

Guadalajara Open

Saturday, 23 September 2023

Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico

Storm Hunter

Elise Mertens

Press Conference

HUNTER-MERTENS/Dabrowski-Routliffe

3-6, 6-2, 10-4

Q. Congratulations to both of you. Storm, this is your second title here in Guadalajara. How do you feel about it, now with Elise, last year with Luisa Stefani?

STORM HUNTER: Yeah, it's an amazing feeling to make, yeah, make another final, and then to win it with Elise was, yeah, I'm over the moon.

We had a really great week here. We played really well all week. We had a lot of fun as well. The fans here are amazing. Honestly, this event is so much fun. Last year I had a lot of fun, so I definitely wanted to come back. Yeah, to be able to do it again with Elise is just an incredible feeling right now.

Q. Elise?

ELISE MERTENS: I mean, we had a pretty incredible run and, of course, she's won it twice in a row, so that's an amazing result.

Yeah, happy that as a team we really grew into the match, and to get the win is pretty special, especially here in Guadalajara. Played the WTA Finals in doubles here, which I lost the finals, so now it's really nice to get the win.

Q. How do you feel about working together? I mean, this is your second title at this level, so what does it mean to you, and what can you say about each other, and what are the best moments of your working together?

STORM HUNTER: Yeah, it's been, we've been playing all year together, and it's been a lot of fun. I feel like we've both grown as a team from the beginning of the year to now.

The girls we played today, they are on a roll. They won the



US Open. We really had to figure it out. I think the trust that we have in each other's games and just kind of knowing what we feel in those tight moments, and just having fun as well. Just trying to figure it out together, I think that's the biggest thing. We know each other's strengths, and, yeah, just try to use them as much as possible.

It's been a great year. I couldn't ask for anything more. It's been so much fun with Elise. We obviously still have a few more events, including the WTA Finals in Cancun, which is very exciting that we've qualified. Yeah, looking forward to it.

ELISE MERTENS: We really played throughout the whole year together and really grew as a team. So, yeah, I think that's why we turned around the first set and really, like, we were finding solutions and we found them and we were really, like, in the super tiebreak anything can happen. We really started off strong and I felt like we were really consistent today.

Yeah, she's a very positive person on court. I mean, I'm like, sometimes I'm a bit like, Oh, I can't miss. So, you know, it's a really good combination.

Q. What was the most difficult thing in this match, because they were champions of the US Open?

STORM HUNTER: Yeah, they're obviously coming in with a lot of confidence. I think that's a big thing is when you've won a lot of matches you feel good out there. They obviously have both really good serves, closing the net and coming forward. At times the match was a little bit out of our control with them crossing and taking the net away.

We just had to try and be aggressive, play aggressive plays and just trust ourselves. Sometimes they're going to make some amazing shots, but also you know in a final anything can happen, you're feeling the pressure and the nerves.

I just think the fact that we've played together a lot more and we've been in these situations in a few finals and, yeah, really proud of the way, when we lost the first set, we



just got back to work and were super positive and just tried to play our game, which worked today.

Q. Besides the championship, what was your best memory this week?

ELISE MERTENS: Oh, the best memory this week? I mean, definitely the crowd. I think if we can say like something tennis-wise it would be definitely the crowd. There's a lot of people watching today who were really like, and throughout the whole week. We really felt like Guadalajara is really alive for tennis. That makes us, like, it's a really good feeling, because we don't always have that. It's amazing to get a sold-out stadium yesterday. Today everybody was cheering, really into tennis. It's really amazing to see.

STORM HUNTER: I would say the same as Elise. The fans here have been absolutely amazing. You can just see they're loving the tennis. They're so excited to get your autograph. They know every single player's name, which is incredible. Yeah, definitely feeling the love here in Guadalajara from the fans. Yeah, it's amazing.

This atmosphere, it doesn't happen every week, so, yeah, it's been so fun, and especially for doubles as well to have amazing crowds the last few days has been incredible.

Q. Again for you, Elise, what do you consider that has been the key in your career to have success in singles and doubles, because you have many titles in both ways. What do you think that is the key for having this success in both ways? And also if you can tell us an opinion, as the winners here in doubles, what's your opinion about the differences in salaries in between men and women in professional tennis right now? What do you think that the WTA needs to improve in that way? If you can give us an opinion, please, thank you.

ELISE MERTENS: I'll just talk about the singles and doubles, you can answer the next one (laughing).

Yeah, singles and doubles, you know, I love the sport. I got a passion for tennis. As a tennis player there is room to improve every day. That's how I see it. I think if you still want to improve, there's always something.

Every week we get another tournament, so even though if you get a loss, the next tournament you can win. That's the beauty of tennis.

So, yeah, I love singles. I love doubles. It's a very different thing, because tennis is very individual. Singles you focus on yourself and everything. Then, for doubles, it's so much

fun, and I love to do it. To be able to, you know, in this stressful environment to relax a little bit more. Of course we want to win, but to have more like a team thing, it's something very different, and it's both very fun to do.

STORM HUNTER: Now the tough question for me (laughing).

ELISE MERTENS: You love to talk, so...

STORM HUNTER: No, I mean, yeah, obviously there is a big pay difference at the Masters level, even when we're playing the same events. You see that in Rome and several events throughout the year, yeah, which is tough.

It is a little bit frustrating because we're playing, this is our job. I know the WTA have put a plan together for the next few years to get to equal prize money and they're on board with the ATP with that. That's very exciting.

Obviously it's not coming straightaway, but that's just the way business works and that takes time. I know they have a plan and I know that's coming soon, which is exciting, not just for us, but for the younger players coming through, you know, the 19-, 20-year-olds and the juniors coming through it will be great that hopefully once they're playing pro it's equal prize money across the board.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports....