

**November 9, 2006**

## **Sony Ericsson Championships Madrid, Spain**

**J. HENIN-HARDENNE/N. Petrova**

6-4, 6-4

An Interview with:

### **JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE**

**Q. Justine, can you just talk a little bit about your match management tonight, especially compared to the other night?**

JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE: I'm happy. I was a bit tired after my match against Martina, because it was late and it was my first match since a few weeks, so I think I was pretty sore everywhere. And I needed a little bit of time yesterday to feel better. And I was feeling much better today. But now I'm happy. I had a little bit of trouble in the beginning of the match. I wasn't especially nervous. I just think I love being on the court and I enjoy to be back and that's I think the main thing right now.

And then I played a very good match. I think the first set I was really positive. I've been very aggressive. And it's been tough during the few games, after the second set she started doing it differently, and I felt she was very tired and I did try to take the opportunities when I could and that's what I did at the end of the match.

So it's a very nice feeling.

**Q. Just congratulations on making the semis. If my math is right, you're one match away from winning the year number one because if you make the finals, and you have that in your control. Can you talk about that at all?**

JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE: I'm not going to change my goal right now. It's to try to win every match. There's one more match tomorrow in my group then I can be focused on the semifinal, but I will play it with the goal to go into the final not to be number one. If not it's going to be a big mistake. Because if I have a chance to win this match, for sure I won't win the finals if I think about that. Right now I'm in the semifinal, and it's going to be another tough match for me for sure. But I don't want to look too far.

We have one more tomorrow one more match in my group then I'll be focused on the semis, but it's still too early to talk about that and being back on the courts and enjoy my game and win matches that's the most important thing for me.

**Q. Good evening, Justine. Congratulations. I'd like to know your opinion on an issue. Several players have saying the female circuit is guarding the essence of the game compared to the other circuit, because the players, male, they just hit and hit, they're big shooters and nothing else. What do you think about that?**

JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE: Well, I think the woman's game is very interesting.

You have different kind of games in the top 10. And I think it's getting more popular and I think it's very good news. I am very proud of the fact that I play a different game from the other players, but I love men's tennis also.

I watch a lot of men's tennis. I think it's probably a different game, but everyone is very excited about that, and I think it's people that love to watch tennis on TV and we try to do our best to give emotions and a lot of things to the fans, and I think it's working pretty good.

**Q. Do you think there's still a place for players with just talent and not muscle on the female circuit?**

JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE: Well, I proved it, I think. And many times I did so. I can be powerful but it's not -- I use different things in my game. I'm not acetyl. I'm not as strong so I have to do -- I have to play a different game. Move forward, go to the net. And that's great to be different from the others.

Yes, it's amazing.

**Q. You seem to be very good when you come back off an injury. You did well at the Olympics after you had three months off. Are you particularly good after a few months away or is it just you have a lot of experience or what?**

JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE: I don't know. Maybe a little bit of everything. But no, it's just I did miss tennis a lot in the last few weeks. And still two weeks ago I wasn't sure I

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could come. There were a lot of doubts in my head if I could come and play my game and be 200 percent. So it was a hard time. And then I'm here and everything is going pretty well for me. So I'm just can be happy about that.

And it's just a question of motivation, when you didn't play for a long time you want to prove to yourself that you didn't lose anything. And that's what I'm doing right now. But I just try to keep going in the same way and we see what's going to happen in the next few days.

But it's only a bonus for me now. I can be happy and the tournament is not over for sure, but it's great. It's the last even of the season, and even that I can play in the last two years. It would have been very tough for me if I couldn't play just once. So I'm very happy to be here.

**Q. Congratulations, Justine. I've asked, but sometimes you have asked for the same balls that you have made the point, are you superstitious?**

JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE: I was very, very superstitious in the past, a little bit less right now. I think every player has a routine that's very important. But I'm not as superstitious as I was in the past.

I think every athlete is a bit superstitious, but I understood that it doesn't make a big difference if you eat the same thing every day, if you do sit on the same side from the umpire.

But you need the routine and it's very important for everyone. I'm feeling very much better about that right now.

**Q. At some points in the match you had opportunities to do more with the ball, come in a little bit more and you seemed to hesitate. Is that a question of being unsure about your calf or just not sort of being totally in your rhythm or do you not agree with that?**

JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE: Well, I'm a little bit sad that's the only thing you remember of the match. I think I just tried to take it a positive way.

Well, it's two months I didn't play a match and I come back and play at this level. Hingis, Petrova and I think it's not easy to be 100 percent your first match. So just tolerance, that's the word for me and I think I can be happy about the game I played. I can do better. I always can do better.

But I proved that what Carlos asked me I did it. And for sure on the few points maybe I

could come more in the court. But, you know, we are humans, we do mistakes and that's it.

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