

BNP Paribas Open

Wednesday, March 15, 2017

Novak Djokovic

Press Conference



N. Djokovic/N. Kyrgios

6-4, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You had 19 consecutive wins here and haven't lost since 2013. What's the run mean to you?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, the run was amazing. I am very proud of it, obviously. It had to end at some stage. Unfortunately, it was today.

Well, Nick, again, as he did in Acapulco earlier, few weeks ago, he served so well. Just wasn't managing to get a lot of balls back on his serve, first and second, as well.

So I guess that's what made a difference.

Q. What makes him so tough as a player? Seems like he doesn't have a whole lot of fear out there.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah, I mean, he obviously comes out playing his style, very aggressive, and just, you know, going for every serve, whether it's first or second. It's obviously very hard to play like that.

Q. How tough is it with the schedule coming, playing last night, coming back out after a three-setter, and coming out playing early in the day, 3:00 match?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I don't want to comment about that.

Q. You had a long sort of apprentice ship at No. 3 until you became No. 1. Murray had an even longer one. What kind of transition did you have when you became No. 1? Have you talked to Andy at all about what it means to be No. 1 and sort of the new role that he's in?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, we didn't have much of a chat there. Obviously he's somebody that I respect tremendously because of his determination and, you know, talent, everything that he possesses. He brings a lot to the tennis world, and he deserves to be No. 1, you know, after so many years of trying and playing on such a high level. It was meant to be for him last season.

Q. There was obviously understandable frustration.

Is it more you aren't able to do what you think you can do or more because he's so frustrating to play because of what he can bring?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I guess conditions like today where the ball travels through the air very fast and it bounces very high, you know, it's a gamble.

And on his first serves, to try to anticipate and read his serve, where he's going to go 140 miles per hour down the T and also pretty good angle wide, so it's hard to position yourself well. Let's call it that way. It is a gamble.

His second serve, if you think you're going to have a look at it, you don't, because he goes for it, as well. He didn't make too many double faults.

As I said, you know, in this kind of conditions, it's quite suitable for the server. Puts a lot of pressure on your service games. You know, you need to deliver and you can't fold, which I did in the opening game of the match. Obviously, the dynamic of the match already went his way in the first/second game.

Yeah, it was hard to come back from that one, although I did have my chances, did have some 30-Alls and deuces. I don't think I reached a break point, but I did have some close games on his serves, but I just wasn't able to deliver what was important at that stage.

Q. Is Nick especially tough to play with his energy and demeanor on court, his intensity? Just he can be sort of up and down. Does it make it tougher to play?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: It's his style. There is not many players like him on the tour, and, you know, he plays a certain way, and talks and behaves a certain way, which is characteristic for him.

Obviously it works (smiling).

Q. You said you need to be ready and play well, but you also need a bit of luck at some point. Do you feel at the start of the season that luck hasn't been on your side draw-wise? Is it something that can go through your mind, or...

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, look, you know, I don't want to look back and now just think of whether things could have been different or not in terms of draw or not.

Yeah, sure, I could have had easier draw, but, you know, I don't want to look for excuses. It is what it is. I have to deal with it.

You know, I have to think about doubles here. I want to do well in doubles with Viktor. We're still in the tournament, and then take it from there.

Q. I appreciate the score lines in both Acapulco and here, but where did you find it tougher to play Nick? In the conditions there or the conditions here?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I mean, we played a very late night match in Acapulco, although I thought he was maybe serving a higher percentage of first serves there.

But he was playing well from baseline, better from baseline here than he did in Acapulco. So even when I had my chances, when I was in the rallies, he was just, you know, not giving me too many points away, you know. Not making too many unforced errors. And in the important moments, he was playing consistent from back of the court. I guess, you know, wherever you play him, you know, with that serve, it's a big task.

Q. You and your wife are both public figures and both also professionals who are very active on social media. Wondering if you ever get any negative interactions on social media and what you do about that. Or, if you don't, if you have talked to any of your peers about how they handle negative comments or even abuse on social media.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, look, you know, there is always someone that doesn't, you know, like you or agree with what you post or who you are or with your ideals in life.

It's normal, you know. You can't always have everyone on your side. You can't please everyone. I mean, we both respect everybody's opinions, and we think that, you know, sometimes criticism, if it's constructive, it can actually be very useful for us as public figures.

We are blessed to be able to have many people that follow us, support us. That's all I can say. You know, we're grateful. There is always going to be negatives.

But, you know, it just depends how you look at it and what you take from it.

Q. I'm curious, because you have played so many great players and you just played Nick twice now. How do you see his upside, what he's capable of, and how much talent does it...

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, undoubtedly he's capable of

a lot of big things. That was projected for him already a couple years back.

He's not very consistent with his results, but, you know, he's coming closer to top 10. He had his best year last year, so things are coming together for him. There is no doubt that he has a big game, and that game that he has can and should be for top 10, top 5 player.

So it just depends on him and his commitment to the sport. Obviously it's not only about the game. It's many things that have to fall in place.