

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Friday, 8 May 2026

Roma, Italia

Novak Djokovic

Press Conference

D. PRIZMIC/N. Djokovic

2-6, 6-2, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: We'll go straight into questions.

Q. I know you don't want to take anything away from your opponent, can you explain what you were feeling out there? Was it stomach? Shoulder?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I hope you understand I will not talk about that. I want to congratulate Dino. Deservedly the winner today.

Yeah, came in to have a match or more. Unfortunately only a match. It's all right. I'm pleased at least that I fought till the end. I want to thank the crowd. It was incredible once again. I mean, the support and love that I've been getting, it's something I don't take for granted.

Q. How tough has the preparation been for this event? Looking ahead, obviously last year it was tough for you in the Masters, but you bounced back and played well at Roland Garros.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yes, it's not an ideal preparation, to be honest. I don't recall last time I had in the last couple years a preparation where I didn't have any kind of physical issues or health issues coming into the tournament. There's always something. Kind of a new reality that I have to deal with.

Yeah, it is frustrating. At the same time it's my decision to still perform in that kind of state and conditions. It is what it is.

Q. Looking ahead to Roland Garros, do you feel confident that you'll be able to be in good shape then?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I don't know. I hope so (smiling). Let's see what happens.

Q. This is so soon after, do you think you would play another event like Geneva this year?



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NOVAK DJOKOVIC: No. This year, no. I'll just go to Paris straight.

Q. How come?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: It's the decision. It's the decision.

Q. Maybe a word on how well Dino played. You're his idol. Really smashes the ball hard.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah.

Q. How was it out there dealing with that?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I think he prefers playing on clay from what I have seen in his career so far last years that he's been on the tour.

He's a great competitor, great fighter, a great kid. I've known him for some years. Obviously we speak the same language, so I always wish him all the best.

Today he has definitely performed a high-level tennis. I told him at the net that his forehand improved a lot. Whatever he has been doing with his team is working out well. He should just keep going.

Yeah, I thought also two, two and a half years ago when we played in Australia I think first round, I thought that he possesses a lot of talent and potential. Hopefully he can stay healthy because I know he struggled a lot with injuries.

If things come together, he can really go far in the rankings.

Q. You cannot be happy when you lose. At the same time you cannot expect to play much, much better when you play so little. I don't know if you're surprised or not, but are you very disappointed about the way you played? Did you expect to play much better or more or less...

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I mean, it was okay. I didn't play so bad. I don't think I played so bad, to be honest. Okay, the second set was something to forget obviously the way I felt on the court. But the first and third was good. It was okay. It was a good battle in the end.



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Obviously I see what I'm missing. Late half a step. I'm not definitely where I want to be for the highest level and to compete at the highest level and to be able to get far.

Eventually you have to play. You have to start somewhere. I wanted to start earlier, but I couldn't. So yeah, that's what it is. The situation is as it is. You just adapt to it and make the most out of it.

I train hard. I train as much as the body allows me to. Then how it turns out on the court, that's really unpredictable.

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