

Serena Into The Quarterfinals
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By Craig Gabriel

MIAMI: It was another glorious day out on the Miami Keys, albeit a big windy, but with sunny skies and a few wisps of cloud it's no doubt that this is a city in which to play. And tennis is most definitely the game of the moment as the Sony Ericsson Open continues on Key Biscayne which is about a 15 minute drive from downtown Miami.

The crowds have certainly turned out this week which is reflected in the attendance figures that are up so dramatically on practically every session.

Serena Williams is one of THE star attractions. She has a fantastic following here and there is a rousing welcome for her every time she steps on court. She is chasing her fifth Sony Ericsson Open having won it last year in a brilliantly dramatic final against Justine Henin and prior to that winning a hat-trick of titles from 2002 to 2004.

This is the tenth year that Serena is playing the tournament and she has never failed to reach the business end of the event (fourth round or better) and coming into this year's tournament her win-loss record was a staggering 46-5.

And, along with sister Venus, holds the record for the fastest serve ever hit by a woman at the Sony Ericsson Open ... 124mph. Some small cars don't move that quickly.

She reached the quarterfinals with a 6-3, 6-3 result over the Estonian player Kaia Kanepi and will take on Justine Henin in a repeat match of last year's final.

The match against the Estonian certainly had a fewer number of errors than her previous match and her first serve percentage was higher but Serena still felt it was an up and down match. She explained that Kanepi was an interesting player to face and one who didn't give her any sort of rhythm.

"I definitely feel like I was focused," she said. "Felt like I had to be. The other match was definitely a good eye opener to being focused for this one."

And now for Justine Henin and Serena "couldn't be happier". Last year's final was a classic as Serena forged her way back from a near hopeless position.

"It's a shame it can't be in the finals but I definitely look forward to playing her for sure," said Serena. "I think we have a great rivalry. We definitely bring out the best tennis in each other and she tends to play really well against me. Probably better against me than other opponents, so it's definitely a good match for me."