

**August 29, 2011**



An interview with:

## **SERENA WILLIAMS**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Could you talk about the seeding and whether you think they could have or should have done anything, or you think it's fine the way it is?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I think it's fine. I'm 29 maybe in the world, I guess, I don't know, so I don't see where else I should be seeded.

The rules changed. I know back in the day they used to have, if you were out for a while they used to have these injury rules, but I believe they got rid of that.

**Q. Would you like to see those rules put back into place or not necessarily?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I mean, it might be nice, I mean, just for getting in tournaments, but I'm doing pretty good so I'm okay with it.

**Q. What did you do in the hurricane?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Well, I played a little bit in the rain. I went to Park Avenue because it was empty and danced a little bit in the streets. It was kinda fun.

**Q. You have so many family and friends. I'm wondering especially at the Open do you have more people who want to be in your guest box than there are seats? What do you do if that happens?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, there's tons of friends that I have, so, I mean, USTA is great. They, you know, really help me out with some of my friends and people that just want to come out. So it's cool. It's nice.

**Q. Have you ever had someone who's a celebrity in his or her own right you've had to**

**say, I'm sorry, but there's no room in my box for you?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: No, that's where the USTA really helps out. They'll put them in the box they have and it's great. We never turn them away.

**Q. How do you feel physically after Cincinnati?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I feel good. I feel really good. I just -- you know, it's been a good summer, so I feel solid.

**Q. You expected to go so fast? After you started playing in Eastbourne you already been 29 in the world and winning two tournaments.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: You know, I don't think about it. I didn't think about it. I just expected to do well. I always have goals like I want to win this and I want to win that. Whether you reach them or not is a totally different story.

**Q. What do you remember most from the way your last US Open ended? What carried forward for you, do you think, in the public perception from that controversial episode?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: You mean in the singles or doubles?

**Q. Singles.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Okay, because I don't know. I just remember I lost, and that was that. I got really popular. A lot of people were telling me they thought I was super cool, that they'd never saw me so intense.

So, yeah, it was awesome.

**Q. Did you learn anything from that episode? If so, what did you learn?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Um, I don't know. I don't think about it. Are you still thinking about it? Oh, my God, that was like two years ago.

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This is like two years later.

**Q. Since then you haven't played here. Ironically Kim Clijsters this year isn't there. She was your last opponent.**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah, it's sad that she's not here. But, you know, when you're injured, you're injured. There's nothing you can really do about it.

Last year I was injured and there was nothing I could do about it.

**Q. You had some swelling with your toe in Cincinnati. How has that settled down, or what have you had to do with that?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Ice, which is annoying, and, you know, a couple days off. Not too much, though. It went down pretty good.

You know, just coming back and playing a lot of matches was a lot - and it was actually really good - but it was also a lot, you know, and it worked out.

**Q. Most likely you're going to play Azarenka in the third round. Do you think it's too early, or do you think it will be good preparation for the second week?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Um, you know, I have to get to the third round, so we'll see. She has to get there. I mean, obviously it might be a good chance, but I'm just focused right now at this moment.

**Q. Did you have a chance to speak to Caroline Wozniacki recently? How do you see her chances coming in?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Well, Caroline, you know, she's doing excellent. I haven't talked to her since she won the tournament a couple days ago.

So, you know, she's on a momentum now and that's good for her. You know, she's definitely probably one of the favorites in the tournament.

**Q. This tournament also marks the 10th anniversary of the tragic attacks. Can you recall where you were on September 11, 2001?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, I was in D.C., actually. There was a lot of Army trucks everywhere. It was really kind of scary. It's hard to believe it's already 10 years later, because it doesn't seem like that long ago and yet it does seem like that long. It's kinda weird.

**Q. I'm not an American and I was shocked. What was your state of mind, if I may ask?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I mean, I think everyone was pretty much alarmed and shocked and, you know, all of the above.

So, you know, it wasn't -- and I think fear is a good word to describe how I felt. I was really scared.

**Q. Those tragic events, have they changed your perspective on the world, how you look at the world?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I think it's changed everyone's perspective. I mean, everyone's, you know, security is really a little bit more right now and, you know, the people that we lost in September 11th, you know, will never be forgotten.

**Q. Was there a time when you were younger where you couldn't have imagined playing professionally into your late 20s or 30s? What do you account for the fact that you're still here and winning tournaments?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Yeah, you know, I definitely didn't think -- I never thought about when I would end or when I would stop. You know, like I just didn't think about those things. And I still don't.

I don't know. I just -- I definitely, as long as I'm healthy and doing well, I will keep going.

**Q. When you beat Venus in 2002, you talked about in 10 years I'll get to show my kids what I did. It suggests that you didn't perhaps think you would still be...**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Oh, my God, what a loser. I said that? Oh, my goodness, no way. I had a dream last night that Venus was pregnant.

**Q. Did you tell Venus that?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Not yet. She -- no.

**Q. Do you think that the fact that the two sisters, you're still playing, that that's part of the reason for your longevity of your career, having those two people, two sisters going along like that?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I definitely think so. I mean, we both enjoy it. If Venus were to stop I'd probably still keep playing. The way I feel right now, I definitely will still go.

I'm really enjoying it now more than

anything, and I'm having a lot of fun out there.

**Q. What have you proven to yourself in the way you've come back from the physical challenges that you've had?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: Um, I don't think I've proven anything to myself. I just think that if anything, just enjoy it and been kinda just having fun and being relaxed. And, you know, I didn't play last year, so I don't have anything to lose here. You know, up until this summer.

That's kinda been like a new position I've been in and it's been really fun.

**Q. When you came back this summer, compared with previous times when you've been out for a while, was it harder physically getting back this time?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: I think it was harder physically because of the problems that I had, but that's probably the only reason why it was harder. I just had to work harder. Mentally it was definitely tough because I had never taken this much time off.

You know, it was definitely a whole different comeback than before.

**Q. You came back and won a couple tournaments. You win the Olympus US Open Series title and are competing for double the prize money at this US Open. How nice was that to win that coming back just playing four tournaments this year?**

SERENA WILLIAMS: It's great. You know, I've always wanted to win the US Open Series, so I can check that off the list. I just have a couple more checks and then it will be good.

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