

Citi Open

Tuesday, August 2, 2022

Washington D.C.

Andrey Rublev

Press Conference



A. RUBLEV/J. Draper

6-4, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Great match today against a tricky opponent. How did you feel out there?

ANDREY RUBLEV: I feel happy with my first match, with the performance that I did, that I was able to win in straight sets against such a great player that is doing really well and he's only raising and raising his level.

We played earlier this year in Madrid, and he almost beat me there. He was up with a break in the third set, but then I was a bit lucky and able to win 7-5. So I was really, really like afraid that it's going to be super-tough match today, because it's hard court, and the way he serve, the way he hit the ball, it's even tougher to bring the balls back.

But I'm really happy that I was able to win in straight sets.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Am I correct, this is your first hard court tournament of this time of year? I think you're coming off the clay?

ANDREY RUBLEV: Yeah, it's my first hard court tournament from America swing, yeah. I was playing Hamburg, yeah.

Q. So my question is could you speak a bit about what is challenging or what are the issues when you switch from clay, both to the hard court and the North American humidity and heat in preparation for the US Open?

ANDREY RUBLEV: I mean, I think that's, to be honest, I don't know the secrets, how you can switch better or adapt better to the heat.

I think for everyone it's tough, and I'm just looking in this way more that the opponent, he feel the same. I don't think that someone like to play at this heat of weather, is just

someone who accept it, someone who not -- I just, I don't know, thinking that from the other side is fun, fun for the spectators, because you don't know what to expect.

Sometimes can be like here super crazy with the heat. Then maybe two days of the rain. Then maybe you go another tournament, like I was in Bastad, and it was completely wind and another level, and in the same time was rain. We were playing, and you cannot even see the ball because the ball is moving and you cannot even put, I don't know, on the other side because the wind was super strong.

You cannot control the conditions. I think this is fun that it's a part of our sport, that we have to take it as it is, you know, and that's it. Everyone is in the same conditions.

Q. You and Dasha got a lot of positive media reception from the documentary you participated in. Was curious if you have been able to feel that reception and how you look back on that experience.

ANDREY RUBLEV: Can you repeat? You said about the documentary with me and Kasatkina?

Q. You got a lot of positive reception from fans and from media who watched it. Curious if you felt that and what you made of the experience, participating in it.

ANDREY RUBLEV: Sorry, man. Really sorry. The last part of, what about experience?

Q. How you look back on the experience of filming it and...

ANDREY RUBLEV: Yeah, I mean, I think the video that we made was super positive, that, I don't know, almost 90 or even more percent of the people was writing only positive, really good things, that me, I didn't even expect.

The experience was fun, because I think now, I mean, I don't know, because I'm still quite young and I don't know the history of all the earth, but at least at my age, I think it's one of the toughest now time, and I think it's important to



use the platform, especially the tennis platform, that for the good things that is how is important to take care of each other, how is important to have a peace all around the world.

And that's it. There is nothing more important than to have peace and love all around the world.

Q. Do you feel like fans and media got to see a different side of you from watching the documentary?

ANDREY RUBLEV: If what?

Q. Do you feel like they got to see a different side of you, like a new side?

ANDREY RUBLEV: If the people saw the new side of me?

Q. Yes.

ANDREY RUBLEV: I don't know. Did you watch it? And you see me from the new side? Then maybe yes (smiling). Then it's good. I hope from (indiscernible) side.

Q. The last time you played this tournament in 2019 I believe you were unseeded, and this year the No. 1 seed. Can you just talk to how that's made your experience different here? Do you find you play better when you're the No. 1 seed, worse? Does it matter?

ANDREY RUBLEV: Yeah, first of all, yeah, I have a good story with D.C., because when I play here first-ever time, 2018, it was my first-ever semifinal on ATP 500 level. So it was a special moment for me.

Then when I was coming 2019, the last time, I was going through not easy time, because I was just going out from injury and I was actually -- everybody was telling me not to play here because I just did Hamburg final, and I flew straightaway -- after Hamburg final I flew straightaway on Monday to Washington, and on Tuesday I was playing.

Everyone was playing telling me not to play. I say, No, I want to play because I like Washington a lot.

Yeah, I think I lost 7-6 in the third. I could not even lose easy. I went to play and I lost a really tough match, 7-6 in the third. I was not seeded, yeah, like you said.

I don't know. Of course sometimes it's better when you are seeded because you know that you will not face top players in the first round, but I don't know. There is both, sometimes it's good, sometimes it's not because you have more pressure when you are seeded.

When you are not seeded you don't expect anything and no one expect nothing from you. But you need to have a good draw, because maybe you will face first round, I don't know, top-10 player and in this case it's better to be seeded.

No, I think I like my position. I cannot complain and I prefer to be in my position.

Q. If I may ask an opinion about sport and politics. So I know in Dubai you wrote the lovely sentiment on the lens of "No war please." And I believe you played doubles with a Ukrainian player.

ANDREY RUBLEV: Yeah.

Q. So given all that has happened since then, including, you know, the Wimbledon ban, I'm wondering, do you believe tennis can be a platform for unity, for positive messages, or have you come to believe tennis must be separate, just keep it separate from politics?

ANDREY RUBLEV: Of course I think politics were always in sport. Everybody knows this. But I do believe that by being united and doing good things for the peace, tennis can be, in general, if tennis will be example of it, maybe other sports will follow, and in general, maybe one day sport can be without politics.

Obviously at least I believe that tennis can be without politics, because tennis is something that is independent. I think it's one of not many sports that's independent from the rest of the sports.

We have players from everywhere. We play every country. There is not one place that we are performing. We are traveling all around the world.

So we cannot, I don't know, I think tennis have a good chance to be outside of politics, because, yeah, we have all the nations. We have boys and girls, so many, all the continents, so many countries, so many tournaments per year, and I think then it depends already of the persons who works in ATP, WTA, also the players, because in the end you have to start from yourself.

If each of us start first from ourselves, then maybe at least I do believe in this, yeah.

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