

April 4, 2009

Sony Ericsson Open

MIRNYI-RAM/Huss-Fisher

6-7, 6-2, 10-7

An interview with:

MAX MIRNYI and ANDY RAM

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You came back from one set down the other day and then today. Can you just talk about the match a little bit?

ANDY RAM: Yeah, good comebacks. Then I think playing with Max the last two tournaments, winning many matches is giving us the confidence that we come back from any situation. We came back in the last two weeks from any situation possible.

Been playing tennis for many years, and the situations we came back from were really -- the comebacks we did, I don't remember myself doing it in the past.

It's really giving you confidence getting back from match points in Indian Wells, and then here doing it again.

Just felt first set that we didn't play our best tennis, and then through the second set we start playing our normal things, I think. We keep up the level. That's it. I think we pretty much control the match from the second set.

Q. Andy, you said on the court that you were starting to think about last week in Indian Wells. You wanted to make sure that didn't happen again this time. Can you talk about that?

ANDY RAM: Yeah, you think about it when you have match point and then I'm going for the shot and miss it. And it's getting tight. We lost a tough match last week in Indian Wells. A great final, which we had many chances, and we were unlucky to win it -- To lose it. Sorry. Unlucky to win it and whatever.

So, yeah, think about it. You know, I thought about it at 9-7, like a quick vision from the match points last week.

But it went right away when Max made a return. That's it. It just disappeared. I was so happy to win it, to win my first title since last year.

Q. Throughout this week, and today's match in particular, how much is the influence of mazel, just luck kind of, enter into it?

MAX MIRNYI: Well, I guess you create your own luck, they say. We certainly, ever since we teamed up in Vienna last year, every week we played together we worked extremely hard.

Not to say that other teams don't work hard, but we feel that even though we were losing matches, we knew why we were losing them. We just continue on working hard and believing that we're a good team.

You know, these last two weeks things clicked for us. Until we lost, we were always believing we were going to win. I think that's what made us different, I think, from, say, a month ago when we played in Australia.

Certainly just continuing to work, because it's pretty simple on what you have to do on a tennis court. We came out with that idea in our mind every day on the practice court, that this is what we have to get better it.

Just persevering at what we have to get better at helps us get through the last two tournaments.

Q. It's a big day in Belarus, I guess.

MAX MIRNYI: Yeah, particularly the whole month, because Victoria had a great tournament in Indian Wells, and now here with both of us winning.

It's so important to any country, but particularly to such a small country like Belarus, because it's certainly going to make the headline of general news tomorrow.

It makes me proud. It makes me want to give back to the country that gave me so much. It's just great. I think Victoria is an incredible story. It's been a while since we had a female player that's played at such a high level.

Certainly she's going to be there for a

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while. It's great to see that many more kids are going to come and play tennis. She's a great role model. She handles herself well. I had the pleasure the sharing some moments couple years ago when we played mixed doubles.

Back then I already knew she was a special person. She didn't make us wait too long. She's now at the top of the game, and certainly she'll be competing for the top position in the women's sport.

Q. Andy, you made a couple of items that are historical. You're the first Israeli ever to win any kind of title at the Sony Ericsson Open, second Jewish player since Brad Gilbert to win the doubles. This is up to speculation, but it's the finest performance of any Israeli ever on south Florida soil.

ANDY RAM: Thanks, first of all. It's nice to know I made history again for Israel. It's fun always representing Israel and doing some good result, making the headlines there. I think it's always nice.

I'm very patriotic. I consider myself like really when I play for Israel or get big result, I just feel really proud that I'm representing Israel. It's big, I think.

To be honest, playing with Max this week made things much easier to win this tournament. I would feel very bad if I would lose before the finals. I don't know, he won it three times. He's just playing unbelievable good at the moment. So much fun playing with him. I feel like I'm learning so much from him.

Just from the first day here I thought we could win the tournament. It gave me so much confidence every practice and every match. So thanks, Max. I have to tell you, really, I just enjoyed playing with you. That's it.

Q. You mentioned before that you learned a lot from Max. Do you guys ever talk after matches, or is it from watching him?

ANDY RAM: Every match. On court, off court talking to him a lot and listening to his stories. He's around for many years.

He been to the top -- I mean, he played all four Grand Slams finals and he won four. Much more in mixed doubles. He has so many stories. Just to sit and listen to him it's just interesting.

MAX MIRNYI: And we just enjoy ourselves. Our practice times are very valuable. We make that one hour and a half a day worthwhile, so I think that that's been the key.

ANDY RAM: The only thing he is learning from me the backhand angle.

Q. You said out there that this was almost like a second home because you've played here so many times.

MAX MIRNYI: It's true. I come to this tournament just driving from my home. It's door-to-door a three-hour drive. I have so many people over the years coming to join me and coming from South Florida and Georgia and New York to this location this time of year, spring break.

I go through the crowds, and from young to old people I have recognizing me and saying hello from this year, that year. They're remembering that match. Certainly makes you feel special, because sometimes we forget how old we are, and it's a good reminder.

In a way it's a pleasant reminder, because I've been fortunate to have a long career. I haven't missed this tournament since '95. It's just a great feeling.

Q. So, Andy, are you expecting us all to call you Beauty now?

ANDY RAM: Yeah, you been calling him for years The Beast. It's a private, like, inside joke. But he's The Beast. He's really an animal on the court.

Q. In today's match, the only point that you guys were really, really very upset was that point in the tiebreak where there was a challenge and it was in. You guys were very agitated. What happened?

ANDY RAM: Well, it's the first time ever happened to me.

MAX MIRNYI: Well, I was closest to the ball, and we were totally robbed.

ANDY RAM: Ridiculous.

MAX MIRNYI: I wanted to just cry. I wanted to cry like a crocodile. I didn't know what to do, because normally you argue, you feel this ball was in. There is still a little bit in the back of your mind that maybe you're mistaking.

In this particular instance, the ball traveled so slow and it was right before my eyes.

ANDY RAM: And there was a mark.

MAX MIRNYI: There was a mark. Both the umpire and the linesman called it out. But those guys just used that advantage of the rule and used the challenge.

As I've seen it happen before, for some reason when the ball travels slow the technology doesn't pick up the path of the ball correctly.

ANDY RAM: The second time it's happened. Last week we saw it again.

MAX MIRNYI: The way the challenge showed that point, it was a totally different location where the ball actually bounced. It was a very crying instance.

I think if I were maybe a year younger I would be crying on the court.

Q. I've heard this before also that the challenge system is not 100%.

MAX MIRNYI: Well, I mean, you look at it, and seeing it happen like this -- there was a match against Ljubicic -- a situation when Ljubicic played Murray last week in Indian Wells, and it was a very similar situation. Now it happens this time.

Obviously in the back of your mind, you go into a tiebreak and you have four challenges remaining. Any ball that's going to be out by a foot or ten feet, you might as well use your challenges.

In a case like today, even when the umpire and the linesman called it out, we still go with the machine, we still go with the replay.

This is what we gonna do next time. We still have four challenges remaining, we gonna make sure we use them all up. Who knows? Maybe the challenge system is going to pick up one of those balls that's shows in.

Certainly a flaw in the rule book. Maybe there should be an adjustment that when two people call it simultaneous there shouldn't be a way of challenging it.

But I'm not sure. I'm not just trying to change the rule. I'm just saying that today there was a definite flaw in the system.

Q. I think they have shown that there's flaws, as well, the people who run it.

MAX MIRNYI: Yeah. Well, just unfortunate when it happens on that particular moment. It's deep in a tiebreaker, particularly in a doubles format that are decided by one or two points here or there.

We're fortunate to have come out and turned things around in the second set. Had we maybe played a different team, maybe a more experienced team, we wouldn't have had a chance to play the super tiebreak for the match.

It would have been unfortunate to have lost the first set. That point would have given us unbelievable...

ANDY RAM: Advantage, momentum.
MAX MIRNYI: Yeah. And possibly set point.

Q. How much these two weeks will give you confidence on the clay season surface that I don't think is favorite of both of you?

MAX MIRNYI: Well, I won French Open twice, so I think we should rephrase the question and say that it's going to give us more confidence.

Q. Do you think in the case of a championship match that the third set should be played out?

MAX MIRNYI: It could be very long discussion. I'm still getting used to the formation, the scoring. I think there should be one sport. Shouldn't be singles and doubles. Should be one set of rules.

Whatever it is, we have to go forward with the time. This is my position on this. I'm not sure. Maybe just for the spectacle side of it there should be a longer match. It would also be very difficult to just adjust. If you're playing semifinal under one rules and then the final under others, I think there should be simplification to the rules in general.

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