

April 2, 2018

**N. OSAKA defeats Jennifer Brady
6-4, 6-4
First Round**

Q. How is life on the clay so far?
NAOMI OSAKA: It's okay because I won. I would probably say it was bad or something if I lost, but yeah, so far so good.

Q. How are you on clay? How would you describe your relationship with clay in the past?

NAOMI OSAKA: Well, in 2016 I would have said it was good because I did okay at the French. Last year I wouldn't say that. I literally don't think I won any matches on clay except for here. And this year I'm just trying to like start new and be ready for the longer points and stuff, and yeah, just to enjoy it.

Q. You talk about wanting to be ready for the longer points. You said at Indian Wells that that was one of the things that's really made a difference this year as far as maybe having more confidence in your fitness and knowing you don't have to go for too much too early. Do you think that translates -- have you talked to Sascha a little bit about how -- does that change at all on clay or doesn't change at all? What do you think?

NAOMI OSAKA: I mean I think you have to like change at least a little bit for clay. Like apparently the first time I started hitting here I was hitting my forehands with more spin. I think I did that subconsciously, but he was telling me about that. And it was really good. And yeah, I feel like people that have more spin on the ball do better on clay. So I don't want to drastically change how I play, but I think to do that a little bit is also good.

Q. (Indiscernible).

NAOMI OSAKA: No. I mean the day after that I felt way better. That just kind of sucked. But yeah, I mean I feel like everyone plays with -- like I don't think everyone plays with their health at 100 percent. So I feel like the people that are just able

Transcripts Provided By:

Kelly McKee Dorsey, Sports Media Transcriptionist
Email: kadmcr@yahoo.com
Twitter: @reporterkel



Volvo Car Open



to
fight
through
that,

I think that's what makes a champion. And that's something I'm going to try to work on a lot.

Q. Now that we're here have you been able to take a look at what happened in March?

NAOMI OSAKA: It's so close. My sister's birthday is tomorrow. I forgot. Oh, thank you for telling me.

Q. How do you look back on what you did? You beat like four former No. 1s and current No. 1s, No. 2 Radwanska. Is it all like a blur or does it all make sense?

NAOMI OSAKA: Well, it kind of seems like a while ago. And I -- like everyone asks me how my life's changed and whatever, and I don't really think it changed that much. I feel like the people that surround me are very -- like me sort of bubble me in, and I don't really see too much outside and I don't really want to see what's going on outside. And I feel like I should just focus on tennis because I'm a tennis player. And I don't really want to dwell too much on the past. I kind of want to keep moving towards the future.

Q. So you were able to keep yourself grounded after that career-changing --

NAOMI OSAKA: That's like kind of what I mean, like everyone says career changing. I don't really like see that much of a difference.

Q. Well, one difference is the prize money. Right? Have you treated yourself to anything yet?

NAOMI OSAKA: No. (Laughs).

Q. Do you have any plans to splurge on something maybe?

NAOMI OSAKA: I'm not the type of person that likes to buy stuff for myself. If I spend money, I kind of want to buy stuff for my mom or something. And I feel happy when I see that other people are happy.

Q. Just speak quickly on today's match. I mean first match on clay. So what did you think you did well that you were pleased

with on the court and what did you think maybe, okay, let's get to the practice courts?

NAOMI OSAKA: Well, I feel like when she went up 2-0 in the first set, I feel like I did really well to stay calm and just keep doing what I was doing and not really changing too much. And just I would say not try to over-hit. But also, I feel like in that sense I didn't really do too much sometimes in certain situations. Like I let her dictate. So that's one thing I would change, and also I had like three or four short balls and I missed two or three really badly. And I didn't want to look to see what Sascha was doing because I'm pretty sure he would have been like we need to go to the court after this. Other than that, I'm really happy with how I did. I can't really complain too much because I managed to win, but I feel like I always want to keep improving.

Q. Talk about your first games today. At some points she leads --

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah, I think it's higher.

Q. You mixed a very strong kick serve. Is it Sascha's advice or your judgment?

NAOMI OSAKA: I would say it's a little bit of both. I know in Indian Wells I did a lot of body second serves, because the surface suited that. But on clay court, I think it's better to hit kick because it bounced better. But I also wasn't really sure if she would attack my serve or not, so I was sort of just looking to see what she would do in the beginning. And after a while I see she didn't really step in. I just kept doing what I was doing.

Q. Are you familiar with Luna Lovegood?

NAOMI OSAKA: The last name sounds familiar.

Q. Harry Potter.

NAOMI OSAKA: Oh, yeah.

Q. She's kind of Hawaiian and independent, strong and a little whacky. Do you know who I'm talking about now?

NAOMI OSAKA: In the movie she was like platinum blonde?

Q. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Do you feel any kind of affinity towards her? I love her. I think she's one of the great characters in that series.

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Email: kadmcr@yahoo.com

Twitter: @reporterkel

But I'm just wondering if anyone has ever compared you to her before.

NAOMI OSAKA: No. (Laughs). That's actually the first time I've heard that. Do I do certain stuff? (Laughs).

Q. No. Because even like her, you can be unintentionally hilarious?

NAOMI OSAKA: Is it because my voice feels high sometimes? (Laughs).

Q. It's not the voice as much as content, the things that occur to you. It's comical.

NAOMI OSAKA: Okay. Thank you. (Laughs).

Q. You know what, I retract all that.

NAOMI OSAKA: (Laughs).

Q. Look her up and then we can talk about it.

NAOMI OSAKA: Okay.

Q. She was one of those people who didn't think she had a lot of friends, but she actually ends up being -- everybody ends up understanding what she's like.

NAOMI OSAKA: That sounds good. Maybe that can happen to me some day.

Q. Drawing off of that question, at Indian Wells you were talking about video gaming and stuff. So I'm kind of curious, as a traveling tennis player, what is your traveling gaming setup?

NAOMI OSAKA: Okay. So after Indian Wells -- so Sascha has a friend that was in Indian Wells that brought his PlayStation. So I didn't know that you could travel with a PlayStation. So in Miami I brought my PlayStation. But the internet was really bad. So that was the most disappointing moment in my life. And then here I didn't bring my PlayStation. I just have a game on my computer. So I have like a USB thing with a mouse. So that's what I've played most of the time.

Q. Which ones are you playing?

NAOMI OSAKA: Which one?

Q. What are you playing?

NAOMI OSAKA: I play "Overwatch" on the PS4. I try to play "Fornite." It's a little bit scary. And then on the computer I play Chara (ph).

Q. What are some of the ways that you and Sascha bond and gel? With him going from hitting partner relationships with high-profile players before he himself had a pretty decent social media following and then you yourself whether intentionally or not, have a big presence on social media as well, people follow you a lot, think you're hilarious. Is that one of the commonalities? Social media?

NAOMI OSAKA: He has Twitter fingers. Do you notice that? Like he -- he kind of gets in trouble sometimes. (Laughs). Like I would just be scrolling and I see like he posted something and I'm like, oh. And then I see like the comments below them and I'm like, whoa. And then I'm just laughing. And I'm deciding I'm not going to be involved in that. So whatever. And then like a few minutes later you see that he posted an apology. (Laughs). Yeah. My goal is kind of not to be like him in that sense. But other than that, I feel like it's pretty okay.

Q. Let me ask about your Japanese (indiscernible). He was interviewed.

NAOMI OSAKA: No. He calls my mom a lot. So him and my mom talk a lot, and he's been supporting me since I was really young and like even when I was playing the challengers in Japan he would come and watch. So yeah, I didn't know. But my physio, she told me and then I just started laughing because he was in a suit and stuff and he looked so serious. He was really funny.

Q. I heard he spoke to you when you were in Tunisia.

NAOMI OSAKA: Yeah, yeah. I would say even since I was like 8 or something. Like when I was 13 I remember we met him for the first time, and he's exactly like my mom and that was really surprising to me and I'm just really grateful for everything he's done for me.

End of Interview

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Twitter: @reporterkel