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**Tuesday, April 4, 2023**

Shelby Rogers            6 6 6  
Danielle Collins        7 4 1  
R64

THE MODERATOR: Shelby, congratulations on your win today.

SHELBY ROGERS: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Can you just talk us through the match? Obviously you went down in that first set. How were you able to refocus and come back for the next two?

SHELBY ROGERS: Yeah. I'm really happy with the win today. Of course, any win here is super special for me. But I knew she was going to come out playing super aggressive, and I just felt like I couldn't get a read on her serve in the first set. There were a lot of easy holds from her. And somehow hung in there until the tiebreak, and she was just a little more aggressive than I was, took a little more risk in the breaker. So that was one of the adjustments I made going into the second set was just trying to get on top of a few more points and take

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a little bit more risk and hit through the ball a little bit more.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Congratulations, Shelby. Can you talk about the pressure you may feel at this tournament every year being the headliner, and even this week dropped doubles yesterday and going right back to singles. Just what you have to deal with inside for that.

SHELBY ROGERS: Yeah. I mean I've played here -- gosh, I've lost count now how many years. Maybe Chris knows better than I do. But I think I've learned over the years that no matter what happens here, because I've had some of the most amazing moments on court. I've gotten injured. I've, you know, been bagled. I've been up a lead and blown it. Like everything has happened. There's nothing that Charleston hasn't seen me do on the court. And so I'm at a place now where I feel I can just go out and be free, be myself, play my game. Actually, one of my best friends texted me this morning and she said, just a reminder, we're here to support you and love you and watch you do what you love to do. And I was like, that's really helpful.

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Thank you for that. And that's how I feel, everybody watching me, you know, feels as well. And they convey that every time, and they're just excited to come out and support me, and I really appreciate that, and I'm so thankful for that. So I would say the pressure just comes from myself. You know, it doesn't come from anyone off the court. And that's just me wanting to perform and put on a good show for everyone.

Q. Shelby, we talked yesterday about putting all the off-court stuff aside and getting ready for that. Was that a struggle early on in that first set or was she just doing something that you weren't prepared for early on?

**SHELBY ROGERS:** Yeah. I felt like once I stepped on court, I was able to embrace the arena, if you will, and kind of leave everything outside the gates. But it is nice to look over and see my friends and family and familiar faces in the crowd. That helps me feel the support and helps me keep perspective as well. And I thought I did a good job of staying focused and regrouping after that first set when it was so tight, could have gone either way, and adjusting a few things here and there.

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And then the third set, I think 3-1, had a really gutsy hold there and was able to continue that momentum. So I think really happy with a lot of things I did today, and hopefully can continue to do that.

Q. Shelby, what's the hardest thing about playing Danielle?

SHELBY ROGERS: Oh, gosh. That list is long. I think, for one, she's just an incredible competitor. She is super feisty, and she can play super aggressive and hit a winner whenever she wants. If she wants to turn it on, she can. So it's important to kind of stay on top of her if you do happen to get a lead. And if she's taking the ball early, she's really, really dangerous. And her serve was on fire today at the beginning, and finally, you know, made some returns in there. But she's just overall just a very, very tough girl to play, especially when she gets fired up and throws in her signature "come ons", you know. She loves that energy.

Q. Shelby, can you just talk a little bit about clay court season and then this court in particular and how it suits your game?

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SHELBY ROGERS: Yeah. Clay court season is always a challenge, especially transitioning from hard, I think, for most players. You know, the movement is a little bit different, the timing. You have the bad bounces off the lines, and just some momentum shifts that maybe you wouldn't see on hard courts, maybe more breaks of serve. But, actually, the green clay plays a little bit faster than the red clay and is a little bit more slippery, in my opinion. So I find, actually, that it's in between like a hard court and a red clay court. So it's a little bit easier to kind of hit through the court. And, again, if you take risk, it pays off, high-risk, high-reward kind of tennis. And especially with the new balls here, you know, kick serves are jumping, the spin is really taking well. But then you also have the element of the humidity here where, you know, if it rains, the balls can get really heavy. So there's just so many variables with the clay courts that you constantly have to keep adjusting to, which I think makes for really interesting, fun matches.

Q. When you have a win like that, when you finish it and you get to exhale, is it different or do you let yourself sort

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of experience the moment differently being in this actual venue, because we know you're so focused on just one ball at a time during the match, but then once that clicks over and you hear "game, set, match Rogers," what goes through your head and your heart?

**SHELBY ROGERS:** Yeah, I think the crowd sounds a little bit different here than anywhere else for me. It's just really special to hear how many people come out to support me and just good tennis. Like every match that I've watched, you know, there's people cheering, and the stands are full, and it just makes my heart so happy to see the city supporting the sport the way that they do, and then not to mention, coming out every year for me. It's really humbling, and makes me just want to keep going, work harder and try to do the best that I can.

And the kids come up and say, you know, thank you for being the person that you are, which means more to me than anything I could do on court with tennis.

**THE MODERATOR:** Any more questions?

**SHELBY ROGERS:** Whew, you got me there!

End of Interview

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