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**Western & Southern
Financial Group®**

MASTERS & WOMEN'S OPEN

D. SAFINA/F. Pennetta

6-2, 6-0

An interview with:

DINARA SAFINA

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You seem to keep getting stronger and better as the week goes on.

DINARA SAFINA: Well, that's how it goes. As I've been saying, every match I feel better. Today, stepping on the court, I was feeling very good and confident, like I was feeling very good stepping in.

Q. Why does that happen? Why do you feel like you get so much better with each step in the tournament?

DINARA SAFINA: Well, definitely more matches you play more and more you start to bring yourself out of your game, because I been working hard.

Sometimes it needs time to -- you build, build, build, and then you need some matches to bring it out. So the more you play the more you have chances to bring the game out.

Q. Pennetta came into this with a 15-match winning streak. Did you sense her fatigue today?

DINARA SAFINA: Well, you know, I knew that I had to be strong at the beginning, because, I mean, I know how it is playing that many matches in a row.

When somebody starts to put you pressure from the first, it's tough mentally to face it, you know. That was the key for myself. I wanted to

put straight the pressure and to be dominate, and not let her get into the match.

If you let her go into the match, then of course she starts to feel better and she will start to forget about that. But when you see the pressure is coming, coming, then it's tough. I know it from my experience.

Q. What do you do for yourself to prepare mentally and physically for tomorrow's final?

DINARA SAFINA: Right now it's still too early. About this I will think tomorrow morning. Right now I'm happy with the way I played today.

Right now it makes no sense to think about tomorrow, because I still don't know who I'm playing. That's all. Now it's gonna be kind of day off until then.

Q. Has the heat bothered you much this week, or do you feel very fresh yet?

DINARA SAFINA: First couple days here it was impossible to practice. It was more humid. Now it's a little bit cooler. Still hot, but not as humid.

First two days it was impossible. I as on the court practicing, and my heart rate was 180 just standing from the middle of the court. I was like, What's going on? I cannot breathe.

But, you know, it cooled down a little bit.

Q. You talked about keeping the pressure on her from the very beginning, and Clijsters yesterday said she felt like you did the same thing to her. How much has that become just a general game plan for you, regardless of who you're playing?

DINARA SAFINA: Well, it's not really this is my game plan not to let the other ones in. That's how it goes when you play top players. Either you start to dominate or they dominate you. Of course nobody wants to run on the court.

I'm trying to make sure I'm the first one to start the point to dictate.

Q. And no problems with your hand again?

DINARA SAFINA: No, no. Thanks, but it's good.

Q. It's over, it's done, it's better?

DINARA SAFINA: Yeah.

Q. Have you seen your brother in town yet?

DINARA SAFINA: Yeah, he's here.

Q. Have you had a chance to hang out much at all?

DINARA SAFINA: No. We might go today for dinner, but yesterday, no.

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