

# Rolex Paris Masters

Sunday, 30 October 2022

Paris, France

## Novak Djokovic

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Novak, welcome back to Paris. How do you feel here at this tournament where you have had so much success in the past?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I feel great in this tournament. As you mentioned, lots of success. Always helps to come into the tournament confident and with some good memories, good emotions on the court. Last few times that I played here, I won both tournaments, 2019 and also 2021, last year. Hopefully I can continue that run.

I like the conditions. Even though I must say after few practice sessions this year, the conditions are different from last year. I spoke to tournament director, and he told me that they increased the speed of the court. I mean, I could feel that. Just takes a little bit of time to adjust to that.

But, you know, overall, I like this tournament. I have always done well. Hopefully I can keep the run going.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. During the Astana Open you said you were a bit rusty after your comeback, but you won Tel Aviv and Astana, and most of the tournaments you played this year. So how do you feel right now, still rusty or just better and better?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, in the second part of the season I feel different on the court in a positive way. You know, the first part of the year with everything that has happened in Australia, I felt, you know, just challenged, very much emotionally, mentally off the court, and was affecting my game. I was kind of finding my way to that desired level of tennis, and that happened, I think, towards the end of the clay season I start to play really well.

Wimbledon, I mean, always comes at the right time in my career when I need that huge confidence boost and big title, Wimbledon is always there. That obviously was a huge also relief I think with everything that has happened this season.

After Wimbledon, you know, I haven't played for a while. Played Laver Cup, Tel Aviv, and Astana, and I played great, great tennis. Generally looking at my past career results indoors, I have had a really good record indoors generally, playing anywhere.

I'll make sure to keep going in this way, because I feel good. You know, I have been training last few days, so, you know, is another few days to my first match.

As I said, I think coming back to a place where you have done so well, it always brings back good memories and good feelings on the court.

I think at this level it's important to have a good feeling on the court and just good memory of coming to a place where you have done well, because, you know, tennis is a game of fine margins that decide who is going to take a win in the match. Oftentimes, you know, how you feel mentally, whether you are your fighting with your own demons inside in a good or bad way affects the end result. Here I always felt good.

**Q. As you mentioned, you have black times in your calendar this year without being injured. I just wanted to know, how did you work? What was your mindset? What was your own organization to stay competitive, stay the greatest tennis player possible without being able to compete for long weeks?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I haven't said I had black times in the calendar this year, but I said I have challenging months post-January. It was a completely new experience for me. Unfortunately not a great one but still a life experience, and a possibility for me to grow stronger out of that.

I mean, that was always my intention, even though while I was, you know, experiencing what I was experiencing off the court, particularly, I was not feeling my best, and that was affecting my tennis as well.

But I knew that that's not going to last for too long. It's just a matter of time when, you know, I will come to the optimal state of balance on and off the court.

That, as I said, happened towards the end of the clay season.

**Q. Halloween is tomorrow and I'm looking for the monster of tennis planet. Your track record is positive against all the top players. Can I say that you are the monster of tennis?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: The monster? I don't know the significance of that word in your language, but in mine is not really the best (smiling). I prefer not to be the monster of the tennis. But yeah, the record against most of the top players, well, against pretty much all of the top players is positive, which is great.

You know, we played so many tournaments throughout the year and throughout our careers, and some of us have been there more than some of the younger players. So playing more matches helps, I think, to know how to approach every next big challenge when you play one of your top rivals.

I have managed to do well throughout my career, which is great, which is something that I always intended to do.

**Q. You mentioned the speed of the court earlier in this conference. There were a lot of talk on the fact that courts have become very slow, at Astana, Laver Cup, and other events, even here in the past. In your mind, in your opinion, what's the fair speed of indoor courts? Organizers try to avoid too speedy courts, to have rallies, but when you have very slow courts it can damage the players, a lot of them complain of that. What's a good solution for you, the good speed?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I don't know. Because oftentimes what the tournament wants and what the players want is maybe two different things. But it doesn't particularly mean that in this case for Paris-Bercy it's two different things.

Because I was speaking with Cedric Pioline an hour ago, and he told me that many players, I mean, were kind of complaining about the slowness of the court last year, the conditions. So that's why they decided to speed it up.

I think it's fair. It's okay. You know, it's what they have the right to do. I can't tell you what kind of speed of the court is best for everyone, because everyone is different. We all like different conditions, I guess, you know.

For a big server, those guys, I guess, they would prefer quick conditions. For someone who is staying at the back of the court and playing with a lot of spin, you know, they like things to be, balls and conditions to be slower.

So it's just I don't think there is a golden formula, to be honest with you. And remembering all the years that I played here in Bercy, there were years when it was really quick, then medium quick, medium slow, slow last year. Now back to medium quick.

So, I mean, it changes and it changes also depending on the local players as well, also. I think that's something that we know it's happening in tennis. You know, when you have a home-court advantage that a tournament is trying to please the hometown heroes, the players that have possibility to win more matches in certain conditions that they prefer more, which is something, as I said, that was happening a lot in the past.

Yeah, that's my answer, basically, is no one golden rule or formula that works for everyone.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

**Q. You won six times here like in Miami and Rome. If you win, it will be the Masters 1000 that you will have won most. Why? Why do you have so much success here? What do you like here?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I like this town. I like the conditions here. As I said earlier, I feel well here every day playing indoors. In Serbia, I have been playing a lot of indoors, because 6 months out of 12 it's actually cold. We'll see if I finish the season with a good feeling, with a last push, as we say.

The more victories you have in a tournament, in a given tournament such as here in Paris, the more you have positive sensations, feelings for the following year.

So these are two, three different things that help you to have a positive effect.

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