

# Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Tuesday, 11 May 2021

Roma, Italia

## Dominic Thiem

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. I wanted to ask about your health. It's been a while since you played. You have several matches under your belt at Madrid. You had some tape on your hands. Do you feel 100%? Was it a good experience playing in Madrid? How are you feeling overall?**

DOMINIC THIEM: Yeah, I mean, it's always a great experience playing in Madrid. I love that tournament. Health-wise everything is fine. Before Madrid I had like two and a half, three weeks really tough practice, so I got used to it again. Also got blisters on the hand. That's why I was taping. Usually I only get them on the feet. Now that I started on clay again, I also got them on the hand.

Beside that, everything is fine. The knee, which was causing me troubles in the preparation, is pain-free. Everything is good. Also I recovered quite well after the four matches.

**Q. Did you find it tricky playing with the tape on your hands?**

DOMINIC THIEM: I don't like it too much because I'm not used to it. But the blisters came quite in the beginning of the practice period, so I was practicing like two weeks, one and a half with the tape, so I got used to it a little bit.

Still I hope I can play without from here in Rome on just because the feeling is better, as I never played with tape on my hands. I like it more without.

**Q. How do you feel about making the adjustment to sea level, the different conditions in Rome? Has it been a trickier place to play because it comes quickly after Madrid?**

DOMINIC THIEM: I always had some kind of little troubles here after coming from Madrid. Luckily I was always playing well in Madrid, so didn't have so much time to prepare. It's from altitude to sea level. I think it's a different type of clay, as well. Way slower, obviously. So completely different conditions.



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But yeah, I hope that I can do better than the last two times when I played here. I lost both times my first match. Yeah, we'll see. I have a tough opponent. I'll try my best. Hopefully can play as well as in Madrid.

**Q. A question about Roger Federer. He's going to be back we hope in the French Open and Wimbledon, having not played at Grand Slams for more than a year. How much do you think tennis has missed Roger? How good will it be to have him back?**

DOMINIC THIEM: I guess pretty much everybody is missing him when he's not playing just because of his style, of the way he plays. I mean, in general he's a great guy. It's amazing to have him around.

I'm also looking forward to French Open and Wimbledon to see him play again. With him, you know, he's just so good and has so unreal skills that I don't think it's that big of a problem if he's not playing for that long. If he's physically 100% I guess that he can still go very deep in the tournament he participates.

**Q. Can he go deep enough to win a Grand Slam, especially Wimbledon?**

DOMINIC THIEM: I think so. Why not? I think otherwise he wouldn't be playing. He's too good. He had I think too much success in the past also. I guess if he knows that he's not playing for the big titles any more, he wouldn't be playing. So I definitely expect him, especially in Wimbledon, that he can go very, very deep and also play for the title.

**Q. With you and Sascha getting to the final in New York, Daniil reaching a couple of major finals, No. 2 in the rankings, we've seen a series of younger guys getting to Masters finals this season, do you think now finally is the time when that next generation is going to assert itself, really take over men's tennis even at the Grand Slam tournaments?**

DOMINIC THIEM: Yeah, I think it's only about the Grand Slam tournaments mainly because from the moment when especially Sascha started to win the Masters 1000 events back in 2017, I think also since 2017 nobody of the big three won the Nitto ATP Finals any more, always younger guys. There and the Masters 1000, it's a nice mix of the



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winner now. Of course, the Grand Slams are still dominated by the big three.

As it's way tougher to beat them, to win three sets against them, it's way more difficult of course than to win two. That's one of the big reasons. But we have a lot of finals already in Grand Slam tournaments. I think in the near future it's also going to happen that somebody else is going to win them.

I also think a lot of people underestimate the time and the era we are playing in with by far the three best players in the history of the game. I think it's more than clear that it's incredibly tough to win Grand Slam tournaments, having to beat most of the times two of them even.

**Q. How would you describe your approach towards tennis now after all the difficulties you've been through? Would you say there is less pressure on your shoulders now?**

DOMINIC THIEM: No. I mean, the pressure is always the same. When I step on court, I want to win the match. There are going to be lots of close calls, close situations. I'm always going to be nervous. That's how it's going to be until the end of my career.

But still the break was really good. I tried to maybe play little bit less tournaments in the future, try to be on 100% at really each tournament I play. I guess that's the biggest thing I was learning from the last few months.

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