

Western & Southern Open

Saturday, August 19, 2023

Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

Novak Djokovic

Press Conference



N. DJOKOVIC/A. Zverev

7-6, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Straight to questions for Novak.

Q. (Question about playing Alcaraz.)

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I mean, I guess it's the ultimate challenge at the moment for me. We faced each other in the last three events. Roland Garros, clay. Wimbledon, grass. Now hard court. It's going to be the first encounter on a hard court.

It's a very good test prior to US Open. Obviously different conditions. Here best-of-three, US Open best-of-five. It's still facing the top, top player of the world now who is in form. It's the biggest challenge I could get, so I'm looking forward to it. Now it's the best way to prepare for New York.

Q. You've made it through the draw without dropping a set. How would you rate your form now at the end of the tournament?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, haven't dropped a set the entire tournament, so I'm very pleased with the way I've been playing.

Today obviously more nervous performance from my side. I guess when I was serving for the match, I got tight. It's kind of expected considering who I was playing. Sascha is in a great form. With that powerful serve, in these kind of conditions where the balls are bouncing extremely high, it's very quick, it's so difficult to break the serve, which in return puts a lot of pressure on my service games. I felt that.

One or two points really both sets decided the winner. I just I guess found the right shots in important moments, held my nerve, yeah, closed the match out in straight sets, which was of course super important to win and to win in straights because if we went to the third, who knows how long we would play. It's also good in terms of recovery for tomorrow's final.

Q. Did you expect to be at this level, to be in the final of a Masters 1000?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I always expect myself to play on a high level. It's not a big surprise for me. I know the amount of work that I put in on and off the court in order to be where I am. So it's not a big surprise, to be honest.

It definitely feels great to come back to the hard court tournaments after February, actually the last time I played, already played finals of the one of the biggest events in the sport. Some really good performances this week.

So hopefully I can keep it going tomorrow.

Q. Three very emotional matches today. Do you feel like that energy kept up in your match tonight?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I think so. They were great. They were terrific. Thanks for all the people who stayed to watch our match. I did obviously follow what was happening before me. All three matches, three-setters. Really, really close encounters.

Yeah, crowd definitely got the value for the ticket today.

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