

National Bank Open

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Carol Zhao

Press Conference



A. ANISIMOVA/C. Zhao

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THE MODERATOR: Just start off by telling us about the match.

CAROL ZHAO: Yeah, definitely a tough day at the office for me. I thought Amanda played very well obviously. Didn't really give me many opportunities.

Obviously had the five break points that I feel like I could have capitalized on a little bit better. But just back to the drawing board and back at it next week.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. I don't really have any questions about today's match. Could I just ask you about Serena announcing her retirement. Your thoughts on that?

CAROL ZHAO: Yeah, I think it's a bittersweet moment for all of us players on tour. Obviously she's a legend in the sport and she's done so much for women's tennis in the past 20 years.

So to have her be one of the last tournaments that she's at it makes it extra special, I guess.

Just hope, you know, like all of us can continue carrying on her legacy and just enjoy the last few tournaments that she's playing.

Q. You mentioned her legacy. What do you think she will be remembered for most, her on-court abilities or her off-the-court or pop culture abilities?

CAROL ZHAO: Both, probably. She's done a lot of stuff off the court as well. Especially in recent years. Yeah, it's a great role model to aspire to in that sense as well.

Q. Have you played her?

CAROL ZHAO: I have not, no. Maybe at the US Open or

one of her last events, hopefully.

Q. What would you like to say to her about her career?

CAROL ZHAO: I mean there's so much. I'm sure many other people have given her their best wishes.

But just that there's a lot of respect there for her as an athlete, as a woman, as someone who wants to continue expanding her family. So just wish her the best.

Q. What's she done for young women in the game in particular?

CAROL ZHAO: I think she's inspired a lot of people. She inspired me when I was younger. I used to come here and watch the tournament like everyone else in Toronto. She was definitely one of the people that I watched.

So just growing up I think she's had that impact on a lot of young players.

Q. Could you talk about your team here at National Bank Open this week and some of the things that you're working on and you want to improve in your game.

CAROL ZHAO: Yeah, well I'm working with Rob Steckley this week. And also Simon Bartram, who's been helping me the last year or so. Both coaches from Toronto.

Obviously my parents and other family are here this week. So it's nice to play in Toronto of home fans in Toronto.

We're just trying to continue evolving my game. I've had pretty good results this summer. So it was a bit disappointing not to be able to perform the way that I wanted to today.

But, yeah, just continuing to execute better, to be more consistent at a higher level. Yeah.

Q. What worked, what didn't work for you today in the match?

CAROL ZHAO: I mean, more didn't work than did work for sure. I think off the returns off the first ball especially I



need to be able to do more with it and hit bigger consistently with more power. Be able to problem solve probably a little bit better.

Q. Would you talk a little bit about how you juggled your college years and your professional tennis career.

CAROL ZHAO: Yes. Well it's a couple years ago now. But yeah, I really enjoyed being a student athlete. I thought it really enriched my life as an athlete and as a person as well.

Not easy to try to be a good student and a good athlete at the same time and compete at the high levels. But I think it was a good transformative experience for me and I'm really grateful for the experience.

Q. You spoke about the fans. Maybe it's a bit too early with the loss but were you able to take it all in? And how many family members did you have, in the end, how many tickets were you able to get for family and friends?

CAROL ZHAO: A pretty good amount. I saw some faces in the crowd. Although like when I'm playing I try not to look too much. I try to focus on the task at hand.

So I tried to enjoy the moment, but obviously my sense of urgency was more with the match and stuff. So maybe in a day or two I'll be able to soak it in a bit better.

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