

March 31, 2009

Sony Ericsson Open

S. KUZNETSOVA/C. Wozniacki

6-4, 6-7, 6-1

An interview with:

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What was going through your head after you got match point? You kind of fell to the court.

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: I didn't believe it was out actually, because it was so close. It just missed. I was like, Oh, my God. Did she miss it? Because it was a very long match. I had a couple match points and I couldn't finish it.

But, yeah, I was like, Oh, my God, I cannot believe it's finished.

Q. You're pretty exhausted?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Yeah, I was. I saw her, and for me she was perfectly. The heat didn't disturb her to me. I know she was feeling much better than myself.

I knew still I'm playing better game and I'm doing the right things. But just, yeah, I was very happy to win this match, especially in the conditions how we played.

Q. You had the trainer out a couple times. Can you tell us a little bit about what was going on?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: It was a little bit of cramping, and she helped me out bigtime.

Q. What does Wozniacki do well?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: I think I was playing -- I mean, she was running and she was recovering many balls. She force me to miss. But I think when I was playing the right tactics and the right game and mixing her up I was in control of everything.

I was till score 5-3 feeling very comfortable out there, but I got so dizzy and tired. I don't know, the conditions played a big role in my game. I just had to play the same similar game without thinking about, you know. I just play the same all the way, hitting it instead of mixing it up.

Q. Do you feel like you've got a pretty good shot at making the finals if you continue to play well?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Well, guys, you know, like I came here and I lost first -- two tournaments in a row first round. I been prepared. I felt like I practiced well and I been playing well when I was training, I came here and I was like so disappointed.

You know, I haven't been winning matches. I never lost first two rounds in a row I think, as I remember. So for me it was very important to just play match by match. Now I'm in semis, and I'm really happy about it. I'm just going to concentrate on semis. For me it's great to get to this point.

At the stage I came into the tournament I didn't believe I could make it. Well, I did believe but I was like, I don't know, I would be surprised. I am surprised.

Q. You won the title here before. Tell us what it means to play here in Miami? Do you like the night life? The conditions? How does that work for you?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Well, I cannot think about night life first of all, because I played all days at 11:00. I'm professional enough I'm not going out during the tournament for sure. Maybe to celebrate sometimes I can let myself do that.

I like Miami a lot. The conditions suits my game a lot. Definitely good memory of winning here other past years. Gives me a good memory, a good feeling about here.

Q. Seems like you kind of fall under the radar. Do you like that? Does it bother you?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: I don't care about it. I'm just living my life, and I enjoy it. I enjoy my life. I don't care whether I'm under radar

or on top of radar. Whatever.

Q. How about specifically here. You're a past winner and you're playing really well.

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: I don't care.

Q. How is it going with Olga?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: I'm not working with Olga anymore.

Q. As of when?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: As of finishing of Indian Wells. I'm by myself for all tournament. It's is my first tournament on my own without coach.

Q. In your life?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Yeah.

Q. Are you if the market for anyone?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Well, I was actually maybe once, but always somebody was there to help me. But here I have 200% responsibility. I have a hitting partner. Very nice guy. He helps me a lot out. But I'm just -- you know, I needed to take some time off.

Because she's unbelievable person and great coach, but we kind of didn't get each other tennis-wise and outside-wise. By the way, it's first I announce about that, because I never been asked about this. We just decided it's not working out for both of us. We have perfectly good relationship between us. I mean, she's unbelievable person. I took as I could a lot from her.

I don't know, I'm a little bit frustrated now. But, yeah, I'll see. Definitely I don't think I can be on my own. I think a player needs a coach. Maybe Roger can do it because he knows -- I mean, he's No. 1. Well, No. 2 now. But for me he is one of the best players ever.

But for myself, I think I can improve many areas, but I need coach. And first of all, I need something to get along well, to understand me, because I cannot handle the pressure. You know, I need somebody who really goes along well with me.

Q. So will you go back to someone at Casal, or...

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: No. I'm going back to Sanchez-Casal coach-wise, but they offer me like if I need any help I can come back. I'm the person who ends up anything with anybody

I try to do it good way. I'm never going bad way and hard. It's not my style.

So I'm good with them. Everybody who helps me, I appreciate it. They help me a lot for many years. I'm going to prepare there for clay court season for one week maybe before Stuttgart. I don't know exactly the schedule right now. And they're very welcome. You know, they say, You're welcome to come here always.

I don't who still who I going be coached for clay season, for next month. I have a few opportunities, a few coaches. I really have to take this decision, and it's not going to be easy because I would like still to live and train in Russia. I realize that sometimes I have to go out, but I need to come back because it makes me feel good.

So we'll see how it will work out. Not many coaches will go to Moscow.

Q. But you would try to find one as soon as possible, or you'll be on your own for a while?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Well, after I finish with Olga, I was like, I just want to take my time, you know, to find myself on the court. Then I got here, and first two days I said, I need somebody.

Then it was kind of -- but I'm winning matches. I know I can rely on myself. It makes me mature and it makes me find more ways, makes me stronger, because there's nobody else to help out.

Like today's, Wozniacki's she has coach like maybe three, four times, and I have to figure out all by myself. But I'm mature enough. As I read today in newspaper, they say I been for years on the tour, and I'm only 23. They called me young veteran.

But anyway, you know, I think I'm mature enough to play on my own like this, but definitely I have moments improve, and I need somebody to help me to do that.

Q. Changing the subject, a lot of celebrities like to come to this tournament. Have you met any? Have any come to see you personally?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Well, depends who you call celebrity. I met guys who came to watch Serena. I'm not sure they're celebrity. I think they're football players. So I met them.

And I have always a friend of mine. He's Russian singer, very popular in Russia. He was in my box today. I mean, but he's just good friend of mine.

Q. Who was that?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Nikolaev. He's very famous in Russia. Like I don't think you guys know him here. You know, as I go along I do meet somebody.

Q. I know Shakira was here yesterday. Do you think that's part of the excitement of this tournament for fans, to people watch and star...

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: I think it's great to put tennis in such big cities and such popular cities as Miami. If stars are here, they're interested. Tennis is extremely popular. So they come here.

In New York we play and the celebrities come. So whenever we're in big cities, celebrities try to come to watch the game. I believe that tennis should be more games like this. Like French Open also celebrities from French come, from all over the world. Maybe also some other tournament. Wimbledon.

You know, these big events all celebrities come, so I think it's great.

Q. Is it as fun for you to meet a star, do you think, as it is for them to meet you?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Well, I don't know how for them to meet me, you know. For me, I'm just a person. I try to count other people as the same person. We're all human. So just respect somebody, because, for example, I love the movie what he was in or one she was in, or singer.

Well, once I met a singer who I been a fan of since I been 14. I was growing up with his music. I came to his concert, and they told me -- when I was growing up, and my dream was to say hello to him one day. So I came to his whatever, room where he was changing and making up, and I could not speak I was so nervous. My voice was shaking.

My friends go, Sveta, are you okay? Because this guy should be nervous, not you like for meeting him. For me, I just rather look up to people. It's always nice to meet some people you look up to.

Q. Who was the singer?



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SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Russian rock star. You would not know this.

Q. What's the name?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Kinchev.

Q. When was that?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: It was in November in Moscow.

Q. I love them; they're great. (Laughter.) It's a he?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Yes, he has a band call Alisa.

Q. Has he come to watch you play tennis?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: No, but first I walk in and he said, Look, I read your interview one year and already since two years when I read it I follow your game, because I know you're a big fan of our group.

But when I was like 14 I went to -- I mean, for me it's big meeting, because it's a concert. You know, like the crazy rock people that jump in the crowd? I was there. I went when I was 14. So for me it was huge to meet him.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the semifinals? You're going to play either Azarenka or Stosur.

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: I have not been thinking about it right now, because I been so trying to recover from my match. It's gonna be tough match because they both playing well. They have no pressure. And, yeah.

Q. Electronic line calling, do you feel it's just a normal part of game at this point? I mean, it's been around a few years. Hawk-Eye.

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Yeah, two years only, no?

Q. Three. Have you ever been on a court that didn't have it and you started to do it and they said, Oh, no?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Not like this, but you go on the court and you're like, Damn, you know, no line calling. But then chair umpire misses for you, and you go, Thanks, it's not right here. And then opposite, Damn, where is Hawk-Eye? So you never know.

But it's fun for the crowd. I think it's great thing.

Q. But why do you think the players do so poorly at getting the call right?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Because they're afraid to get embarrassed. No, just kidding. I think they see it properly. Sometimes you see...

Q. The players?

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA: Yeah. I mean, we feel it. I see it. Sometimes -- I think I have very high percentage of making, you know, my Hawk-Eyes. You see it when the ball in or the ball out.

So when you're just like 80% sure you ask for it, maybe 70%. Some players just go like, Okay, Hawk-Eye just for no reason.

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