

**August 10, 2009**



**Western & Southern  
Financial Group®**

**MASTERS & WOMEN'S OPEN**

**K. CLIJSTERS/M. Bartoli**

6-4, 6-3

An interview with:

## **KIM CLIJSTERS**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. You said on court that it was great to get back with a win. Were you nervous at first?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: I was really excited to be out there. You know, like I said on Saturday too in my press conference, it's been so long that I've been practicing for this. There were some events that I was a part of, but this was my main goal. For it to finally be here, it was exciting.

**Q. What was it like when you walked out? What were you feeling?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: It was fun. I was really focused on what I had to do out there. I was not focusing - or trying not to - on who I was playing. It was nice just to be back out there and going through the whole match preparations and routines again.

I have to listen to the chair umpire a little more careful, because there are different rules than when I was playing. Normally you do your own thing and wait for the coin toss to start. I'll have to pay really close attention now.

**Q. And the coaching?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: Yeah, I hear, Bartoli is requesting her coach. I was like, Is that allowed now? Yeah, I guess it is. So a few little things that I just have to get used to.

**Q. What did you do well tonight?**

**ASAP** sports  
...when all is said, we're done.®

visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

KIM CLIJSTERS: I think what I did well was even when my level was a little bit up and down at some point, mentally I stayed focused. I think that's what I'm really happy with.

And obviously with the start that I took today, that gave me a boost to be out there and just keep playing aggressive tennis and just to try to make her move around. I think that was the main goal: To try to make her not play her own level.

Once she's in her routine and in a rhythm, she can hit the ball really well and really deep and very low over the net. Then she puts me under pressure, and that's kind of what I was trying to avoid a little bit. Trying to make the angles.

The only thing I guess I wasn't too pleased with was the first serve percentage. Again, that's a part -- you know, I'm learning from these matches. That's why I'm also playing doubles. Hopefully I can work on that tomorrow in doubles.

So, yeah...

**Q. Do you feel any relief after that match?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: Um, not relieved, I'm excited. I'm excited that I can play another match here, and I play doubles first tomorrow. That's obviously going to be my next goal, to work on a few things that weren't going too good tonight, and then try to win with Yanina.

I'm just looking forward. I'm happy that I can play another match here and that it's not over after the first match.

**Q. The last game you were down, did you feel things slipping away?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: Well, you know, I felt a little under pressure in my service games, because my first serve percentage wasn't way I like it to be. She's a good returner. My second serve was going well, so that's something that I think made my stay in there a little bit.

So, you know, when you're in a situation like that you just have to focus on each shot and

**K. Clijsters - 08.10.09.doc**

get 15-40, and 30-40. Then it's up to her, the nerves start coming in on her. She has to get that point.

I was happy to get to deuce, so...

**Q. Did you expect to win?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: I wasn't really focusing too much on winning or losing. Not at all on losing, obviously. But when you go out there you want to win. No matter who you play or where, you want to win.

But I wasn't -- my mindset, I think, tonight was different than, let's say, a few years ago where you're focusing on, Okay, I'm gonna go out there and I'm gonna -- yeah, you focus a lot on the other players and everything.

Now I'm just focusing on myself and trying to take a lot of things in. At the same time, notice a lot of things. Learn again. Just, yeah, I'll try to -- later tonight I'll talk to my coach and explain what I was feeling and just little things like that.

**Q. We asked her if it seemed you were playing like you were at the top 5 or top 10 level, and she said it takes more than that over the year, but yes.**

KIM CLIJSTERS: That's nice to hear, but I still feel like I'm far from that. One match doesn't mean that obviously, but that's a nice compliment. I'm humbled by that, I guess.

**Q. How do you feel? Did you answer any questions tonight? Did this answer any questions for you tonight?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: Yeah, again, I mean, I was just gonna go out there and play tennis. That's kind of what I was really focusing on. Again, I wasn't really focusing too much on, yeah, scores or anything.

Even out there today, okay, I knew I was up. When she came back, you know what the score is obviously. But I wasn't really trying to make that my first thoughts. I was trying to focus on, okay, make the first serve. Where are you gonna serve? Things like that.

I think once you have that mindset, I think you forget about everything else that's going on, even outside tennis right now.

**Q. I guess in a broader sense you've been away for 27 months or something. You come in and your first match beat the 13th ranked player who just beat Ms. Williams. Does that tell you anything?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: Yeah, I had a really good feeling in practice. It's not that I wasn't hitting the ball well in practice or anything. I've worked hard to get myself at a level, where, yeah, I hope I can compete with those girls.

Again, not having played a match, that was something that was gonna be new out there for me today. Like I said, I felt pretty comfortable out there. Didn't feel like much changed. I fell very good into my rhythm, and especially mentally-wise I stayed very focused. That's something that I think I'm the most pleased with tonight.

**Q. How about comparing the Kim of August of 2009 against, say, April 2007?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: I have no idea. Let me know when you ask those questions so I have a little bit of a defense.

**Q. It's a pleasure seeing you back on the tour. Will you do this full time, do you feel?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: Yeah, I hope so. Even before today that was what I was planning on doing. Again, after the US Open the season is not that much longer. We're already in the second part of the season.

You know, like I said, I hope that I can get some matches in the next few tournaments, and I'll take that with me for the next season. So I have that all behind me that I don't have to go through the whole match experiences again, saying hi and meeting everybody all over again. That takes a little bit out of you as well.

Everybody I see wants to talk and see my daughter. It's fun and I like doing that, but it also takes energy out of you. I'm glad to be here. And like I said, hopefully I can give myself more matches.

**Q. Well, welcome to our state of Ohio.**

KIM CLIJSTERS: Thank you.

**Q. What has the response been from the other players?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: It was really nice. I've been in touch with some of them. The new girls, it's nice to kind of get to know them and see what they're like. There's a lot of Russian-speaking girls, especially in the locker room as well.

It's fun and nice to see young girls coming up as well and see how they do, how they play. That's a whole part of it. Wim is really good at that,

my coach. He goes out and watches a lot of players. I play Patty Schnyder and I know her. She's one of the old-timers out there.

But it's fun again to play someone like that.

**Q. Give you any perspective when you left hotel today and said good-bye to your daughter, here I go to work?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: Yeah, she was crying, Mama, mama. It's fun. It's just a very comfortable feeling knowing when you're out there that she's in bed sleeping quietly, doing her thing. Yeah, I mean, so far the combination is going really well.

You know, we have nothing to complain about.

**Q. Do you think World Team Tennis helps you at all?**

KIM CLIJSTERS: I really liked it. Again, it was a part -- it was part of my preparation that I really felt like I needed. It came at a really good time. I was practicing for a while, and it was nice to have the competition and the format. It was something completely different.

I remember coming in the first day and seeing the different colors of the court and just everything, I'm meeting my team members. It's fun, and the fans were really into it. I think the whole interaction was a nice experience for me as well to just go through that. I played a young girl there, I think 14, she played for Philadelphia.

**Q. Madison Key.**

KIM CLIJSTERS: Yeah, she's a really good player. Those are fun things you take away from these events. I saw Billie Jean and had a nice talk with her. Just nice to get back and see those people.

**FastScripts by ASAP Sports**