

In the next week of

HAMPTONS



Fit to Be Tried

Getting in shape and staying that way can be fun and fruitful—and our Fitness Issue will show you how. ■ Cover star Serena Williams talks tennis, siblings, the US Open and what it's like to be a champion. ■ A peek at three young tennis stars wasting no time rocketing toward the top of the game. ■ At home with Jim Mooney. ■ Wandering through Water Mill.

Williams' exclusive tennis dress,
Nike. Necklace, bracelets and
earrings, **Black Starr + Frost.**
blackstarrfrost.com

STYLING BY ISE WHITE FOR ARTISTSBYTIMOTHYPRIANO.COM
HAIR BY MARCIA HAMILTON AT MARGARET MALDONADO
MAKEUP BY CARLENE K WITH ARTISTS BY NEXT LA



Court ween

SERENA WILLIAMS CONTINUES TO DOMINATE HER SPORT—NOT TO MENTION NEARLY EVERY OTHER VENTURE SHE TRIES. BY INGRID SKJONG | PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT ASCROFT

It's easy to forgive Serena Williams for sounding a bit tired. Fresh off her third Wimbledon singles title at the time of this interview—and her fourth Wimbledon doubles championship alongside older sister Venus—the 27-year-old is laid-back and talkative despite having jumped back into her normal post-win routine. Serena boasts 11 Grand Slam titles and is currently ranked second in the world. But beyond tennis, she has also evolved from a teenage phenom into a visible (she and boyfriend Common are frequently seen out and about) entrepreneurial businesswoman (she spearheads her own fashion house, Aneres, and launched a collection for Mission Skincare on HSN) who's eager to give back.

HAMPTONS: Congratulations on the big win. Does this ever become old hat?

SERENA WILLIAMS: Well, each one is really exciting—more exciting than the last. It's like getting a new pair of shoes: You want a new pair and you always need a new pair, so it's just the greatest feeling.

H: You and Venus are such amazing forces and often play each other. How competitive are you two?

SW: We're always super-competitive, but we leave it on the court. We always give 100 percent but when that's done, we're done with it. I always want the best for her and she wants the best for me, so when we link up it's like, this is what we've worked for our whole lives. It's really a blessing.

H: Why stay on the doubles circuit?

SW: We'll always joke [that it's] because she's so good at it and she does all the work

and I kind of just sit back. It's fun—we enjoy being out there. And it counts as another title, to be honest. They add up.

H: Do you enjoy training or competing?

SW: Oh my goodness, I definitely fall in the competitive part. I hate training! I mean, I even hate the gym. I often wonder how I even became an athlete because I hate the gym, I hate working out, I don't like to run, I don't like any of that.

H: So you like getting on the court and doing your thing.

SW: No, not even. What I like mostly is the prize—the trophy. I know all the work that it takes to get there and obviously you have to play the match, and that's enjoyable, too. But for me the end result is the most enjoyable. It's like, OK, you know what? It was worth it.

H: You'll be at the US Open—what do you like best about it?

SW: The fact that it's in New York and it's just an amazing place to be and an amazing place to play. It just doesn't get better than New York. [The fans] are very vocal and really, really cool. There's nothing like the US Open because the fans are New Yorkers and they actually really get into the match. They don't act quiet like the proper tennis fans.

H: Where does your drive come from?

SW: I think I've always had it. I remember once when I was young I had to study for a spelling test and I wanted to do it so well, I stayed up all night. I was such a perfectionist at it, and I think that's just how I am with whatever I do. It has to be perfect. And that's not just in tennis. It's in everything I do.

H: Why did you give fashion a try?

SW: All my life I've been involved in fashion. I remember when I was younger I used to sew and make clothes. My mom sewed. And then I majored in fashion in college and I was able to really learn the trade. It was natural for me to start my own thing next. I also work with Nike; we make things that I wear on the court and because of my experience I know what works and what doesn't work.

H: You also like to give back.

SW: I'm really into education. We weren't allowed to bring home Bs or Cs. Being an athlete, anything can happen on any given day, and my dad and mom always thought that we needed something to fall back on. There are so many kids in this country and other countries who don't have an education and they're suffering because they simply can't learn or they don't learn. So what I do in the United States is help college funds and help kids go to college. We give them grants. I [also] just opened up a school in Kenya, three hours out of Nairobi. I called it the Serena Williams Secondary School. We donated computers from Hewlett Packard, and by the time we left the school, the kids were online. It was just the best thing.

H: Many people look up to you. Whom do you admire?

SW: I'd definitely say my parents and my sisters. I think that's the problem today—sometimes people look too much to other people to be role models. I think it's really important to have positive role models at home. It can go a long way. **H**