

August 15, 2009



Western & Southern Financial Group®

MASTERS & WOMEN'S OPEN

J. JANKOVIC/E. Dementieva

7-6, 0-6, 7-6

An interview with:

JELENA JANKOVIC

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How did you pull that out?

JELENA JANKOVIC: You know, be to be honest, I really don't know. It's really amazing. I couldn't believe, you know, that I was able to win this match at the end.

There was so many ups and down throughout the match. I had I don't know, 5-4 and three match points on my serve, and I thought I was gonna win right there. And then all of a sudden, she was going for broke on those points and she took her chances. It was tough for me to except that I lost that game.

But then I just tried to refocus again and play the best that I can even though I was really tired and it was tough and we were there for three hours. Then all of a sudden I got into a situation down 6-2 in the tiebreak, and I just said to myself, you know, I have been in these kind of situations in the past. I know I can win. I just have to go one point at a time and move the best as I can, even if I have to move on my hands or whatever I had to do.

I just gave everything I had. It was really tough. To be honest, I don't know how I was able to win those points and win the tiebreak. It's a really unbelievable win for me in such a tough match. It was tough mentally and physically for both of us.

Q. Were you cramping? I saw you bending over a lot.

JELENA JANKOVIC: I was tight. My legs were hurting, everything was hurting. It was a three-hour match, and I haven't played many matches this year. It's not the same practicing -- you can practice eight hours, but when you're under pressure and when you're competing, it takes much more energy out of you. I felt that. I cannot lie about that.

But I tried to make myself think that I'm still fresh and I still have, you know, energy to keep going and keep going and keep going. Here I am. I came out as a winner. It's a really huge win for me and great for my confidence.

It's been a while since I played a final of a big tournament, and it's good to be back.

Q. Looked like almost several different matches tonight. What happened in the second set?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Second set I got so tired. You know, I tried my best in the first set, and it look a lot of energy out of me. Second set I fell completely flat. I said to myself, you know, I have no chance to win that second set. She was playing really well. She was going for her shots, and I didn't have enough energy. I was hitting everything short and I let her dictate the play.

I said, I'm just going to just try to gain as much energy as possible and start in a good way in the third. That's what I did. I started attacking right away and giving everything I had. You know, I kept going, going, going. Really, really took so much out of me mentally and physically.

I cannot believe -- there were so many things going on out there. It was unbelievable that I was able to win this. She was in much better form coming into this match, you know, but I had a good score against her in the past. She has had the better year this year, so obviously she was the favorite.

But, you know, I was the No. 1 player last year, and, you know, sometimes I can come up and give it a good go.

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

visit our archives at asapsports.com

J. Jankovic - 08.15.09.doc

Q. Does this result, the way you won, make up for a lot of disappointing results you've had?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, it's nice to make up for this. It's been a while. I've been waiting for this. You know, I had all these problems as well. You know, my mother was sick and she had surgery. I had so many distractions outside of the court.

I wasn't able to -- I'm quite an emotional person, and I wasn't able to focus. It took a lot out of me. My tennis was going down and I didn't enjoy it. I didn't enjoy those battles like I did today, even though sometimes I played not so well and then I played well.

You know, I still enjoyed the whole situation. I was out there and believing that I can do it and I had fun. That's the most important thing.

Now I'm enjoying and enjoying the challenge. I'm happy that I have this opportunity to play matches again. I love competing, and that's what I'm here for. It's been a while since I been deep in the competition. This is what I want, and this is where I belong. I hope that I can continue like this.

Q. Given your fatigue level, what did you tell yourself mentally at the end of the second set? You got bageled, basically. How did you get back into it in the third set?

JELENA JANKOVIC: I told you at the end of that second set, I said to myself, you know, I didn't want to run so much for some of shots. I didn't want to try my best. I said, Okay, I'm just gonna let it go and try to feel better for the beginning of the third.

Then I started -- you know, I lifted my game a little bit and got a bit more energy. Then I didn't want to, you know, try so hard if I didn't have energy. Then I would be completely dead and then I would ruin everything and I wouldn't be able to do anything.

So I kind of did -- that's how I managed. It was difficult. It was not easy to run side to side and play all the long points. It's so humid. Elena played so well. She's an unbelievable athlete and makes you play all the shots and doesn't give you easy points. You have to earn everything.

You know, I'm really happy that I was able to beat her tonight?

Q. Looking at the match tomorrow, I mean, you have a very short recovery time. What do you have to do to win tomorrow?

JELENA JANKOVIC: That will be a little bit disadvantage. Safina played today at 1:00 and had the whole day to rest. I finished late tonight. I will do my best to recover. I will try, you know, my best to play well tomorrow.

Q. Will you take fluids or something like that?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, we'll do everything possible. We'll see how I will be tomorrow. It will be a difficult match. It's a tough opponent. We'll see how things go. Anything can happen.

Q. How is your mother's health right now?

JELENA JANKOVIC: She's doing good. Thank you. She had surgery after Wimbledon and she's recovering. Hopefully she will come in New York, so I'm really happy about that. You know, I can enjoy my tennis. I'm happy for my mom. There's nothing more important than health.

Q. What was the difference today? Was it just you were the last person standing? Did you feel maybe more fit than Dementieva?

JELENA JANKOVIC: What do you mean, at the end?

Q. Because it was a very tough, long match. What was the difference in the match?

JELENA JANKOVIC: There was very little. The difference was few points here and there. It was unbelievable. You know, you couldn't decide. It was -- I don't know how I was able to win. I thought she felt more fit than I was. I was struggling with my -- you know, I was struggling with fatigue.

I was giving my best trying not to think about that and trying to think in the present and play each point one point at a time and fight and give ever atom of my power.

You know, it was difficult. I thought that she had enough energy, but it was very tough mentally to handle the whole situation. It's not easy.

Q. Can you say what kind of sickness your mother had?

JELENA JANKOVIC: It's better not to talk about this now. I'm just so happy I won my match.

Q. Do you feel like that person who was No. 1 at the beginning of year, that that was forever ago? I mean, there are probably people that don't even remember that.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, but it's been a while since I played well. Last time was at the end of last year when I played finals at the Open and won three big tournaments in the row and was beating all the top players at a lot of big tournaments. All these things happened, and my game completely dropped down. It was difficult to accept that.

All of the players were favorites against me, even though I had a positive score against them. When I saw -- it gave me kind of a little bit of motivation, to be honest. I know I can do it. I know I can play well and bring some good tennis out there. I know I'm a good athlete. It's just a matter of believing in myself and doing what I can do best.

I showed tonight I was able to handle the situation and come out as a winner, even though it was tough and a lot of ups and downs.

Q. Were you happy with the way you served?

JELENA JANKOVIC: No. There was a lot of things I could have done better. I didn't serve so well. I didn't put many first serves in and made a lot of double faults. There are so many things I have to improve. There is -- it's not always gonna be perfect.

But still, in those situations when things are not going the way you want them to go, you still have to figure out a way to get through. Doesn't matter how. Do whatever you can do. Try to find a way to win. I was able to do that tonight.

Q. You said that at the end you were telling yourself that, I feel fresh, I feel fresh.

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah.

Q. How did you convince yourself when that you body is telling you otherwise?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Well, you know, the way it works, whatever you tell to yourself, your body follows. I mean, how you say it in -- (from translation) power of suggestion. Whatever you say to yourself -- if you say to yourself, I'm so nervous I can't go anymore, you're gonna be even worse. You got to keep feeding your mind with

positive things and words and just keep pushing yourself to the limits.

I just kept going and going and said, Jelena, keep going, keep going. I didn't want to think too far. 6-2 and I didn't want to think, I'm going down. I'm gonna lose. I took one point at a time, and that's the way I managed to win this match.

Q. In your career, would you rank this match as being one of the toughest?

JELENA JANKOVIC: One of the toughest, for sure. You know, it was tough mentally and physically, especially in this time of the year, you know. I been looking for this kind of matches. For my confidence it's really unbelievable. It's a good comeback for me. It's good to get in this group again, you know, be with the top players again and compete with them hopefully week in and week out. That's what I want. That's my goal for now.

Q. You mentioned that you haven't been playing that much this year. That has taken a little bit of that confidence. How will you see yourself looking ahead to the US Open? Are you prepared for that? Are you prepared to be a Grand Slam champion?

JELENA JANKOVIC: After Wimbledon, I completely, you know, rested my mind. I wanted to forget everything what happened in that first half of the season. I wanted to clear my mind and be -- start the second half of the season with a fresh mind and ready to play.

I changed a lot of things. I changed -- my body changed as well. I lost some weight and became more lean, which at this beginning of year I had 15 pounds more weight than usual. That gave my trouble and I felt awkward on court.

There's lots of things that I have changed. I'm much more positive now and enjoying every practice and every match. I'm trying my best to improve every day. You know, there is things I would like to get better at and work on certain shots, but with the positive mind, I think you can achieve anything.

The most important is I'm enjoying. I'm playing with passion, which -- and with a smile on my face. That's what I needed. I been missing that for a while. I wasn't the same player.

Q. How does pulling through a tough match tonight help you tomorrow?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Tomorrow it's gonna be another match. Soon as I step on the court tomorrow, I will forget everything that has happened in this tournament. I just have to focus on what I can do to play against Safina. That's all. There is nothing else. I gotta try my best. Nobody is unbeatable out there.

Q. During the break after Wimbledon, how much did you follow the tour?

JELENA JANKOVIC: I didn't really follow. To be honest, when I'm out, on vacation or not playing tennis, I don't really watch women's tennis, or even men's matches. I just want to stay out of tennis and recharge the batteries and think about something else other than hitting balls and all these things that go long with tennis.

Q. Shop?

JELENA JANKOVIC: Shopping, beach, whatever. Taking care of my mother as well.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports