

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Thursday, 13 May 2021

Roma, Italia

Novak Djokovic

Press Conference



INTERNAZIONALI
BNL D'ITALIA

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N. DJOKOVIC/A. Davidovich Fokina

6-2, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. A question about the serve that was overruled in the second set. They tested the replay system in Madrid last week. What are your thoughts on whether that should be implemented on the clay circuit and the French Open?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: How was the serve?

Q. I didn't see the mark that closely. I think you thought it was in.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah, yeah, I kind of smiled at the chair umpire, smiled back. Said we're going to check it out after the match. It was very, very close.

Look, you can always see the mark on clay. It has always been like that. Of course, you have to treat this surface differently than others. I don't think it is necessary to have a challenge particularly, but maybe, yeah, a review, an automatic technology system that would just call it where maybe chair umpire can see it on his screen and that's it. He can just say it's out or in. We don't need to see it on the big screen. It can just be connected to his screen. I think that would be good enough when it comes to clay.

Q. You think they should implement that in terms of the entire clay season?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Look, I just said something now that was kind of on my mind. Again, I don't think it's necessary to implement the entire technological system that we have for the challenge review on other surfaces. I don't think it's necessary to have that complex of a system. Maybe just, as I said, the chair umpire can have on his screen the result of what technology gives him and that's it.

But, yeah, I mean, I don't know what to say more than that, whether it's possible that only chair umpire reviews it. If it's possible, then my answer would be yes, I think they should

have that kind of review system.

Q. Excuse me for asking this in the middle of the clay court season. I'm asking all players for their favorite Wimbledon memories. I'm sure you have many. Is there one that is a particular favorite memory for you?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: You don't need to apologize for asking for Wimbledon. You can ask me for Wimbledon any time. Always been a dream tournament for me. Whenever someone mentions Wimbledon, I get goosebumps.

Yeah, I was very fortunate I think to experience many wonderful moments in Wimbledon Centre Court particularly. I don't know which one I would pick as a highlight of my Wimbledon career. Just my career overall.

As I mentioned, when I was a five-year-old boy I was dreaming of winning Wimbledon one day. That was always that dream tournament. Any Wimbledon trophy counts as multiple trophies in other tournaments for me.

2011, the first one I guess is always the most special one. In '11 when I won and managed to clinch the No. 1 ranking for the first time, going back to my country and celebrating with people in the streets, that was probably really once-in-a-lifetime experience that I will nurture and I will remember forever.

Q. Another non-match question. You just mentioned when you were five years old looking to Wimbledon. We also know the stories about how particular you were as a child with making sure your things were all in the right spots, organized, et cetera. As you came through and developed, when you look back, is there any aspect of growing up that you missed that maybe other kids would have experienced that you didn't really get to do? In that case, would there be any regrets from that period?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: First of all, what a great accreditation collection you have behind you. Never seen more accreditations in my life (laughter).

Q. It means I'm old.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: It means your experienced (smiling).

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Yes, I was really fortunate to be surrounded I think with the right people, right mentorship, right guidance from my parents, as well. I developed the habit of discipline very early on. That has helped me stay focused and devoted to the sport that I love. From a pretty young age, I was already quite clear with myself what I want to achieve and where I'm headed, what are the dreams, what are the goals.

As I said, the guidance that I had from my parents, particularly from my tennis mother I like to call her, Jelena Gencic, my coach early on, taught me all the fundamentals of tennis, because of them I was just able to organize my life pretty well.

It allowed me to enjoy playing tennis, not just really be training and kind of putting aside the actual joy of an inner child that wants to play. So I did have a lot of friends and a lot of outdoor play, other sports, school and everything. I did leave school pretty early on because I started to travel already when I was 12, 13. Nevertheless, I kept in touch with many of my friends, so I had that social life. I don't feel there is a regret for not having enough social life or friends.

Probably the only thing, I value education a lot. I think education is essential for self-growth and self-development and character building throughout life, not just from an aspect of knowledge but also from an aspect of social interaction and social skills. That's probably the one thing that I would say I probably missed, is to be more in school and to be surrounded with friends, kind of build that foundation for myself.

Nevertheless, I have great life experience. I think traveling also brought a lot of benefits to me from that perspective. I do intend to follow up with the educational part. I do intend to make more studies, I don't know, when I have just more time. I don't know exactly when that's going to be the case, whether it's going to be when I finish my career or maybe soon when I slow down with the pace of tournaments.

I'm excited to learn. I'm kind of hungry for that knowledge. That's probably the only part I would probably say I don't regret but I just miss probably more than anything else.

Q. What would you like to be studying? What is it you would like to follow?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Health. Anything that is related to health. I mean, such a wide area of life obviously. That attracts me a lot. The nutrition, the wellness, well-being, mental well-being, emotional well-being. I don't know particularly what at the moment, but anything that is really

related to health and well-being of a person.

History, archeology, I like that as well. I love the ancient civilization knowledge. History, obviously things related to that kind of education.

I don't know which one I would pick first, but I probably would stick with health because that's something that I as a professional athlete had to really learn well. I'm obviously still learning a lot about myself. I like to implement things in my own life, everyday life, test it on my own body, whether it's food, supplements, recovery techniques, stuff like this that would help my performance, recovery, well-being in general. I think it would probably be in that area.

Q. Tell me, what did you think about Berrettini reaching the final in Madrid. Were you surprised? He could be your opponent if he beats Tsitsipas. Someone was thinking he didn't deserve to be No. 10 for such a long time because the rankings were frozen. Now he's showing he deserves. That's my opinion. What do you expect if you play Berrettini or Tsitsipas with the crowd?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: First of all, I think he deserved to be in the finals of Madrid. I wasn't surprised. I think he deserves to be a top-10 player. Yes, he was injured, then maybe he didn't play so well or up to his standard in the last maybe, I don't know, six, seven months. At the end of the day he earned his spot in the top 10 rankings. That's something I think anyone has to admit and respect.

I'm very much aware of his quality of tennis. I'm not surprised with the win he had in Belgrade, then the streak that continued in Madrid. He was also pretty close to win it in the finals.

Yeah, I mean, playing against him in front of the Italian crowd, obviously it's not an ideal matchup for me. Obviously the big support from Italian crowd for him. But I also have my supporters here. Probably in that match out there there would be more on his side, which would be logically the case.

I'm going to be playing against top 10 opponents tomorrow. Both of these guys are in top shape. I was happy with the way I played today. I think I'm on the good way. Obviously tomorrow is going to be a huge challenge for me. I'm going to be ready for it. I've been practicing well and feeling good. I'll make sure I prepare myself well for the next match.

Q. In Rome you have more fans than in any other country. How do you explain that?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I mean, it always feels like home coming back to Rome. Honestly, with the amount of love and appreciation that I get and respect from people here, not just on the court, but outside in the organization here, from the drivers, the restaurant, people in hotel, everyone is really super kind to me.

Maybe it helps that I speak Italian. Probably does. I love Italy. Who doesn't? The history this city has, this country. The food. La gioia della vita qui. It brings me happiness every time I'm about to come to Italy and to play in Rome. Each year the love affair grows even more because the bond is stronger and stronger.

Hopefully I can feel a little bit of that love more tomorrow so I can keep on progressing in the tournament.

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