

Omnium Banque Nationale

Friday, 11 August 2023

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Marina Stakusic

Carol Zhao

Press Conference

MELICHAR-MARTINEZ-PEREZ/Stakusic-Zhao

3-6, 6-3, 10-6

Q. I'll ask Carol first and then Marina. Are you surprised? Are you disappointed, all of the above, because you went far? You're the last Canadian standing.

CAROL ZHAO: I would say mixed emotions for sure because obviously we respect our opponents a lot, and they're obviously good players, but we were leading for most of the match, and I thought we had a great chance of winning it.

So definitely disappointed that it came out on the other side, but encouraged, I would say. Yeah.

MARINA STAKUSIC: I agree with Carol. I think we're a little bit disappointed that we lost just because we felt like we had a match in our hands, especially after the first set. We were playing very aggressive, controlling a lot of the points, but I'm happy.

This is our first time playing together. It's nice to be the last Canadians standing in the tournament, so I think it's positive. This week was positive.

Q. Should we assume that the veteran was leading, suggesting being the captain of the duo, or it was not that at all? Carol, first.

CAROL ZHAO: I would like Marina to answer that.

MARINA STAKUSIC: I mean, yeah. I definitely learned a lot from Carol. She has more experience than me. I think playing, like, Billie Jean King Cup doubles and stuff, but I think we both contributed.

But I definitely learned a lot from her. She gave some good tips throughout the matches, and yeah.

Q. Carol, with your experience, how would you rate



the quickness of learning experience for your young partner?

CAROL ZHAO: Well, I was going to say I don't think she needed much of my help. It was definitely a mutually-beneficial experience. I mean, I learned a lot from her as well.

She's super poised for her age, and we had a really tough match in the first round. Also, both super set tiebreaks, so high pressure situations. I thought she handled them really well. So I would say very quick, to answer your question.

Q. You may have different paths from now on, but would you consider playing again if you were in the same tournament? You are doing pretty well.

CAROL ZHAO: Absolutely, yeah. I would say we have great chemistry, and I think right off the bat you tend to feel like if it's going to be a good match or not, and I think it was a pretty good match. So definitely if we have the opportunity.

MARINA STAKUSIC: How would you describe your chemistry? What does she do well that completes you and vice versa?

MARINA STAKUSIC: In my opinion I think that Carol is really good at the net. She's quick. She's all over the net. So I think, for example, if I'm serving, like a hit a good serve, Carol can quickly come and poach right away, and I think that worked a lot.

We did a lot of the crossing, especially when I'm at the back and she's at the net, and I think that worked a lot.

Q. Nothing to add?

CAROL ZHAO: Yeah, and I would say I think we both like playing all court. I think Marina is great at the net in her own right, and especially she's given me a lot of opportunities from the back to look for our opportunities at the net to cross.

I think, yeah, overall we match each other pretty well. Obviously it would be better if we had more time, more practice.



Q. Finally, one after the other, what are your plans for the next week? Let's start with Marina.

MARINA STAKUSIC: I'm going to go back to take a few days off and then I'm going to go back to training. Then I have some tournaments, some ITF tournaments in Europe that I'm going to go to, and then I'll see after that. I'm not sure yet.

Q. Which country?

MARINA STAKUSIC: Spain.

Q. Only?

MARINA STAKUSIC: Spain only, and then I'm probably going to come back to the U.S. and play some California tournaments.

Q. No Grand Slam junior? You're still a junior.

MARINA STAKUSIC: I'm not a junior anymore.

Q. That's 18 or 19.

MARINA STAKUSIC: I'm turning 19 this year.

Q. Carol, what are your plans?

CAROL ZHAO: I'm playing Stanford next week, so I probably have to figure out how to get there like right now.

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