

Billie Jean King Cup: USA vs Belgium

Friday, April 12, 2024

Orlando, Florida, USA

USTA National Campus

Team Belgium

Sofia Costoulas

Press Conference

J. PEGULA/S. Costoulas

4-6, 6-2, 6-3

USA - 1

Belgium - 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Were you proud of what you were able to show on court tonight?

SOFIA COSTOULAS: Yeah, really proud. I think I played a good match. Yeah, it was close till the end. I feel like I was playing good level and it was just a couple points here and there where Jessica played really good.

Yeah, overall I'm pretty happy with my performance tonight.

Q. She is the highest ranked player you've ever played. Can you take us through, were you feeling nervous? How did the first set develop?

SOFIA COSTOULAS: Yeah, of course I think I started nervous, which was normal. I felt like Jessica was nervous, as well, and that gave me a little bit of confidence, feeling that she also didn't feel 100% out there.

Yeah, after a couple games, I started feeling my game and I started going for my shots, yeah, started feeling better and better. At the end I got the first set.

Q. She said she was surprised by how well you were serving. Did you feel like you were serving well? What made the difference in the end?

SOFIA COSTOULAS: Yeah, I think my serve is a weapon



and I knew that if I would be serving well, I would have opportunities in the match. I was trying to focus on that, trying to serve as best as I can, especially against those top players.

Yeah, at the end I think Jessica played really good on the important moments, which was expected from her. I mean, she's an unbelievable player. I feel like I didn't do anything wrong on break points and stuff like that, but she just played a little bit better.

Q. Higher caliber of player than you have played in the past. Did it feel like a longer, more intense match than you're used to playing?

SOFIA COSTOULAS: Yeah, of course. It felt like physically in the third set I was getting a bit tired, which I don't have in the matches I play during the year. I felt like, yeah, it was a higher caliber, of course.

I feel like I really had to beat her every point and be very focused. Yeah, I felt like at the end I got a bit tired. That's the thing that I can work on.

Q. Did it ever feel exciting, there were thrills in the match? Or were you so locked in that you weren't thinking about it?

SOFIA COSTOULAS: Yeah, I thought I would be feeling that, but I was really locked in and I didn't really pay attention to the score. It was almost like I wasn't even playing the match, if I can say it like that.

Yeah, I was just trying to play every point and fight for every point.

Q. Players get so many clothes for their matches from sponsors. What do you do with all your clothes? Do you keep them all?

SOFIA COSTOULAS: I keep most of them, and some of them I try to give away younger girls who need it, yeah.

Q. Before the match you talked about how tough it was going to be, but it was going to be a good



experience, you were going to fight for every point. Talk about all the positives, the good things that you can take away from how well you played.

SOFIA COSTOULAS: Yeah, definitely I think I can take away that I have the level to compete at this level. Yeah, today I felt like it were just a couple of points here and there. If I can improve my quality of shots a little bit more, yeah, I will definitely try to grow as a player and take a lot from this match.

Yeah, I'm very pleased with the way I played tonight.

Q. Your coach described you as a great groundstroker, great hands. You said you agreed. Do you really agree? What is your assessment of your strengths? You seem to have great chemistry with Wim.

SOFIA COSTOULAS: Yes, I definitely agree with what Wim said. Yes, I know Wim already from I was 10 years old. We have a good chemistry. I know him for a long time. Yeah, he's a really great coach and has a lot of experience. I learn a lot from him. He gives me, like, a lot of confidence also during the match. Like, You can really do this. It's great.

Q. How significant is it for you to play for your country and not yourself?

SOFIA COSTOULAS: Yeah, it means a lot. It's so much bigger than myself. Yeah, I really love competing for my country. To be able to do it against a country like the U.S. really means a lot. Yeah, I'm super proud.

Q. We haven't seen much of you, your play. Where would you rank this as far as your matches in your career, your play tonight?

SOFIA COSTOULAS: Yeah, I think I played a great match. I think I can put it as like a number one match against such a great player.

I think can I still play better. But, yeah, it's very tough playing against a player like Jessica, an occasion like this, to play your very best tennis.

But I think I played a good, decent level tonight. I know I can still play better. But, yeah, really happy with what I did tonight under the circumstances.

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