

April 6, 2017

A Post-Match Interview With:

LAURA SIEGEMUND

**Laura Siegemund defeats Lucie Safarova
6-2, 6-3
Third Round**

Q. Another win here. What are you doing that's helping you play so well here these last few days?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: Yeah. I think, you know, it's a lot of work behind the scenes, you know. My coach is scouting any opponent. My coach is with me. He can't be there all the time. So that really helps me a lot. I had good preparation. I had good matches that gave me confidence. All that together I think makes me play well here. Today was very difficult. It was not easy at all, and I managed very well to deal with the wind.

Q. Laura, your drop shot is kind of the shot of the tournament at the moment in terms of dictating things. I mean why do you think that it is so effective?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: Yeah, but today I don't think I played so many drop shots.

Q. Yeah. But they were effective.

LAURA SIEGEMUND: I don't think so. I mean I'd have to look at the video. But I don't think today I played so many, and I don't think it worked so well, but maybe I'm wrong, I don't know. In general I think I played very aggressive today and put a lot of pressure on her at the beginning of the points already, so like in the early shots of a rally, and I think that worked really well. And the drop shot, of course, is always a weapon. Yeah, but today I really dominated.

Q. How difficult is it to follow up a big win, like for you specifically? Different players can struggle with getting a big win and the next match is a little bit of letdown.

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Kelly McKee Dorsey, Sports Media Transcriptionist

Email: kadmcr@yahoo.com

Twitter: @reporterkel



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LAURA SIEGEMUND: Yeah. That's actually true. There was so there was so much going on yesterday, with the hype and all that, and I enjoy it. I love to be with the fans. I love to get messages from home and all that. But I was like, wait a minute. People congratulating me while I was practicing before my match today; they're like, awesome win yesterday. And I'm like, yeah, but with my mind I was already in the next today's match, because it's another piece of work, and I was telling me, well, this is all nice, but the next match is not going to be handed to you. You will have to be ready to play the tough points, the tough situations. You might have the same as yesterday. Like you might be out there three hours again, you know, battling for every point.

So I really tried to prepare for that mentally, and I was very ready today. I think I did a good job in that and was very focused from the first points on. And yeah, and that it went so quick and so like in a dominating way, I'm very happy about that.

Q. Speaking of your mind, can you talk about how the whole psychology degree thing has helped you become a better player?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: I get this question every time. She's laughing already. She's laughing.

Q. Like in the next five years.

LAURA SIEGEMUND: You guys don't talk to each other?

Q. No. We don't talk to each other. We don't.

LAURA SIEGEMUND: Really? That's terrible. You should. (Laughs).

No. I always say -- my answer, and I keep saying the same thing, that you know, out there it's a different story. It's very tennis specific what's going on in the mind that has to do with the score, with your confidence, all that. Having a degree certainly helps in a way, you know, to understand the mind better maybe, but what you need out there on the court, I don't think I learned that in any

of the books I read. It was general psychology I studied, so didn't really have anything to do with the sport or with the sport of tennis. So in general it's good knowledge, but I think out there it's more experience and knowing myself, and I think that every player has to develop that for him or herself.

Q. Changing the subject, what do you do to relax when you get a chance to?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: It depends very much. I like to be very active. That's relaxation for me, you know. The other day at the beginning of the tournament we had really nice breakfast downtown in the French Quarter and just walk around, enjoy the cities I go to. I really that's one of the things that make me very sad that we travel places and sometimes don't get to see them so much.

You know, in the end, in a tournament like this with that kind of matches I play, I play long matches a lot of times, relaxing for me is just being in the hotel room, speaking with people at home, Skyping or, you know, watching TV, simple things.

If my matches weren't so long and I didn't need so much time for recovery, which pretty much eats up the whole day after a match, if I have a day off or so, I really like to get out and have a look at whatever sights there are to see in the places I go.

Q. Laura, going back to Stuttgart last year, I know we spoke about it like immediately after it all happened, but now with more time, what are the lessons? What did you kind of take from that week there and kind of, I don't know, that kind of still sit with you to this day?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: This amazing support of the people if you're playing in your hometown. This is -- like you have to work your way hard to get it because it's not -- I mean the first matches in quali I played somewhere in the back court. There's only one other -- well, two other back courts.

But anyway, you know, it was different and then in the end I played in the big arena. Everyone was like waiting for me already, so that was a big difference, you know. And that was something I will never forget.

And I know it's there. It's like -- it sleeps there, but I have to earn my way to be in that limelight and get that support of the people. But that's what I remember a lot.

And also, of course, for me personally it was just knowing that I can beat Top 10 players, knowing that I can like consecutively play a top level. That was important for me personally as a player, helped me believing in myself, and there were a lot of good things I learned about myself in that tournament.

Q. And most of your career obviously was spent on the ITFs primarily, and then now you're into kind of your second full year of being a regular at all the WTA tournaments. So what has that transition been like for you? What's been the biggest takeaway, I guess, over the last 12 months?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: It's a different life. I mean it's totally different. Here, you know, you -- first of all, you play the same tournaments again and again. I mean you can choose, of course, but there's just like more of a way for you that is kind of set already because maybe it has to do with your surface, your preferred surface or the time scheduling you prefer or stuff like that. But in the end it comes down to 50/50 choice which tournament you're going to play that week and you kind of come back to the same tournaments.

On the ITF tour, you know, I played something different every year. There were also some tournaments I played the same over the years, but just more changing, and it's way better to plan now, you know. I remember when I was playing ITFs, if people ask me where are you in three weeks, I'm like, I have no idea. I could be in France or, I don't know, in Tunisia or in the U. S., you know. And now it's kind of you have your schedule. You know when you're taking breaks is easier now. That's the things like the tennis-specific things that changed a lot. And then, of course, the lifestyle now. There is just bigger tournaments, more publicity. Everything is different.

Yeah. I played a long time on the ITF tour, so I still remember how it is there. And I have a lot of friends that play there, and I like to give them advice. Of course they always ask me, how did you do that, you know, and I'm glad if I can give a little bit of my knowledge to people that play on the ITF tour still.

Q. What was your process for dealing with the elements today, the wind and all the

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Email: kadmcr@yahoo.com

Twitter: @reporterkel

stuff going on on the court today, both mental and physical?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: It was very hard. How can you deal with that? I mean it was unpredictable today. The wind was changing in that kettle. That's how we say it in German. And yeah, you kind of have to accept a lot of weird things happening.

And I think that's mentally something that I did well today, just accept that whatever happened, and then I was moving very well. That was what I wanted to do, you know, to adjust well to the balls, and always be prepared that something might bounce differently or be differently than you would expect. But still it was very tough to play. It looked maybe easier than it was.

Q. What do you think drives your game more, your movement or your touch and feel?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: I need both. I mean it's a combination. If I don't move well, I can do the crafty stuff, you know. I think the physical aspect is the base of my game, you know. And then, you know, having a feel in the hands and an overview over what's happening, that's always been my strength and I try to take advantage of that as well as I can, but without the physicality as a base, it's not working.

Q. And then speaking of that, how is your recovery program different nowadays than maybe it was three years ago? What do you have to do more?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: I always had a very good recovery plan, I think, and I always did a great job in preparation, and like recovery after matches. But now, of course, it's more professional, you know. Now we're talking there's an ice bath. In the ITFs, if you ask for an ice bath, people are like, go to the lake around the corner, you know.

It's like, you know, you don't have that kind of stuff. I remember going to physios, and they'd be like yeah, here, ice package. That's it. Now I get a full-on treatment. Now I travel with my own physio. That's something I didn't have the money for before. Simply as that. There's just more professionalism possible because you're making more money and you can invest it in your work actually, in your training, in your recovery, having the right people around you. And it was always an

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issue. If money wasn't a problem. If there was a sponsor that wants to support me, you know, that's always a big thing, because you know, it's just professionalism has a lot to do with having the finances for it. And even on this level now. And that makes your game better. You have to know what is really important for you.

Q. Getting back to your course work, if you don't mind, was there a particular book or thinker or author or course that really you enjoyed when you were studying that meant a lot to you? When you were studying for your degree.

LAURA SIEGEMUND: There's a book -- wow. "The Best Tennis of Your Life." That has nothing to do with my studies, but it's my favorite book.

Q. He's a friend of mine. I know him.

LAURA SIEGEMUND: Yeah? Gallwey is his name; right?

Q. Tim wrote "The Inner Game of Tennis." And "The Best Tennis" is Greenwald. Yeah.

LAURA SIEGEMUND: Greenwald. Right. Yeah. Sorry. Greenwald. Anyway, that's a book that I actually have in my pocket pretty much, in my suitcase, because there's a lot of things that, yeah, I know all that. But it's nice to read it sometimes with the words of other people. And I keep reading it again, and different chapters are always like, yeah, I do want to do that more often. And it's just a very good book. I like to have that a lot. It's maybe one of the things that I can name right away off the top of my head.

End of Interview