

April 7, 2017

A Post-Match Interview With:

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI

**Mirjana Lucic-Baroni defeats Shelby Rogers
6-7⁷, 6-1, 6-1
Quarterfinal Round**

Q. Mirjana, how was that competing today in both these conditions, with the wind as well as the local crowd?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: I mean it was beautiful in a way. It was difficult playing against the crowd, because I mean Shelby is from here. It's normal. It's always tough, but I felt they were very respectful. They were cheering for their home girl, and it's totally normal. The wind was what was really difficult today. It was incredibly hard, and for people who play like me, last two days, I mean this has been a disaster -- not disaster, but a really, really difficult conditions, and the fact that I came out yesterday and today playing some great tennis and winning in these conditions, it's incredible, really, really good effort.

Q. What did you say after, you'd rather play versus a lion?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: I don't even know what the heck I said, but I was thinking during the match. I was trying to say I would rather play with a live -- in normal conditions with a lion running around than playing in this much wind. I don't know. In my head it made sense. I was trying to be funny. I'm not funny. My husband says I'm not.

Q. When you say the wind bothers your game, why does it bother your game so much?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: I mean I play very flat. I don't have, let's say, a lot of margin. I hit the ball early, and I like to step in. And it's difficult to find that feeling when on one side the wind is taking the ball six feet long, and the other side I always felt like I was a little bit short.

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Volvo
Car
Open



And Shelby has a lot of variety, and she was doing a good job mixing things up, and I wasn't. I feel like I had way too many unforced errors. I was missing a lot. I never felt like I was on the ball and I was hitting the ball clean. I always felt like I was hitting with not the frame, but like edge of the racquet and kind of just weird shots. I never felt like I was hitting a clean ball. So yeah, that was difficult today.

Q. Did you notice a change in Shelby's game after the first set? The first set was pretty much dead even between you. But after that you kind of cruised for a little bit. Did you notice a dropoff in her game after that?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: I didn't necessarily focus much on her. I really felt that I stepped up a lot. And I got really mad at myself after losing that set, because I felt like I was there. I had chances. I didn't play well. And even though I didn't play so well, I was still in there.

And then I just told myself, step up, hit the ball, go forward, move forward and keep playing your game, where I didn't feel like I was doing that as good in the first set. And I really stepped up and I played aggressive, and I fought really hard for every single point. And I feel like that's why the result was the way it was later.

Q. Mirjana, it sounded like you didn't get a ton of preparation time for this tournament at all. So how surprised are you to get through these matches, especially given the conditions that you've had to play through all week to make another semifinal?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: Surprised a little bit, yeah, I have to say, because I really didn't have much time -- you know, and it's not that easy to change surfaces. It's really -- it's difficult. But I told my coach before yesterday's match, because of the wind, I told him if I pull through this match, then I'm pretty good. I'm decent. And I was able to do that, because I mean it's difficult.

It's not easy for anybody who has a couple of days and comes to a different surface. But I did grow up on clay. I know how to move around, I

know how to slide. So even though it is a big change, I think I approached it mentally really good without putting much pressure and without thinking too much about how my body is going to feel, just kind of step in and play and that's it.

Q. Three semifinals, Miami quarterfinals. At this point is this what you expect of yourself when you get to tournaments, these sorts of results, these sorts of wins? I mean is this becoming a bit old hat for you?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: I really -- I mean you may believe me or not, but I really don't think about it at all. I just come into a tournament -- I know that I'm able to and capable 100 percent, and I'm really confident about the way I'm playing and I know I can be at the end of any tournament.

But I don't think about it much. It's just for me I really focus kind of every single day. Just today is a practice day, we practice. Tomorrow is the first match, we play a match. I just focus on just really what's just ahead of me. I don't want to think about the ranking, how far I'm going to go, titles, semifinals, finals, nothing. I just one match at a time, and I try to remind myself to enjoy myself out there.

Q. I know you've been asked this a lot, but what are the factors that are helping you enjoy tennis so much now at this stage of your life?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: I mean when you have really good results, everything is so much nicer, everything is so much -- it's so much easier to enjoy. You know, this didn't happen overnight. I worked long and hard to be in this situation, and I've had some good results over the past years and it just wasn't so consistent. And now that's I think the biggest difference. Now I'm consistently playing well. And even when I'm not playing well I'm winning matches, and that's what's really important.

And to have consistency tournament after tournament, this is what every player wants, and that's what I'm having, and I'm really happy.

Q. Did the sun glaze help you a lot in situations where there's a lot of shadows?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: Yeah. Today was difficult, especially towards I believe it was

second set, it was kind of coming through on the side of both sides. It was difficult to see. I mean everything that could be thrown at us was thrown at us today, with the wind, with the sun, with the shadows. But it is what it is. There's not much we can do.

Q. Mirjana, either Caroline or Ostapenko next. I know it's just right after your match, but in the event that it's Caroline, what can you expect from a match like that? What would be the key for you against her?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: I mean a tough match. Whoever it is, it's going to be a tough match for sure. I don't really worry about it right now at all because I want to enjoy my win for five minutes, recover a little bit and get ready for tomorrow. But look, it's a semifinal. It's a beautiful stage. The court is beautiful. The crowd is great. I'm going to come out, have fun and play hopefully another great match.

Q. How much of a boost is it to have all of your family here with you at this tournament? I think they were in Miami with you as well; right?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: Yeah.

Q. Do you gain energy from that?

MIRJANA LUCIC-BARONI: Yeah, for sure. I mean I'm very close with my family, so it's beautiful having my family around. My husband is here and my niece and nephew. So it's really fun. You're able to kind of have time off away from tennis, which is nice, because it can be very stressful, even though Charleston is super relaxing and super beautiful. Altogether it is the perfect tournament to bring your family. And we're really having a good time outside the court. I play, do my job and then we go hang out together. So we're having a great time.

End of Interview

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