know, each year doing better and improving more and working hard still and hoping my ranking keeps going up.

Q. How are you adjusting to people coming to a tournament and expecting you to win? There's a lot of people out there that, you know, last year they were just excited to see you play. You were excited to win. It's all changed now because of your run at Wimbledon, your run at the US Open. Fans are coming in expecting to see you in advance. How is that for you?

MELANIE OUDIN: It's definitely a little bit different because I am seeded here, but I'm not a high seed. But yeah, I just go into the tournament and each match the same way. I don't think about that I'm supposed to win this match. I just go in thinking, all right, I'm going to do the best I can and play the best I can and that's just going to happen.

Q. I heard you describe Jill as a friend out there. Is she sort of a mentor for you or how has that relationship been?

MELANIE OUDIN: Yes. I mean Jill has so much experience, so there's a lot of things that I could take from her, and you know, advice she has.

But yeah, it's always tough playing someone, I've been on the Fed Cup team with her and I've known her for a while now, and she was someone that I looked up to as a younger

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American coming up. So yeah, it's always tough, but she's a great player.

Q. Any nerves tonight or, you know, just being on center court, night match and everything, or is there not really nerves after you've played Wimbledon and US Open to come to Charleston?

MELANIE OUDIN: There's not really many nerves for me anywhere really. I've learned that there's really no -- I mean it's good to be a little bit nervous, but once I get out there, it's where I'm comfortable, on the court. And I like playing in front of people, and you know, just giving everyone a good match out there and hoping to play some good tennis.

Q. This year you seem to be swinging at the ball a little bit faster, your racquet head speed seems to be a little bit faster. Is that something you've been working on?

MELANIE OUDIN: Yes. I mean I think as I get stronger and everything, I think I'm going to get more power and I'm going to be able to swing faster and add different things in my game. So every tournament I try to work on something new and just everything get a little bit better.

Q. There's only like two or three Americans even left in the tournament. Just talk a little bit about carrying the American flag, if you will, being the local girl and now pretty much the crowd favorite going the rest of the way through.

MELANIE OUDIN: It's pretty exciting to be the crowd favorite and stuff. I wish there were more Americans. I'm hoping that next tournament there's going to be more coming up and stuff, but again, I don't like to think of myself as the like next hot American or whatever coming up because that adds a lot of pressure. I just go in to every match the same way, and I'm hoping that you know, the few Americans that are in the tournament can go far in it.

End of Interview

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