

April 16, 2010



Post-Match Press Conference With:

VERA ZVONAREVA

VERA ZVONAREVA defeats
MELANIE OUDIN
7-5, 6-2
Quarterfinal Round

Q. So when did you decide to change your strategy?

VERA ZVONAREVA: You know, I had a plan how I was going to play, but I think last time I played Melanie it was in Miami and it was different surface, higher bounce, so everything was different.

And there are a few things that I wanted to do, they don't work as well on the clay as they work on the hard court, so slowly, slowly I was trying to change something up, and I think I was a little bit inconsistent in the beginning. I played, you know, good game and bad game, then couple good games and couple bad games, but slowly, slowly I was just trying to, you know, to find a way to hang in there, fight for every point, and it paid off in the end.

Q. Melanie thought that because of your experience you were able to not worry so much about what the crowd was doing, their effect, but did you use some of that maybe to pump you up, that the majority is cheering for Melanie, I'm going to take it to her and use some of the vibes from the crowd and use it against her as well?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Actually it was pretty tough out there. Sometimes I would hit a

great shot and I think it's a great point and I don't have that many people cheering for me, so it was a little bit tough out there today.

But fair enough. She's a great player and everyone is supporting her here, and I'm sure next time we're going to be playing in Moscow and everyone is going to support me. But I think I'm much more experienced right now. It was a little bit different atmosphere here tonight because it was my first night session match playing here, and definitely it was a little bit tough to handle in the beginning, but like you said, I have enough experience to handle the situation, and I think I did it pretty well.

Q. Vera, did you have to make an extra effort to be very calm? I know Wozniak said she had to do that at the US Open playing Oudin. Did you make an extra effort staying calm?

VERA ZVONAREVA: I think this year you have to try to concentrate on yourself and not what's going on around you. Sometimes you can get frustrated at some moments. You play great shot and you don't have anyone supporting you or the ball is obviously out and the crowd is complaining and wants to see the ball in.

You know, those things can a little bit frustrate and take your focus away from what you want to do. But you know, I think there are a couple of moments maybe I got a little bit frustrated, but I handled it really well. I tried to think about what I have to do to play to win that match, and you know, at the end of the day, you know, if she's better today, she would win. If I'm better today, I would win, and I was just trying to hang in there and fight for every ball.

TRANSCRIPTS PROVIDED BY:

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Q. 2008 you make the finals. Last year you had to pull out. I know there are bigger tournaments out there, but now that you're here, do those past experiences drive you as you move forward in this bracket here, that this is something I want to get done?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Well, you know, Charleston is one of the most famous tournaments on the Tour. It's been there for many years, and actually it's one of the biggest events on the WTA Tour, so for me I'm just excited to be playing here in semifinals, you know.

I think, you know, I was here in the final, like you mentioned, before, and hopefully I can do one better, but the most important thing is to take one step at a time. There are so many great players out there that it's very tough competition, so I'm just going to concentrate on my match tomorrow and we'll see what's going to happen.

Q. And I was going to ask you, what do you think about Caroline, your next match? Have you started thinking about it yet?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Oh, actually you just mentioned it to me that I'm playing Caroline. I never look at the draw. I have no idea who's my next opponent. So yeah, I think she's a great player. We'll see. It's going to be a tough one tomorrow.

Q. This is your eighth consecutive year here. Why is it that you always come here aside from what you just said in the other question about this being a very big stop on the WTA Tour.

VERA ZVONAREVA: I don't know why. I think I feel a warm -- everyone welcomes all players really well here. It's like a home tournament. I'm enjoying it, and everyone is so nice, and it's a first event on the clay court, and it's very convenient to stay here after, you know, after Miami and play a great event, but in a relaxed atmosphere, you know. Those two big events, Indian Wells, Miami, back to back, they're a little bit crazy, a lot of people, and here it's more relaxed but still very tough draw. It's a great start to the clay court season.

Q. In the second set she thought that you really changed things up and it was causing her to shank and just do crazy things

and she really gave you a lot of credit for doing that. Is that the strategy you were going for?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Yeah. I think I made a few unforced errors in the beginning in the first set, and I sort of, you know, was playing the same pace all the time, just maybe trying to keep the ball in play too much, and I think, yeah, I think I started slowly like at the end of the first set I started changing it up, mixing my shots, added some variety, playing with different spins, with different speed, and you know, I think that was good on my part.

Q. She really gave you a lot of credit for that. I noticed that you seem to be a little bit -- you've always been lean, but you seem even leaner in the past year or year and a half. Did you make a conscious effort to get leaner or are you just doing a lot of fitness that you happen to get leaner?

VERA ZVONAREVA: I think it just happened over time. I don't know. I don't notice it myself, so but yeah, maybe it's just also I've been injured and maybe I just also lost a bit of muscle and, you know, as well, but I think, yeah, I think I've been working hard especially, you know, since the injury because I knew I needed to keep up with my fitness somehow, and it was difficult because when you have injured ankle, it's hard to work on your fitness, but I was trying the best I can and as soon as I was able to use it, you know, and start my fitness, of course I was concentrating on it a lot.

End of Interview

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