

Williams makes US Open doubles quarters, says Serena must show up

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Venus Williams is into the U.S. Open women's doubles quarterfinals with Leylah Fernandez and now wants her old partner to come back. She says it's time for Serena Williams to come see a match.

Williams made the plea for her younger sister to show up after she and Fernandez beat the 12th-seeded duo of Ekaterina Alexandrova and Zhang Shuai 63, 64 in their third-round match Monday in front of a capacity crowd at Louis Armstrong Stadium.

"She's so happy for Leylah and I, and she's given us advice," Williams said. "We just need her in the box. So, my message is, 'Serena, you need to show up.'"

Williams and Fernandez will play Tuesday against the top-seeded team of Taylor Townsend and Katerina Siniakova.

The Williams sisters won 14 major championships together. Even if Serena chooses not to attend, she's definitely watching.

"She gave me a pep talk and made sure to call me today. I was, like, 'You're right. I got it. I got it,'" Venus said.

"She's definitely coaching from afar. She's so excited. She gets so nervous watching, and she's got the kids watching. They're all at home, just really on our side."

Venus said she was sent a video of her two nieces watching the match and yelling her name.

Williams and Fernandez had not played together until last week, when they received a wild-card entry into the field at the Grand Slam tournament.

They are now 3-0 and have not lost a set in the process.

"We're on the same wavelength, and hopefully we can keep it going," Williams said.

With the stands packed at Armstrong and a wait to get in to see Williams and Fernandez, the 45-year-old Canadian and 22-year-old American needed just an hour and 14 minutes to move on.

"I have full confidence in Venus, and I hope she has full confidence in me during our match," Fernandez said. "We're just going out there, playing our game: Be offensive, aggressive and ready for the ball."

Venus has called Fernandez her best partner other than Serena. She joked that Serena didn't have any advice for Fernandez, the 2021 U.S. Open runner-up in singles.

"So I guess you're playing perfect," Williams said to her partner during their press conference.

Serena hasn't played since the 2022 U.S. Open. If she does return to Flushing Meadows, it sounds as if Venus would expect her to bring a racket.

"If she came, it would be a dream for both of us and we'd have her on the court coaching," Venus said. "We'd force her to hit, even though she doesn't hit often. It's probably best she doesn't come because we'd probably bully her."



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West Shelby Water District
By: Melvin Phenix, Manager



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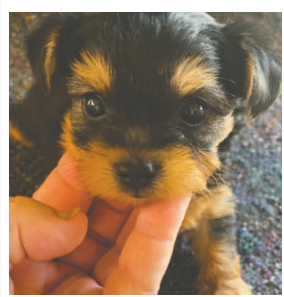
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