

Opinion: Williams strikes right note in time of turmoil

By William C. Rhoden, New York Times

INDIAN WELLS – Serena Williams officially ended her 14-year boycott of the annual tennis tournament held here when she addressed members of the news media Thursday to explain why she returned.

“I just felt like it was time,” she said.

At the same time, Williams said there was a time when she felt this day might never come: “I didn’t think I would come back, to be honest.”

In March 2001, Williams, then 19, was booed without mercy as she played a championship match here. Fans were angry that the much-anticipated semifinal between her and her sister Venus never materialized after Venus pulled out with an injury. Their father, Richard Williams, was accused of orchestrating the outcome.

Many say they are not clear about what happened over that weekend, but Richard Williams is very clear about what happened. In his autobiography, which was published last year, Williams described the events in detail.

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