

August 20, 2011



M. SHARAPOVA/V. Zvonareva

2-6, 6-3, 6-3

An interview with:

VERA ZVONAREVA

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. The match really started out and you were able to break a lot easier. What happened? You were in control. Did she do anything in the second and third sets?

VERA ZVONAREVA: I think obviously she started a little bit slow and was having a lot of unforced errors. Then I think she came up with more consistency in the second set. She started playing a little bit -- she always plays aggressive, so she was playing aggressive and making a lot shots. I was a little bit of the rhythm because she made a lot mistakes in the first set.

Yeah, then she started serving and returning better and was able to turn it around.

Q. You've had a very strong last month or so winning in Baku and doing well. How much confidence do you now have going to the US Open? Does it matter for your confidence, this match?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Well, definitely, you know, just a lot of matches playing during the hard court season and a lot of great wins, they always give confidence.

No matter what. I always believe in myself and I always believe if I can play my best tennis I can beat anyone. It's just a matter of going out there and playing very good tennis every day.

It's not easy sometimes. You have ups and sometimes you have downs. But overall, I'm feeling pretty good, so I'm looking forward to New York.

Q. When Maria called her coach over, when she came back, did you expect her to play differently?

VERA ZVONAREVA: No, I didn't think about it at all. She just start playing a little bit more consistent. But she knows how to do it. I don't think about her calling the coach or that she changed something a lot.

No, nothing like this.

Q. You talked about how Maria's game changed there throughout. Talk about yours, the difference between the first and the second and third sets for you.

VERA ZVONAREVA: Well, I think, you know, in the first set I made less unforced errors obviously, so it was a very clean set from me.

In the second and the third I had a bit more maybe concentration level drop down a little bit some moments and I had few more double faults. It gave her some confidence. I gave her a little bit more chances.

Then it was tough, because if you give an opponent chances like that, and especially if you give Maria chances like that, she will take it.

Q. Was her serve doing anything different? Your first return points is lower than what it normally is?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Well, she's a tall girl; she's got a good serve. Of course it's tough. And especially after the serve she's very aggressive. So I think it's normal. There are a lot of different players. Against her, it's quite normal.

Q. Maria told ESPN that she made some adjustments in the second and third sets to help her win. Did you try to counter those and adjust? If so, what were some of those things when you saw the momentum start to change?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Yeah, of course. I had to concentrate on my game. I think today

there were a lot of shots that I made few like wrong choices. I went for my shots, but I made mistakes.

If I would have made those shots it would have been a different story.

Q. You went for a lot more velocity it seemed like than normal on your serves. You also had more double faults than usual. Is that because of how good a returner she, you felt like you needed to go for more today?

VERA ZVONAREVA: No, not really. I don't know. I think, yeah, maybe in a way that I have to stay a little bit more aggressive with my serve, my first and second serve.

Of course if you stay a little bit more aggressive you'll take a little bit more risk and you will have a little bit more errors. Maybe it's part of it.

I don't really know why.

Q. At one point you served three aces in a row. Did you get excited inside?

VERA ZVONAREVA: No. It happened to me before. Nothing to be excited. I still lost the match.

Q. Looking forward to the US Open, a bunch of different players have been saying today for some of them they loved the US Open from the first time they went there, and like the atmosphere and the crowds and the noise and everything; other players have said it took them a little bit longer to get used to it and embrace the Open. Where do you fall in that range?

VERA ZVONAREVA: I think I like the US Open a lot. I like the atmosphere. I like the crowd. I like the center court matches, the whole thing. Just the energy of it, it gives a lot of energy.

Yeah, it makes you maybe a better competitor. You really want to go there and really want to compete and be on the big stage, and, you know, try to show some good tennis.

Q. What are some of positives you take out of this match going forward?

VERA ZVONAREVA: It's a huge event. I was playing a semifinal night match against Maria, and we had a tough match, three sets. So there are a lot of positive things about it. Of course I saw a lot of things that I need to work onto to prepare myself better for US Open. That's the positive thing.

So I will have a few days now, a week, before the Open, so I will go and work on them. Hopefully I can play a little bit more consistent at the Open.

Q. You have more wins here than anyone in the Open era. Did you know this, and how does it feel?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Yeah, someone told me the other day. You know, it's a good record to have. It's nice, but that's not something I'm really thinking about.

But no matter what, I like Cincinnati. I like the crowd and the atmosphere here. Well, just want to come back next year.

Q. You talked about hitting the three aces and not really reacting. You hit some other incredible shots during this match and didn't show anything on your face. Do you feel like positive emotion when that happens, or do you just try to stay flat when it happenings?

VERA ZVONAREVA: Of course you feel positive that this happens when you have good shots. But it's just one or two shots. You have to focus on the next point. You still have to play a match.

So I think I'm just trying to keep my concentration and focus. I know if I hit a very good shot, you know, it's great. But I have to focus on another one, so just probably is my way of playing the match.

Q. When the match starts to go against where you want it to go obviously, what do you think about in terms of trying to get it back on track, I mean, from a mental standpoint?

VERA ZVONAREVA: I'm just thinking about that no matter what I have to go for my shots. Just take one point at a time and just think about, Okay, what do I have to do now no win this point? That's it. I'm not really thinking about the score or anything else. Just trying to stay in the moment.

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