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**Western & Southern  
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**MASTERS & WOMEN'S OPEN**

**J. JANKOVIC/D.** Safina

6-4, 6-2

An interview with:

## **JELENA JANKOVIC**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. How is it that you looked like the fresher player out there today?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: You know, I just -- you know, when I did the interview before the match and Pam Shriver was asking me, How you feel today after such a tough one last night? I just said that I wanted to make myself believe that you're not tired. I feel fresh. I'm ready to play.

That's how I felt today in the match, actually. When I woke up in morning I felt really sore, especially after going to sleep at 2:00 a.m. You know, when I went on court I just felt fine. My legs were a little bit tight and I got a little bit pain in my quad. I was sore in my certain parts of my body, which was normal because yesterday's match was -- it took a lot out of me and it's been a while since I played this tough matches against the top players.

But I'm really pleased that I was able to play well today and beat the No. 1 player in the world, and yesterday beat Elena Dementieva. I got quite a few good wins under my belt this week, which is very good for my confidence coming into Toronto, and especially US Open.

You know, I'm very happy with my performance.

**Q. When's the last time you felt this good about how you were playing?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: Last year. It's been a while. You know, I finished last year No. 1 in the

world. You know, when I won my last big tournament it was in Moscow last year at the end of the year. I won three tournaments in a row, big ones, beating the top players.

You know, I won this year in Marbella, but that was like, you know, compared to the Tier 1 events and all the big events and playing against the No. 1 in the world and all these top 10 girls.

So good win for me. I'm happy that I'm back. I'm back in the, you know, in this group of players, and hopefully I can keep my form up.

**Q. Did you know who the people were that spelled out your name in the T-shirts in the stands? I didn't know if they were near where your dad was.**

JELENA JANKOVIC: No.

**Q. What do you make of those people that obviously like you enough to come wearing T-shirts with your name?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, throughout this week I had a lot of fans. There were so many people. They had my T-shirt with my picture on it. You know, I had also some fans, you know, No. 1, Jelena. They're my biggest fans.

It's really nice. I appreciate my fans, and I take my time to sign autographs and take pictures with them. They been supporting me throughout the whole week. For me, it means a lot to me, especially in important moments. Especially yesterday when I was down. I heard all these supportive words from the crowd all over the place.

It really pushes you on. It's important, you know, to have these kind of fans. I really appreciate that. It means a lot to me.

**Q. She really dominated everyone else she played this week. Why were you able to almost turn the tables on her?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: You know, this match was really the ex-No. 1 in the world with the current No. 1 in the world. I came out, and I wanted to play the best that I could play under

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**J. Jankovic - 08.16.09.doc**

those conditions. Today was very hot. Especially I didn't know -- my only concern was I didn't know how I was gonna feel during the match because my legs -- if I was gonna be able to move throughout the whole match and be able to be on the ball and try to get the first strike.

I played really smart. I played really with the intelligence. I didn't want to get into the power game, what she does. I really opened up the court and didn't let her play her game. I really put my game out there. I opened those angles and opened the court and waited for the shots that I know I can hit and what I do best.

Really pleased with my performance. The wind and all the conditions, it was not easy, but I handled the whole situation very well.

**Q. Was your dad a stand-in for your mom, or does he usually try to come to a few of your matches?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: No, my dad, actually it's been really a while since he has been -- since he has watched me play. You know, my mom usually travels with me, but my mom had surgery after Wimbledon, so she's recovering.

You know, I dedicate this win to her. I wanted to make her happy. It's important. But my dad, you know, it's tough for him to watch. He gets really nervous out there. It's tough watching your kid. I understand him. My mother is more used to those kind of things because she travel with me since I was a little girl.

But my dad has helped me a lot. He knows my tennis very well, and I've readjusted some of the things just before coming into this tournament. I work a lot on, you know, doing the right things, playing and improving some of the shots. There is still many things I would like to get better at. I will work hard to improve, but it's been really big improvement so far.

Because I haven't been playing very well this first half of the season, I said to myself, I'm gonna begin. This is my time to come back. I love playing on hardcourts. I'm moving very well again and my game is coming back and I'm positive. I'm out there with a smile on my face, and I bring some, you know, how do you say, some interesting things into tennis again.

You know, it's nice for me to be back.

**Q. That was a very sweet moment when you went over and hugged your dad.**

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah.

**Q. For him, you can imagine how nervous he was for you, to be able to share that with your dad.**

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, for sure to be able to share these kind of moments with your parents, doesn't matter who it is, my dad or my mom. My mom watched on TV, so she was really happy for that. It's always amazing. I really appreciate my family. My family and my parents have been with me through the good and the bad times. I really appreciate their support.

You know, watching me play and going through all the things that I went through, it's not really easy. For me to win this week, it's really great and brings a lot of joy.

**Q. Which was more difficult for you, with Azarenka or Dementieva?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: You cannot compare it. Each match is individual. Individual, different players, different styles of game.

I cannot compare. I tried my best each match. You know, some matches I played better than the others. Some worse than the others. You cannot expect yourself to play your best tennis every time.

Also, some games, the way they play doesn't really suit you, so it gives you a lot more trouble.

But I figured out my way, you know, to win those matches. It didn't matter who it was on the other side. Yesterday was unbelievable match. You know, 6-2 I was down in the tiebreaker, and I was able to win 8-6. Today beating the No. 1 player in the world, it's amazing as well. She has been in great form and she played very well this year.

You know, for me to win against her, it gives me a lot of confidence. So I hope that I can just keep getting better and better. Like I said in the beginning of the week when I won my first round, the more I play the better I get and the more dangerous I get.

So I keep getting and getting better and better and my level of play was going up and up. So really happy and satisfied.

**Q. Have you been in contact with your mom since the match ended?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: Every day I'm calling her a couple times a day. It's just sometimes a problem with the time difference, because last

night she was -- because there was no, how do you say, there was no coverage. It was on Tennis Channel but not in Europe, so she was watching the live score. And she couldn't watch. You know, she was on the computer live score, and she couldn't believe it, what was happening.

She said, you want me to have a heart attack watching these scores? What are you doing to your mother? But, what can I do? I don't want to do that, but I'm just trying to win. That was it. It's nice.

You know, at the end of the day, the most important thing is to be happy and to give your best here on the court. Sometimes you're gonna win and sometimes you're gonna lose. You got to try hard and give your best, and whatever your best is on that certain day, that's it.

**Q. Where is your mom now?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: In Serbia at home.

**Q. With respect to playing a long match the night before and then coming back playing midday, were you looking to do anything different? With respect to your physical condition, did you know that you had to do some things different, that you didn't have a lot of gas in the tank today?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: No, like I said, it was all mental because I didn't want to make myself believe I was tired. My legs are hurting me now. I cannot wait to get a massage. I just didn't want to tell to myself that I'm tired and I don't have enough energy. I just said to myself, I'm feeling good and I'm excited about playing today's final. I'm playing against the No. 1 in the world. I just gotta go out there and try to play the best that I can.

I came out tactically very well-prepared. I was playing really smart. That's what I did. It was all up in the mind. You know, that was all.

I didn't think I had issues with my fatigue or whatever there was. It was really hot out there. There's no doubt about that. But I just focused one point at a time and played my tennis.

**Q. How long have you been waiting for a result like this? You said at Stanford you felt like you were playing well and didn't come together there.**

JELENA JANKOVIC: Yeah, you know, when I was playing in Stanford, you know, I felt like my game was coming back, but I was still a little bit rusty. After Wimbledon I haven't played for a

month, so I needed some matches and to just get into that rhythm again.

I was a little bit unlucky against Bartoli, and then she ended up winning the tournament. But I had the chance to win in two sets. Unfortunately, got some strange calls and some, you know, strange things happened over there.

You know, I lost that match, but I didn't put myself down. I just analyze what I had to do and I went to practice right after that. I worked on my game. I worked on certain things and I came out here, you know, really optimistic. I want to enjoy my tennis and I want to play.

You know, every match I got better and better. At the end, I won the title. It's a big title, and it's been a while since I have done this. Hopefully I can continue with the consistent results.

**Q. After winning three tournaments last fall, there would be a lot of people who would think, whatever I'm doing is right. Yet you went and tried to add more muscle. What were you thinking?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: No, I didn't want to add muscle. I never wanted to do that. It's the coaches, you know. I did some different training, and the work-outs that I did added muscle to my body.

It was 15 pounds more muscle than I have now. Maybe you cannot tell the difference. You probably can. Because I was much bigger in my shoulders and legs. But I felt so much slower. It was so difficult for me to move. I did not feel my strokes.

Then some other problems with my mother's health and, you know, it's difficult. It was difficult for me to concentrate, and it affected me a lot in many ways. You know, I changed and readjusted the way I trained. I started thinking much more positive and started eating right as well.

You know, I used to drink Coke. I drank Coke and I ate chocolate. But generally I have a good metabolism and I don't really gain weight. Doesn't make a difference if I eat chocolate or not.

But you got to take care of all these little things to have energy and feel good. All of us have certain things that are not good that we like to eat. Nobody is perfect. You cannot take care and you just eat everything right.

But now I'm doing this and I'm feeling good. All these little things at the end give a good

result. But the most important, I'm having -- my smile is back and I'm having fun, you know, playing the matches. I love competing and being out there. This is what I missed. I missed this for maybe seven months this year. I missed being in these kind of situations and being in big crowds and having the support and being in tough situations.

At the end, coming out as a winner, it gives a great -- it's great satisfaction. This is what the sport is all about.

**Q. Is there anything that sets this event apart for you, besides today obviously?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: You know, it's amazing. I've been here maybe three years ago or something. There's so many fans that I remember. It's amazing. I remember their faces, and, you know, I have a lot of support.

You know, I really like that a lot. You know, all these roller coasters and all of these things. I haven't had a chance to go this week. I was focused on my job finally.

**Q. Your first service game, it went to deuce three times. She had a breakpoint. Did you almost feel that set the tone, because if you would have lost that and then maybe it gives her confidence to be more aggressive?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: You can always tell. You can always say if, if. If I did this or she did that, you never know what can happen.

In the beginning, when I played those first two games, I felt a little bit slow. I felt a little bit flat. Took me a little bit of time, you know, five or ten minutes, to warm up, to get into the match, and to start feeling the ball.

It was a little bit windy, and so I needed to move my feet and really be dynamic and play with energy.

After, right after those two games, I started to feel good again. Then I just kind of cruised through and was getting better and better and did my job in a big way.

**Q. You asked for the trainer twice in the match. Was it just stiffness, or beginning of the cramps?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: You know, I have a little bit of pain in my quad because it's -- maybe I even have a strain. I'm not sure about that. I will see the trainer. I had some pain, and I had to call because when I was banging I felt it quite a lot.

But it's not something that's abnormal, because I played a lot of tennis this week. It's been a while since I have done that. You can practice eight hours a day, but playing the match with a pressure and intensity, it's completely different. Takes way more energy out of you.

**Q. Do you empathize with Dinara because of the No. 1 situation, not having won a Slam?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: No, I respect everybody. I respect every player. You cannot -- she's the current No. 1 in the world. You cannot take away her results. What she has done, she deserves all of that. Being No. 1 in the world is not easy to do, even if it's for a week or however time it is.

Not many people can say that they were the No. 1 player in the world. No matter what profession you are, it's a huge accomplishment.

**Q. But do you feel a little bit more of a bond or something with her?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: No, I don't feel -- you know, no bond to anybody. You know, I mean, we are all individuals. We all have different results, different goals, different, you know, ambitions.

You know, I respect her a lot as a player, and what she has done, it's great. Nobody can tell her anything, you know. With a Grand Slam or no Grand Slam, she's still the No. 1 player in the world, and nobody can take it away from her in this moment.

Maybe somebody else will during -- it's still not the end of the year. But for right now, she's the player. She has had the best results this year so far, so all the credit to her.

**Q. How much your coach contributed to your victory today? Was it his idea to play the way you played?**

JELENA JANKOVIC: My dad contributed a lot to this. You know, he has -- he knows the way I played since I was a little girl. Just he hasn't traveled with me so much. He knows, and he was telling me before -- you know, after Wimbledon I took a little break.

My dad came out and saw me play, and he goes, Jelena, this has nothing to do with your backhand. I don't know what you have been doing, but this is not your shot.

I mean, you know. And then you know the funny part was Nick Bollettieri's, he was like, You're not bending enough. You're not doing this or that. I see my shoes. I used to have always hole in my shoes because I was bending and I always ripped my shoelaces because I was bending so much on certain shots, especially the backhand and the way I hit my backhand down the line. It was my biggest weapon. This is the way I was hurting my opponents.

Then I start and I see my laces are ripped again and all of those things, and it's amazing. I started to change some of my technique and get back to the shot, to the way I was playing and the way I felt the rhythm.

Little by little, it was coming back. I was feeling it, feeling it, feeling, feeling, and especially couple times there was some great shots that I was able to hit and my game is coming back together.

**Q. They told me he went to the bar.**

JELENA JANKOVIC: Who, my dad.

**Q. Yes.**

JELENA JANKOVIC: I don't know, probably to relax a little bit. To celebrate. Nothing wrong with that.

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