

April 6, 2016



Volvo Car Open 2016 - Thursday, April 7 - 1

**Venus Williams defeats Alison Riske
6-4, 6-2
Second Round**

An Interview With: Venus Williams

Q. Was there any clay rust in terms of getting back started on this surface after not playing on it yet this year?

VENUS WILLIAMS: I know. You know, since I had an early dismissal in Miami, I had a chance to get on the clay, so that was probably helpful because typically when you play deep, you only have a little bit of time to go into a different surface. I don't like to change surfaces throughout the year because I think it can lead to injury.

So it feels good out there. The center court is a lot slower than the practice courts, so that took a little bit of adjusting. Never played Alison before, so I had to get to know her game a little bit, and she played really well today.

Q. What did you do well today and what are you happy about that you did well today?

VENUS WILLIAMS: Yeah. I think today I was aggressive, which is important for my game, even on clay. You still want to dictate the points. You don't want to just loop it back and hope for the best. And a lot of high first-serve percentage was very helpful today. Just trying to do the things that I do and try to do those well with a minimal amount of errors is always super helpful for me.

Q. How would you assess your year so far coming into this tournament?

VENUS WILLIAMS: Yeah. You know, I've got a tournament win already this year. So that always makes you pumped. And other than that, it's just like an early year. You know, I had some early losses, too, but that just makes you get out there and work harder honestly.

Q. I saw your dad is here. I haven't seen him at too many tournaments lately. So what's it like having him back on tour?

VENUS WILLIAMS: Yeah, he loves this tournament. So he was asking me when I was getting here and, you know, making sure that he was all set up. And he actually went to Miami, too. But he now just goes to his favorite events, I guess. He likes to drive to them, so just wherever he's comfortable now.

Q. Your thigh was wrapped. Is there a problem or is it just maintenance?

VENUS WILLIAMS: Yeah. I mean I've had the thigh wrap all year. So hopefully at some point I'll be able to get rid of it, but now I kind of need it for the support.

Q. Support? (Indicating)?

VENUS WILLIAMS: (Laughs). Thankfully I'm not one of those mental cases on the court. But I just need it physically.

Q. Venus, you said that because of Miami you got to go out on clay earlier than maybe you had planned. How did you feel going back? Were your practice sessions good ones? Did you come in here with some confidence that, hey, you know, I can play on this surface even though it's early in the season?

VENUS WILLIAMS: I just came into the tournament eager, just ready to go, especially after waiting two weeks of play, and the tournament before. So it's four weeks and only two matches and you're like, argh. So I usually don't have that problem.

Life is all about adjusting. It's never going to be ideal. Everybody is out to win, and when I play my opponents, they play their best tennis. So it's not like I lose because I necessarily played badly. I just played inspired opponents, and sometimes you just gotta get through it.

Transcripts Provided By:

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Q. Change the subject. While I was watching you play, I heard from someone in Jamaica who said to me "the top Venus is wearing is gorgeous, get it for me."

VENUS WILLIAMS: Awww.

Q. So since you are -- EleVen is internationally quite known, I was wondering if you had any plans to expand both design and marketing.

VENUS WILLIAMS: Oh, yes. We got big plans.

Q. Can you share any of them?

VENUS WILLIAMS: Worldwide domination. (Laughs). No. Well, we definitely will be expanding our line starting spring '17 and also exploring international opportunities in '17 and '18. I would love to do men's lines sooner than later. But it's an interesting business and it's a tough business. But I like a challenge.

Q. Thanks. I guess just back to your dad, he's been on and off tour for close to 20 years now, probably over 20 years. What does he make of this world and I guess your role in it having changed from being a newcomer to being sort of one of the veterans and stateswoman of the game?

VENUS WILLIAMS: I think that he's -- of course, as a parent you're proud when your daughters are kicking butt. (Laughs). But at the same time I think more than anything he's just happy that we're happy, and just any parent you want to spend time with your kids and have that quality time. I think that's most important for him.

But he's still very enthusiastic about the game. He gets extremely excited, even though he's not on the road, he's always watching and pulling for us and helping us. So he still has that love for the game. It's still just as true.

Q. What about the Volvo Car Open is unique to you? What do you associate Charleston with in this tournament?

VENUS WILLIAMS: Well, Charleston, great tennis, great eating, great people. All of that. I've heard that there's more tourists per capita than any other city in the United States. So that's pretty interesting.

There's a lot to do here, from like the water to historical to recreational. Like there's -- you can

just get it in. I have to come back one day when I'm not playing because when you're here it's just back-to-back tennis. You either have to find a way to get here earlier or -- I don't know. This tennis tour never gives you a break.

End of Interview

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