

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Saturday, 11 May 2024

Roma, Italia

Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference

D. MEDVEDEV/J. Draper

7-5, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Daniil.

Q. What did you make of Draper, a talented young player?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, first time I played him. I think from what I saw in his matches, he probably doesn't like clay too much. I tried to use it to my advantage before the match because I know how it feels. Sometimes you can play good, but when you don't feel like you like the surface, in tight moments it can be tough. I tried to use it. I tried to think of it before the match.

Me now, I don't enjoy it, but I know what I have to do. I just continue to do it. So, yeah, I think he can play very well. But tennis is a tough sport. Is he going to be top 10, top five, win Grand Slam or not? Never know.

But me, I was happy with my level and looking forward.

Q. Do you know your next opponent? What do you like now of the clay that once you said the socks are always dirty?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: This I don't like, for sure (smiling).

Q. Why do you explain the fact that you never win twice the same tournament? A coincidence? It's strange. Never happen to anyone.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: It's very strange. I would think it's like coincidence, unlucky thing. I don't care which tournament I play, I want to win. Doesn't matter whether I win it before or not. Every tournament I play, I want to win.

I really hope that one time in my career I can win somewhere I win before. Now is the chance here to do it, and I will try.

About clay? I like it more now regarding the game. Again, when someone asks me what's the thing you really hate



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about clay, for me it's dirty. I don't like. Locker rooms are dirty. When you come, you clap the shoes to get out the clay. It's dirty. Socks, you can throw away after clay season, for sure. In your car after practice, it's dirty. So I don't like it.

It is what it is. Now I enjoy it more and more.

Q. Yesterday Dominic Thiem announced his retirement at the end of the season. Your thoughts on that and how you see your rivalry with him?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I would say that it's a little tough to see someone like Dominic retire because maybe he's younger than some other players that retired. I'm not in his body, in his mind, to know exactly the wrist and everything.

We had some I felt unbelievable moments. Me personally, the most I remember is US Open semifinal and the final in London of ATP Masters.

In US Open I felt like I was playing good, in a good run, semifinal. He beat me. I was surprised with the way he played, surprised in a way where he played very good, very strong.

In Nitto was unbelievable because in my opinion he played maybe even stronger than US Open and I managed to turn this around. I remember these two matches.

It's a pity to see him struggle after his injury and never be able to come back to the level he was before. I'm sure, knowing him, he's going to be fine without tennis. He's going to have a good life, happy life. I think that's the most important, so I wish him all the best.

Q. Did you see what happened to Novak last night?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah.

Q. Just in general, the strangest, most unexpected thing that's ever happened to you when interacting with a fan?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: For me? It would be tough to say. Myself one time before Wimbledon quallies when I lost to Marcus Willis. The day before was a day off. In Aorangi



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Park, I don't think they have it now, but maybe they do.
How to explain it?

To come in, there is like a cage which you need to step up just a little bit. On the top there is also one thing. I didn't look carefully. I hit it. Okay, you hit your head sometimes. Doesn't matter. Especially when you are tall. So usually when you hit your head, you straightaway put your arm there because you're painful. Look on my arm, full of blood. I say I have to go to hospital, stitches, et cetera.

I lost the match the next day. I felt like I played good. Marcus really had a good run. You always ask yourself after the match, Did I lose yesterday because I hit my head or not?

That's a story which no one knew about. It's not a bad story either, but a story that I remember, yeah.

Q. Next opponent Hamad Medjedovic, are you familiar with his game? And everybody knows that Medjedovic is 'bear' in Slavic languages. And in Serbian dialect, it's also 'bear'.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: He looks more like a bear than me. Strong. Maybe a bit smaller. Looks more like a bear.

I know him a little bit. I think everyone saw last year that he can play very good. I think he was a little bit injured, if I guess it right, this year. He was going up. I would think he would come into the top hundred on the ATP Tour. It was a matter of time whether he has these good results.

I will try my best to stop his run in this tournament here. For sure in terms of game, I don't know too much. Seems like very aggressive player. I'm going to have to leave it to my team to tell me a little bit how he plays, try to see also during the match for sure what I can do to beat him.

But I think he can be a very, very strong player in the future.

Q. I'm writing a piece about the rankings. Has there ever been any point in your career when you were focused on a particular ranking, and was there ever a time when it was too much, you focused too much and it affected how you played?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I think I was focused on the rankings till my US Open final in 2019 because before this moment, I won Cincinnati, in US Open final, I was only going up. Before the US Open final, I went into the top 10 actually for the first time, either after Wimbledon or after Washington.

Till this moment, every time I would think about rankings,

because you go from futures to challengers, you think about rankings because you need to get into challengers. When you play challengers, you want to get into the top hundred and into ATP Tour tournaments, so you think about rankings. Then I wanted to go top 50, 30, 20, No. 1 Russian player, No. 1 of my generation. I was always thinking about it.

When I made the final of US Open, I still was maybe 5 or 6 in the world, or 4. I understood that now it's a moment where for sure I want to be No. 1 in the world. No. 2, No. 3 at the time I was not. I just need to play my best, win Masters 1000, be in the final of slams or win slams. That's where I will be able to.

When I was No. 1, it was a little bit the year where I was not playing my best tennis, but I was No. 1 because I had final of ATP Finals, US Open title, Australian Open final, Masters in Canada or something. I managed to gain a lot of points throughout the year. That's why I was No. 1.

Now it's the same. Now I'm No. 4, but in the race I'm No. 2. It's a bit more important. But I know it doesn't matter about rankings. I need to win Rome if I want to be closer to be No. 1 in the world. I need to play good Roland Garros and not lose first round if I want to gain points.

Rankings is secondary for me. The first is results right now.

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