

Serena Bows Out of Aussie Open But Looks Beyond
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By Craig Gabriel

MELBOURNE: Serena Williams puts in 150% into everything she does. Her tennis is at the top of the list so when things don't quite go the way she would like them to it's a big disappointment. Because she is such a perfectionist, any loss hurts and it hurts even more when it's at a Grand Slam tournament such as the Australian Open which is a cornerstone of the sport.

Right now Serena is going through the disappointment of a match loss because unfortunately she was defeated in the quarterfinals of the Australian Open by Jelena Jankovic in one hour 39 minutes 63 64. The match ended when a forehand floated wide.

"Well, I'm obviously extremely disappointed," said Serena. "I'm one that enjoys the battles, and I enjoy the victories as well. But I'm definitely, you know, not really happy right now, especially not with my performance. If I had a different performance and I gave it I felt like I did better, then I would feel a little better about it."

Serena wasn't moving as well as one would have expected her to. She had treatment during the match for blisters but that was not as issue as far as she was concerned. There was certainly something else that was hampering her in the match but Serena was not prepared to mention it as she had no intention of making excuses and taking credit away from Jankovic.

"I just think I'm not going to sit here and make excuses," said Serena. "I lost because Jelena played better than me and I made too many errors. I think regardless, the match was on my racquet, and I gave it away."

"I just think that I made a lot of errors today. I mean, I didn't like my shots just weren't right. I didn't move the way I traditionally want to move, and I wasn't feeling 100 percent. But as an athlete you know not every day you're going to feel 100 percent, and some days you have to win feeling 30 percent."

This was always going to be a difficult match for Serena; she and Jankovic shared their head-to-head series having played four times before. Their last meeting was last year's Australian Open when they met in the fourth round and Serena won en route to the title.

Serena started the quarterfinal match very smartly when she broke the Serb player's serve to love. That gave her a 2-0 lead but in the next game Serena dropped her own serve and did so again in the fifth and ninth games. The sixth game on Jankovic's serve was a long one and there were chances with three break points to bring things back to an even keel. However, Jankovic saved them all.

In the second set service breaks were exchanged a few times before Jankovic broke in the tenth game to claim the victory.

"I definitely didn't have the right shot selection," added Serena. "I felt like some shots I made weren't the correct selection, and I didn't go after some shots I thought I should have went after. Then I just made some errors that I shouldn't make, and I have no reason to make those errors. So I think that's what it boiled down to. I feel like I had plenty of opportunities, and I didn't I just made too many errors."

After the singles she went out and played doubles with Venus but they lost to the Chinese combination of Yan Zi and Jheng Jie 36 64 62.

"It's hard, I guess. I mean, me being the person I am, I'm pretty much a perfectionist," said Serena. "If things don't go right then I have problems with that. It's not the end of the world. There's a tournament I'm going to be in in a couple of weeks. I'm just going to go home and keep working out and staying fit."

She's looking forward to a full year on the tour. The number one ranking is most definitely a goal of hers and "there's good things coming forward"

She said: "Just taking it one day at a time and trying to let this go behind me and just go back and keep training. I've come a long way from last year and I just keep going forward."