

BNP Paribas Open

Saturday, March 11, 2017

Caroline Wozniacki

Press Conference



C. WOZNIACKI/M. Linette

6-3, 6-0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Happy with that effort? Start of the tournament? First match? Just kind of talk about it.

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Yeah, I was happy with the effort. It's always tough playing the first round here. The balls fly, the ball goes fast through the air and slows down once it hits the court and the bounce is very high.

But I was very pleased with the way I tactically managed to kind of mix up the pace. She's a good player. We have practiced quite a bit together, so we know each other's game.

I just kept focused out there and just kept playing every point.

Q. Haven't seen you since your Middle East swing. Curious how you felt out there and how that shows you're on a good path?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Yeah, I'm playing well right now. I have had a good start to the year. I played well in the Middle East. Obviously that took a lot out of me. The weather kind of played games with us a little bit.

But it's nice to feel like I'm hitting the ball this well, and hopefully I can just continue in this U.S. hard court swing.

Q. When you look at a draw like this and you see --

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I never look at the draw. So I don't know who I'm playing. I don't know anything. I don't want to know.

Q. Is this true, though, this "no look at the draw" thing? We hear this from players a lot. Is that legit? You go out of your way to not see it?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: That is legit. I know I play Siniakova because she beat Suarez Navarro, but I never look farther ahead than that.

Q. I'm looking at no Serena, no Petra, no Vika. Do you see an opportunity, Hey, it's opened up a little bit? I could have a nice chance here?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Even with those players in the draw, I feel like I have a good chance. Serena obviously is playing very well. When she's on fire, she's the best player in the world. But other than that, I don't really get nervous playing against any player on tour.

Q. You're working with Sascha now, and you have mentioned he's kind of more than just a hitting partner, kind of a bit of an assistant coach. Can you tell us a little bit about what he's bringing to your game and how he's helping you?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Well, he can play different type of balls to me that I need for different opponents. You know, he talks to my dad about some tactical stuff, and that's -- yeah.

Q. After Dubai, just with how taxing that two weeks was, what was your kind of recovery plan? How long did the racquet stay in your bag and let your body recover?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Well, my plan was to take probably four or five days off, but someone in my team thought that three days would be more than enough, so I had three days off and then I was back on court training. (Laughter.)

Q. Maria Sharapova just received a wildcard to Stuttgart. Wondering about your thoughts about her return and whether she should be receiving wildcards, especially with discussion going on about whether she will receive one to Roland Garros.

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Well, first of all, I think obviously she's a good draw to tennis, women's tennis in general. That's one.

But, two, I think it's very questionable, allowing -- no matter who it is -- a player that is still banned to play a tournament that week. I think that's -- from the tournament side, I think it's disrespectful to the other players and the WTA.

But, you know, it is what it is. Obviously rules are twisted and turned in favor of who wants to do what.

You know, I think everyone deserves a second chance, and I think that, you know, she's going to come back and she's going to fight her way back. I'm sure she's

going to play well.

But at the same time, I feel like when a player is banned for drugs, I think that someone should start from the bottom and fight their way back, because it's different from an injury where someone is out because they had hurt themselves. You know, that way I feel like a player should be able to receive as many wildcards.

But when someone has been banned for drugs and something that is performance enhancing, I think that you deserve a second chance like everybody else, people make mistakes, but I think you should fight your way back from the bottom.

Q. So just to clarify, what you're saying is one of two things: One is that maybe the wildcards should not be available; and, two, that even though the ban ended mid-Stuttgart, that she shouldn't be allowed to play Stuttgart but start the following week?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I think she should be able to start the following week. I think once a tournament is started and a player is banned, I don't think that a player should be allowed to play that week. I think that's -- that's how I see it.

You know, I think, again, as I said, people can make mistakes and things can happen and people deserve a second chance. But I feel like when someone is banned for drugs, they should fight their way back from the start, like everyone else.

Q. Getting back to playing somebody like Linette and you said you have hit with her a lot. Are you learning -- every time you played someone, even if you have played them a number of times, are you picking up new and different things about playing them, and do you keep a log? Do you keep a book with notes and things like that?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: My book is my team, basically (smiling). I used to, back when I started on tour, write down things about the other players. But I think now I have been on tour so many years and played the same people so many times, you kind of know their game. You go out and watch a couple of games. Maybe they have switched something up, changed something.

But in the end of the day, I think your main priority is to play your game and try and force them to play the way you want them to play. If that doesn't work, then you go to Plan B, and that's going into the real tactical mode.

Q. Can I ask you about balancing off the court and

on the court a little bit? We cover Genie Bouchard a little bit, and she's been taking a little bit of heat not being able to perform on court because she's got a lot of stuff going on off court. You do things, modeling, professional sponsoring stuff. How do you balance the two? Is there any way -- is that why she's having trouble on court because she's doing too much? Can you clarify that a little bit?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I think I have the experience. And I have been on tour for so many years and know what it takes, obviously, to be a target week in and week out.

But to be honest, I think I just love what I do. I take the opportunities I get, because you never know how long I'm going to play or how long you're going to get these opportunities.

You know, I go back on the practice court. That's my main priority is to be a better tennis player and I fit everything else around that.

I also think that -- yeah, I don't know. I just do my thing, and I love what I do. I think that's...

Q. Is it tough to balance it? Is it difficult -- do you have to spend more time on the court when you're doing those things just because of...

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: No, I think it's never really been hard for me, because my main priority is the tennis. And my main priority is to prepare the best that I can to be a better player, and to prepare the best I can for the tournament that I'm playing. Everything else takes second priority.

So, for me, once I have known I have done everything I could on the practice court, you still have hours in your day. Sometimes you're, like, Well, I need to rest, I need to relax and really close everything down.

I have weeks where I basically feel like a 98-year-old woman. You know, I just eat, sleep, and hit a few balls and that's it.

Then I have weeks that are really busy where I feel like I have the energy to do stuff, and that's when I, you know, when I work in the shoots and my sponsor commitments.

Q. You have known Tommy Haas for a while. What were your thoughts when he got named to this job back during the French Open and have you interacted with him at all in his new role?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I think it's great. He was a very likeable player, and I think he's always been supporting of the women's tour, as well.

I think, you know, he reached out to quite a few players before the tournament and asked for things that we thought maybe could be improved in the tournament, and I really appreciated that. I think the fact that he's been a top player himself and he's been on tour for so many years, he knows what players want and needs, and I think that has been very helpful.

Obviously, this is an amazing tournament and everyone loves coming back. You know, he's gotten a good job (smiling). I'm not saying it's not hard, but I'm just saying it's not that many things that he could really do that much better, because it's an awesome tournament.

Q. Do you think how things ended last year with the controversy around Ray Moore's remarks on the final day that sort of repairing and reestablishing relationships with the women's players in particular was important or somebody who would be popular among that group?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I think -- definitely I think the tournament just thought that they need someone who will be positive and popular amongst all players.

I think this tournament is so light and everyone loves coming back here. So I really think that last year's comments are kind of forgotten now, and we just move on, you know. I think they did the right thing by hiring Tommy Haas to be the tournament director.

Q. Getting back to the point about off-court activities, you have done SI about three, four times. And you have tweeted quite a few of those pictures. Do they give you the pictures? Have you put them in frames? What do you do with those sorts of things?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I have kept all the magazines, for sure. I kind of have a stash of things that I have done and been in. You get some of the files sometimes from different shoots that maybe one time -- I don't know. Maybe I'm going to put them in frames and keep them somewhere. I don't know. It may also be slightly weird to have yourself up on the walls (smiling).

But, you know, I think it's something I can be very proud of and, you know, years down the line, you know, when you have your family and kids and you maybe are not in the best shape of your life, you can tell your kids, Well, your mom used to look like this. Your mom used to be cool. She used to do different stuff and not just sit at home.

Q. You talked a little bit about going to Plan B. Is that something that's important in your game and is that something that makes you a little bit

different from other players?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I think so. I think the fact I can mix the game up and the pace and do different things on the court, I think that's helped me on many games and many matches. I definitely think that that's a big advantage that I have.

And the fact that I have great wheels and I can run a lot of balls down, that also helps me when you're not feeling the best and all you have is being the wall back there and just kind of wait it out and then go for your shots when it's wide open.