

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Roma, Italia

Denis Shapovalov

Press Conference

D. SHAPOVALOV/G. Dimitrov

6-2, 3-6, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. This win means top 10. I don't know if you knew that. Does it have a special meaning? Was it something that you were looking at or it's just a nice surprise after a Masters 1000 semifinal?

DENIS SHAPOVALOV: Yeah, for sure, but I think Diego still needs to be out of the tournament to be top 10. So not yet (smiling).

Q. Ridiculously hard transition to make going from a really tough, could say heartbreaking loss in New York, and a lot of tennis on your legs to be out here and to do so well. What has pleased you the most about what you have been able to do so far in Rome on the clay?

DENIS SHAPOVALOV: Yeah, definitely very happy with the result today and this week overall. I have had a lot of difficult matches.

Dealing with jet lag and the body fatigue, it's not easy, so I'm really happy with the way I have been able to overcome that. And the way I felt tonight was really good, so I'm really happy and really pleased with myself.

Q. The way you're playing right now with a certain level of consistency, even when you have little lows in the match, you have been able to pick yourself back up. Would you say that's what you have improved the most since tennis came back?

DENIS SHAPOVALOV: Yeah, for sure. I think tennis in general, you have a lot of ups and downs. It's fairly tough to stay consistent, I think. There is only certain players that have been able to do that throughout their career. So I'm happy to be playing this well. For sure, you know, it's amazing to be getting these wins.

But I think, yeah, I mean, I have just been going one match



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at a time. And of course, like you said, I have had some lows, but I feel like that's where working with a psychologist has helped me a lot to pick myself back up and improve my game after the drops.

I think tonight I was struggling with my serve in the second set, and I did a really good job to pick it up in the third set and started with two or three aces in the opening game.

So, yeah, I'm very pleased with the way I have been able to kind of handle myself and my level overall.

Q. Just a question about the matchup with Grigor. You have played twice before. Hadn't won a set, but there was a four-year gap between those matches. What do you think specifically today that kind of helped you flip the script and be the person who was dictating out there?

DENIS SHAPOVALOV: Yeah, of course. I mean, first of all, I think it's amazing to beat a player like Grigor. He's someone I have looked up to since I was a junior. I'm really a big fan of his game and the way he plays.

Yeah, for sure I have had some difficult matches against him. To get the win, of course, it's a big step for me. You know, big step for my confidence to know I can beat a player of that category, of that level.

Q. I wonder if you could clarify, because I wasn't able to get Vadim's last name last week. Nobody seemed to know it. Is he the person that's with Mischa this week?

DENIS SHAPOVALOV: No, that's my physio, Nick Martichenko. I can't remember Vadim's last name right now.

Q. Nobody knows it.

DENIS SHAPOVALOV: I'm not sure I have it. I don't have his last name. I'll ask him (smiling). I'll get it to you next time.

Q. How tough was it during the lockdown or whatever? Where were you during the long break? How much work did you put in? Because that must be what's behind all this amazing run.

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DENIS SHAPOVALOV: Definitely. I mean, when everything was kind of shutting down at first, I stayed at Indian Wells and just practiced with Mischa there for as long as I could.

And then we decided to go to Florida, because we still weren't sure if Miami Open was going to happen, so we were going to go to IMG Academy and train.

As soon as we landed there, IMG Academy closed down and seemed like Florida was going to shut down. But it never did. We were very lucky, actually. There was a private club that opened up for us to practice and certain hours of the day where nobody else was allowed to practice.

It was really nice. I feel like, you know, for months we were just practicing there, and I feel like me and Mischa just put some great work in together and really worked on my game.

Also, that was the period where I started working with Vadim, with my psychologist, and I feel like that together with the work on the court just really elevated my game. That's why I feel like I have been able to play so well.

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