

## Agony Of Defeat

By Yvonne Profit- March 30, 2010



Mary played the same player she played in her previous tournament just last week. It's interesting how these draws are completed and ironically your child keeps playing the same people. You would think out of a draw of 64 players, the odds of Mary playing the same person in the first round would be virtually nil. Well, guess what? Mary played the same player—again! I'm sure Raquel was NOT looking forward to seeing Mary so early in the draw. The feeling was definitely mutual on Mary's behalf even though Mary prevailed in their last meeting.

I had an incredible long week. It took me literally three days to braid Elizabeth's hair, waking up at 3AM to get a good start before homework and practice. I did not retire to bed until well after 10pm for four consecutive days. A good friend of mine stated, "I tell ya... that "Black" hair sure is time consuming, isn't it?" I emailed her back, "You ain't even lied!" (Sorry for the colloquialism, only did so to make my glaring point!) Given the fact that I'm on this biological alarm clock that causes me to wake-up no matter how exhausted I am at 4AM to test Elizabeth's blood sugar, it really throws a monkey wrench in the sleep deprivation category to have to place all these braids in her hair. I was literally dead on my feet by Sunday morning.

In this tournament Elizabeth start time to play her match was 8AM in San Diego, and Mary was scheduled at 4:30PM. Thank goodness for the byes the girls received for Saturday, but Sunday was an early day where I was up by 3:30AM. I'm the sun and the girls are the planets that evolve around me. If you take me out of the equation, everything comes to a screeching halt. Therefore, as their mother I continue to play a pivotal role in caring for the girls, making sure they practice, eat right, study, you name it, I do it. I am a woman that wears a multitude of different hats. I'm blessed with an excellent education and it has afforded me the ability to multi-task pretty efficiently. However, someone recently told me, "I truly feel sorry for the girls, they are talented young ladies, who unfortunately are stuck with you as their mother." I don't know what planet this idiot lives on, but any knuckle head should know that behind any gifted child, there are always, always a dedicated mother, father, and mentor(s) who sacrifices their lives for the sake of the child reaching his/her dream. I am that parent. If my children fail in life, it isn't because I didn't try to give them an opportunity—a chance. It is extremely rare a child reach his/her pinnacle of success on their own merits; without the

assistance of others. Mary and Elizabeth are no exception to this rule. The words, "It takes a village to raise a child." are true words and are still relevant today.

Due to my hectic week, I was literally exhausted by Sunday morning having awakened at 3:30AM. I slept every chance I could get. I took Mary to practice but there weren't any courts available and she ended up hitting on the wall. Not a good precursor to doing well in her match, against a worthy opponent. All it takes is for me to be out of sync and it's like the domino effect. Mary loss and I apologized to her for not having her prepared for her match. Mary said, "Mommy it's not your fault!" In my heart, I felt it was my fault. Mary has to warm-up before a match and that does not include hitting on a backboard. I set the tone for preparedness; I set the tone for making sure she is prepared. That's why I felt compelled to apologize for her not faring well in the match. Don't get me wrong, I would have wanted her to win, but what was more important to me was the glaring fact she was making mistakes that wasn't typical of her when she is prepared.

The lessons continue to come through the flood gates in tennis. There continue to be a multitudinous of teachable moments. It is up to us to embrace the knowledge gained through trial and error or lend a deaf ear and continue to go to the school of hard knocks. This lesson taught both of us, the one that is most prepared has a greater likelihood or prevailing; and this was the case. Ah, the sheer agony of defeat! However, even in defeat there was a valuable lesson learned. In this game there can only be one winner and I applaud Raquel's success. Mary and I both learned a most valuable lesson and we know that our glass is still half-full and not half-empty.