

Serena Starts Wimbledon Campaign
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By Craig Gabriel

WIMBLEDON: What a difference the first day of this year's Wimbledon is compared to twelve months ago when all that could really be done was watch the rain. Beneath the gloomy skies the only things that brought any sort of colour to the Centre Court at the All England Lawn Tennis Club were the unfurled umbrellas.

This time glorious sunshine bathed the lush green lawn courts and it made it a pleasure in which to play tennis. Everything stood out so much more dramatically and the atmosphere lifted everyone's spirits. And when Serena Williams walked on court wearing a white coat it certainly added a touch of panache to the moment.

The coat really became quite a topic of conversation and we'll get to that in a moment, but first the match.

Serena opened her campaign for a third Wimbledon crown by playing the first match on Court One which is the second biggest court at the All England Club and seats 11,393. From the outside the court looks like a flying saucer but the inside was designed to be almost reflective of the famous Centre Court.

Serena's first match was against the Estonian Kaia Kanepi who she played at the Sony Ericsson Open in Miami this year coming away with a 6-3, 6-3 win in the fourth round.

Serena scored her second win over Kanepi but Kanepi gave a good account of herself in the first set but Serena closed it out nicely 7-5, 6-3.

"I don't think I had time to play myself into this match," said Serena. "I think I had to start straightaway. I think I played myself into the first game. I'm really excited I was able to win that first game. But I couldn't play myself into this match. I needed to get started right away with it.

"I feel like today definitely was not an easy match. I personally prefer 1 1's. I've never been a player that prefers tough matches. I never kind of got that."

And now to the coat and Serena cut quite a striking image as she walked on court. She says coats are a favourite fashion statement of hers and this one certainly got its fair share of attention. She says she probably has more coats than anybody because she just loves them.

"I was talking to Nike, I walked in, had this great coat on there and they said we should do a coat like this for Wimbledon," explained Serena about the evolution of this coat. "I was like, Okay, cool. I was really all about it. Now I have a wonderful white coat I can wear on the court and also, you know, in New York for those rainy days.

"It's definitely kind of retro inspired. Buckles on the wrist, the waistband tie. You can tie it or button it. I just love coats and it's just a great fabric and a great material and it moves well. It's really nice. I really like it."

While it may not be athletic-wear, tennis gear looks good as everyday wear very often. But as Serena says "it's ladylike, and I'm very ladylike and it goes perfect with my personality and everything else. It's perfect for me".

Maybe wearing the coat will keep the rain away from Wimbledon this year.