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06 May 2020

Be sensitive to adolescent girls: Sania Mirza to Coaches at the All India Tennis Association and Sports Authority of India's Education Webinar

India's Fed Cup star player, six-time Grand Slam champion and former world number one, Sania Mirza made a guest appearance at the All India Tennis Association and the Sport Authority of India's digital Coach's Education webinar today.

After her maternity leave, 33-year-old Mirza made a dream return to the WTA Tour with a win at Hobart International tournament in January, earlier this year.

Managing both, comeback to professional tennis and motherhood, did not come easy for Mirza but she persevered and showed tremendous belief in herself. Mirza went on to play a significant hand as a mentor to her Fed Cup team mates and also produced three doubles wins with Ankita Raina to help India advance to the Fed Cup Playoffs, a historic first in Indian tennis.

"Just the way I have managed everything else, I could manage both tennis and motherhood. I am lucky enough to have enough help around me as well, that is a huge plus point for me. My mom and my sister have played a huge part in giving me as much help as possible," said Mirza on being asked about how she is managing the twin-role of mother and professional tennis player.

She added, "A lot of people questioned it even when I was trying to make that comeback, how did you find time to lose so much weight. There's so much that happens with your body after you give birth. You just have to, sort of, adapt, find a way to take out two hours from your day to work-out and try to find that balance. It's also good for your own sanity as well, to find time for yourself".

Mirza further spoke about her tennis journey, her parents' role and their long-term thinking and approach towards shaping her into the superstar player she is today. Having served the country for 18 years now at the Fed Cup competition, Mirza also shared that it is matter of absolute pride and honour to have been nominated for the Fed Cup Heart Award which is an online fan vote award. Voting is open until 8th May - <https://itf.tell-us-what-you-think.com/s3/Heart-Awards-Vote-Now>.

Taking a few questions and interacting with the AITA registered coaches, Mirza shared tips with them on how to work with girls, especially the ones in adolescent age group.

"In general, when you work with girls, there are little complications because girls are little bit moodier than boys are. My dad always tells me that to work with a woman tennis player is a lot trickier and a lot more mental because I do think that there are a lot of issues that girls go through, especially when they are adolescent. There are so many changes that are happening, internally in your body and externally as well. You are trying to be the best tennis player that you can be while there are so many hormonal changes happening as well, and it happens throughout the life of a woman. You can be a little bit more sensitive to their needs and the way they are because a lot of the times they are just trying to discover who they are, while they are also trying to be a tennis player. It can be a pretty tough job," said Mirza to the coaches attending the webinar.

The webinar was later joined by Hemant Bendrey who presented on the Mental Training aspect of the sport.

Indian Davis Cup players Vishnu Vardhan and Saketh Myneni are lined up for tomorrow's session as the guest speakers, starting at 10 AM and Suresh Sonachalam, Director- AITA Coach's Education Program, will present on "Long Term Development" of a tennis player.

(Akhouri Bishwadeep)
CEO, AITA