

Serena Takes One Step Closer  
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By Craig Gabriel

WIMBLEDON: It was a hot sunny day at Wimbledon for the ladies quarterfinals. There was hardly a cloud in the sky and it left people wondering if this really was Wimbledon. This is not Wimbledon like weather.

Let me tell you no one is complaining. The conditions were perfect for Serena Williams as she charged into the semifinals for the fifth time at Wimbledon. She played the 19 year old Pole Agnieszka Radwanska for the second time, the previous occasion was on red clay in Berlin this year and Serena won that match. This time she beat her 6-4, 6-0 in just 51 minutes.

It was an overwhelming performance and there was an even greater purpose with the way Serena played. Even though she has not lost a set the whole tournament, this match saw the fewest number of games surrendered by her in the five rounds so far.

"I definitely felt I stepped it up a notch, mostly with my serve," said Serena. "I expected Radwanska to get a lot of balls back, like she did, and make some good shots, like she did, you know, hit an extra ball, like I had to do out there."

Serena certainly served well in this match and she felt her serve "really clicked". She believed that was the turning point of the match because that put the pressure on the teenager who had to go for more on her serve in an effort to try and keep Serena at bay. Serena really went for the shot and placed it so well. She said this is how she is used to serving and of course she wants to keep it up.

The talk continues to build up about a Serena-Venus final here. An all-Williams final would certainly be special but still both sisters do not really want to enter that discussion till after the semifinals are done.

"I always believe I can win and when I lose no one is more disappointed than I am," said Serena. "I feel like I've been working really hard lately. I'm just waiting on the results to come. I had some really good results earlier this year. You know, I just was waiting."

"I feel like, you know, I deserve this, because I don't think anyone's been working harder than me, except for maybe Venus. I mean, that girl works even harder than I do. I just feel like it's about time."

In the semifinals she will play Zheng Jie of China. This is an amazing story in itself. She was given a wild card into the tournament because through injuries her ranking had dipped. Now she has become the first player from China to reach a Grand Slam semifinal and on the way she has beaten the world number one Ana Ivanovic, 15th seed Agnes Szavay and 18th seed Nicole Pietrangeli in the quarters.

"I've been watching her play," said Serena. "I think she's doing a fabulous job, and I don't think it's luck, her doing so well. I think she's a really good player. I'm definitely not going to underestimate her, try to fight, do the best that I can do."