

Rolex Paris Masters

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Paris, France

Novak Djokovic

Press Conference



N. DJOKOVIC/H. Hurkacz

3-6, 6-0, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. Congratulations. You have finally got it. You got the record-breaking seventh year-end No. 1. Tell us your emotions and feelings.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Thank you. It's a huge achievement, obviously. I'm very, very proud of it. Grateful to be in this position once again to make the historic seventh time and surpass my childhood hero, Pete Sampras. It's incredible.

Obviously overwhelmed with all the beautiful positive emotions. This success is obviously shared with my family, my team, all the close people in my life that have been alongside me that still are there supporting me and also enabling me to keep paving the way, you know, keep playing the sport that I love.

Without their support it would be difficult, so even though it's an individual sport, it's a team effort in the end of the day. It's a thrilling, obviously, sensation and I'm very proud of it.

Q. In the seventh game of the third set, some fans cheered your double fault quite loudly, and you kind of seemed a bit unhappy about that. In the previous two matches, some fans were cheering a lot on errors and double faults when Gaston was playing against his opponents. Did you find that a bit annoying and a bit distracting?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Look, it happens. This is high-intensity match where you'll have crowd supporting both players. In the heat of the battle, things can happen. People get involved in the match.

Of course I did not like that, but in the other hand, you know, you know, I don't mind it. I don't think that there was particularly any group of people that came there to annoy me or my opponent. It's just they were supporting their

favorite player, and it just happens.

It's not the first time, probably not the last time that I will experience that. Obviously playing against a French player is a whole different atmosphere. I can only imagine, you know, how it was. I heard that the atmosphere was incredible for Gaston, against Medvedev and Alcaraz.

You could see that both Alcaraz and Medvedev were feeling uncomfortable on the court with that crowd being involved so much and being loud. Of course you want to have the crowd on your side and you want to have them carry you on, but, you know, if they are for your opponent and kind of against you, it makes your life difficult on the court.

But, you know, I have been in both situations so many times in my life, so I don't mind it.

Q. Congratulations on your tremendous achievement.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Thank you.

Q. You were out for seven weeks, I believe, before this tournament. That's unusual for you except for perhaps your elbow period. What was your level of concern coming in to try to make this history about where you were going to be physically, mentally?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I was not concerned much. To be honest, I enjoyed my time off and spent plenty of time with my family and spent time at my tennis center in Serbia where, you know, I have a lot of work to do and some other things that occupy my time.

I wasn't bored without tennis, so to say, but, you know, I like competing so I was looking forward to come to Paris and the biggest reason coming here was to clinch the year-end No. 1. Now that I managed to do it, it's a huge relief, as well.

But, you know, job is not done. Obviously reaching the finals of one of the biggest tournaments that we have in our sport on our tour is something that, you know, stands out regardless of the year-end achievement that is completed.

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So hopefully going to have another great match tomorrow, and then take it from there.

Q. It looks very much like you're going to play Daniil again. I just wonder, how do you see that match, particularly sort of obviously in the context of having played him in that huge match a couple of months ago?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah, I mean, last time we played, he overplayed me. You know, I overplayed him in the finals of the Australian Open. It was quite straightforward matches, both of them.

Hopefully I'll be able to turn the tables around this time, you know, learning from that experience in New York. I saw him play a little bit today against Zverev. He's been playing fantastic tennis. He's back at his best, you know, in the most important match, again, against Zverev in semis. He's not missing much and serving big. It seems like he's finding the groove.

We played a very close practice set about 10 days ago before coming here to Paris. So, you know, let's hope for the sake of the fans and everyone involved we can have a thrilling match. You know, I look forward to that challenge.

Q. Just going back to the record, this year has been big for you as far as breaking records are concerned. First it was the Federer one with most weeks at No. 1 and now this one against Pete. If you had to pick one of the two to be at a higher aspect, which one would you go for?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I don't want to pick any. You know, I think every record stands for itself. You know, I value all the records and achievements greatly. You know, being historically No. 1 ranked player in the world is probably the paramount achievement of our sport.

Also, you know, finishing the season as year-end No. 1 requires full commitment throughout the entire year and consistency and playing the best tennis in the biggest events, which accumulate the most points that enable you to be highly ranked. So that's what I have done this year. You know, I played my best at Grand Slams and I got most of my points there.

Where I didn't actually play too many tournaments, if you compare with other guys, you know, I played much less tournaments and just kind of focused on the most important ones. That's going to be the case also in the future. You know, the biggest events are my priority. And, you know, every achievement is special.

I try to make myself aware of the fact that, you know, I am in a very unique position. It's difficult for me to understand the magnitude of these achievements, you know, not just for myself but for the sport while I'm still active player. Probably when I retire, I'll be able to reflect on that a little bit more and appreciate it a little bit more.

Of course I'm very appreciative and grateful for it now, but, you know, what is the next challenge is always in your mind while you're an active player. It's constantly another task, another tournament. So don't have really much time to enjoy the success, so to say, because you always have to turn the next page.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

Q. Thank you for answering in French. You will actually play Daniil tomorrow. Will it be a revenge? Is it important to take a revenge on Daniil because he deprived you of the calendar Grand Slam and it hurt you so much?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: It's important to play well tomorrow on the court. When you play a final, you want to play your best tennis.

Obviously it's a great challenge, a great battle ahead of me. I can see today that Daniil has found his best play. He makes less mistakes. But I feel good on court as well and I hope that the start of the match will be better than in New York.

I need to play my best tennis to hoist the trophy. I know what I have to do. But then nothing is guaranteed 100%. I'm ready for the battle.

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