

July 7, 2010



An interview with:

SERENA WILLIAMS

BRYAN HICKS: We are joined today by the 2010 Wimbledon ladies singles champion, Serena Williams. This is Serena's fifth season playing World TeamTennis and second season playing for the Washington Kastles.

Serena will be playing four matches this season, starting Friday, July 9th against the New York Buzz in Glens Falls, New York, followed by a match in Philadelphia on July 13th against the Freedoms. She then returns to Washington on July 14th to play at Kastles Stadium against the Kansas City Explorers, followed by her final match in New York against the Sportimes on July 15th.

I'll now turn it over to questions. Please direct your questions to Serena.

Q. In the past you took some hits from commentators because of your outside interests in business and fashion. Given your continued success, could it be that having interests away from the game allows you to focus more on tennis. That being diversified contributes to your success and longevity?

SERENA WILLIAMS: It definitely contributed to my success. Whether I play a hundred tournaments a year or just five, I feel like I'm just going to do what I have to do.

Q. Your sister is making her Washington Kastles debut tonight again Martina Hingis and the New York Buzz. This is the first time you two will be WTT teammates. What kind of texts or support are you going to be sending her before her first match?

SERENA WILLIAMS: I'm really excited about her being my new teammate. When I first

found out, I was like, Yay, we'll be on the same team. It's good.

We just like to have fun with it and give the fans a good show more than anything.

Q. Both you and Venus have played a number of years in World TeamTennis. What is different about the Washington Kastles and what have you told Venus about what to expect as being a member of the Washington Kastles?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Well, Washington Kastles is a great franchise. First of all, Mark Ein is a great person to work with. He founded the Washington Kastles, so that's kind of cool. He's a great guy.

I think that outside of that, we just have a good chemistry. We have a lot of fun. We have a good team every year. More than that, we have good people on our team, so we just enjoy it.

Q. Serena, can you touch a little bit on kind of the respite that World TeamTennis gives you from the grind of the WTA Tour and the Grand Slams, the value World TeamTennis brings?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah. World TeamTennis is really cool. It brings a lot of value. What I love about it is we get to go to cities that there aren't any major tournaments in, like Philadelphia, like D.C. We get to play for my fans there. My schedule is so tight, it's so special to have an opportunity to play in front of my fans all across the United States.

Q. You've won a lot of titles. You come in with another Wimbledon title. What does this do to you? What is your thinking coming out of this one, heading towards the US Open?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, no, I'm just thinking that I'm just happy to have won it. I'm really excited. Hopefully I can keep the form up or actually have a little better form going into the TeamTennis as well as the summer tournaments.

Q. Serena, can you talk about being on the cover of Sports Illustrated last week. How flattering is that? How do you feel about being called the best ever?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, no, I was really excited and honored and all. I was really happy to be on the cover. Yeah, it was good.

I don't know. I don't think about being the best ever. I just think about, you know, winning Wimbledon and winning tournaments, and most of all having fun, giving back the most that I can, keep my dream alive.

Q. Could you talk a little bit about what your relationship is right now with Martina Hingis, if it's changed over the years at all?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I mean, she's really nice. I've always got along with her because she's always talkative. I saw her at Wimbledon and we talked a little bit. She was going out to a match, so it was kind of funny to see her.

We always kind of just got on. I get on pretty much with everyone on tour. Everyone really, actually.

Q. Serena, you've won just about everything you can possibly win in tennis. What do you look at as your legacy? What is most rewarding to you of what you've done? And what are you going to wear at the US Open?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Well, for me the most rewarding thing I've done hasn't been on the tennis court; it's been, you know, my opportunity to open my school in Africa and help kids and stuff. That was definitely my most precious moment. I wouldn't be able to do hadn't I been so successful in tennis. That means a lot to me.

Other than that, my US Open outfit, you'll just have to wait and see.

Q. Coming back to New York, will you be a little hungrier coming to this US Open because of maybe how the last one ended or is that kind of out of your mind already?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, no, I think I just would be happy to get there. I'm honestly happy that I didn't win the last one because I won't have to defend my title. It's always easier to go into a tournament where you don't have to defend a title. I'll be happy about that and just looking to do my best.

Q. Serena, now that Venus has also come out with a book, was there any advice that you gave her? Did you give her any advice about how to go about publicizing, talking about this book she's come out with?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, we actually started working on our books around the same time. Hers is a different direction: How to Win. It's really just a great book.

I just told her what to do. The book tour she's on now is kind of a whirlwind. I wish her luck with that because it isn't easy.

It's fun. It's a special thing to write a book, especially her book, it's so amazing because people like Bill Clinton wrote things in it, and it's really cool.

Q. What is it like to play tennis in New York and come back next week and play Sportimes when it's not the US Open? What does it mean to play in New York away from the Open?

SERENA WILLIAMS: It's cool. It's always special to go to New York. It's always special to play in New York. You know, there's very few places that are nicer.

Q. Serena, what part of the your game has improved the most over time?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Well, uhm, I think probably my serve, at least as of last week. Hopefully it will still kind of improve. And my consistency more than anything.

Q. Tell us about what your schedule has been like this past week and what the transition will be like going from Wimbledon to Upstate New York.

SERENA WILLIAMS: Well, just been kind of relaxing, getting ready to actually go to Belgium and play in front of the biggest crowd yet. I'm excited about that.

What am I looking forward to? Going to New York, having fun, doing the best that I can. More than anything having fun for the fans.

Q. Are you concerned at all about the kind of crowd reaction you get when you return to the US Open because of the way your last run in the Open ended?

SERENA WILLIAMS: No, not at all. I don't think about those things. You probably

shouldn't either. You know, I try to think about other things. My life is so much more than that. I can't be bothered with that. I just have to think about what I can do to just improve and to help others more than anything.

I focus on the positive. So that's my thing.

Thank you, guys, very much.

BRYAN HICKS: Thank you, Serena, for taking time out of your schedule today to talk with everyone and best of luck.

SERENA WILLIAMS: Thank you. Bye.

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