

Nitto ATP Finals

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London, England, UK

Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference



D. MEDVEDEV/D. Thiem

4-6, 7-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Amazing week. I was quite interested in your reaction when you won match point. No big celebration, no diving on the court. What was actually going through your mind?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I'm very happy when I win matches. That's what I'm playing for. That's why all the big champions, if we don't want to win, we would not be here, so it's just something that I decided to do last year, because at one moment of the career, everybody decides to do something special. Somebody does a special celebration. Somebody, how you call it, applauds the fans. Especially you can see many people doing some things with the racquet.

So I decided during US Open when I had a tough time with the crowd that hopefully I can have a lot of more big titles in my career, and it's gonna be my thing. I'm probably in tennis maybe the first one. Definitely saw some players in football that don't celebrate their goals.

I don't celebrate my victories. That's just my thing and I like it (smiling).

Q. Putting that to one side, can you just reflect on the importance for you, this is the biggest title of your career, what this should do for you going ahead to 2021, the way you finished 2020, the fact that Russians have book-ended the championship in London?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, that's super cool. I actually didn't know, but Nikolay Davydenko commented on my match on Russian TV. He was a commentator during this match, and then I managed to talk to him just after the match.

I was so surprised and so happy because he was one of my idols when I was growing up when I was actually

already starting to play tennis not so bad, he was there and he was playing unbelievable.

So it's really great talking about next year, and what it means to me is not only talking about the title but my level of game here, and especially the last two matches I won are just unbelievable.

I think, yeah, it can give me a lot for my future career, I mean, to beat Dominic the way he played today and to manage to beat him is probably my best victory of my life. Not even talking about the title itself. I mean, to win a Masters, being undefeated, I mean, honestly I know I can play good, but I would not believe it if you would tell me this before the tournament.

So a great boost of confidence for all the slams coming up and all the tournaments. Hopefully I can continue this way.

Q. Congratulations and a great win. Is this the start of the next big tennis rivalry between you and Dominic and other people as well?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Hopefully. We never know because we can only reflect on when we are going to be 35 and maybe we will have a head-to-head 2020, but this moment, as we both said on the ceremony, we really hope to be playing more great finals like this, or, for example, in the US Open we played semifinal. The match was also really close. Went his way. He was better there. Got his first slam.

Hopefully we can have more matches on big stages, hopefully with a crowd, like this against Dominic.

Q. Congratulations. Aside from just winning the biggest title of your career, what sort of significance does it hold for you to do it the way you did, beating the guys who are ranked 1, 2, and 3? It's a very rare accomplishment.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah. It is amazing. I mean, to be honest, to win it, it means that you beat everybody who is top 10, anyway, when you win a Masters. But also, yeah, to be able, in a group I beat Novak, then Rafa in the semis,

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and Dominic in the final, best players in the world.

At this moment maybe someone was not in his best shape. Maybe somebody was in his best shape. Doesn't matter. They are still best players in tennis right now.

Means a lot. Shows what I'm capable of when I'm playing good, when I'm feeling good mentally, physically. I know what I'm capable of. Just I need to produce it more and more and hopefully more matches like this, as I say.

Q. Congratulations. First time I saw you was four or five years ago in Ismaning, close to Munich. You didn't seem to be too interested in that match, quite frankly. How many moments of doubt were in your mind until this point where you are now?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I remember this tournament because I am Bayern Munich fan, it's close to Munich, so it was the first time I saw Allianz Arena live (smiling).

It was tough because tennis season is long no matter if you are top 10 or top 300, what I would be I think at this time, I think it's around 330, so it was the last tournament of the season for me, which is never easy. It was exhausting season. For sure a lot of tough moments when you play futures.

A lot of doubts, because when you're ranked 330 in the world, you never know if you can bring into the 200 to try and make some money in the slams and everything.

But, yeah, finally I'm here. So worked out really well. Yeah, but as I say, answering your question, for sure, a different age, many doubts about myself. And even before Paris-Bercy, as I say, I was not feeling confident in my game and in my tennis, which I proved myself wrong.

Q. You just mentioned it, before Paris. You know, undefeated in the month of November. Two enormous titles and you just talked about the importance of your having confidence physically and emotionally. What happened this month for you?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: To be honest, like, the tournaments I played before, they were not bad. I was playing good tennis. I lost to, I said it many times, but now we can take it match by match, I lost to Reilly Opelka in St. Petersburg. Honestly Reilly is the kind of player you can lose any moment, which was the case. I think I was playing a little bit better, but he was really good in crucial moments, got the match.

Same in Vienna, playing Kevin Anderson, tough, tough opponent, which I had in Paris-Bercy, and we can even say

I was lucky he was injured a little bit, which of course I would never hope for anybody, but he retired.

And then in Paris, I just was fighting. I was fighting in Vienna and St. Petersburg also, also, and I knew it might come back but maybe not this year. Finally it was the case in Paris. I started playing better, started playing amazing, I should say.

Then when you have this sort of confidence, you just need to know how to keep it. And I think I do know how to do it, especially looking back at last year also where I had six finals in a row. So now the question is how to find it faster sometimes (smiling).

Q. Congrats. You just said that this was probably the best match you have ever played. What makes you say this? Secondly, what does Dominic Thiem present to you, what kind of challenge?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I think it was the toughest victory in my life because Dominic is a really tough player to play. I think today he was at his best. I don't know. Maybe it's not the case, but that's what I felt during the match. He was really close to winning it, second set. I managed to stay there.

And also what I felt in the third set that I was really tired physically, for sure, but I felt like he started to miss some balls, he started to run a little bit slower because he was tired.

And, I mean, to make Dominic tired in a three-set match, not a five-set, I think is a great achievement. All these small things, Dominic is playing as today is one of the best players in the history, not yet maybe by the titles and Grand Slams, but as I say, playing as today.

So that's why it's that important to me. Yeah, I also answered about Dominic. He's just amazing player with many more titles to come probably. Hopefully we can have a lot more matches on the big stage.

Q. Congratulations on your win today. I don't want to make you think a lot of this. This is a short game. But if a genie appear and granted you three wishes for next season, what would they be?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I mean, as a tennis player, you want as many titles as possible. So if you play 20 tournaments in the year, you win 20 titles, I don't think anybody ever achieved it, but if you ask me for a wish, it would be my wish.

Second one, again, as any tennis player, to stay healthy,

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because that's how you can play matches. That's how you can win matches. Staying healthy is a big part. I think nowadays that's why we see tennis players actually play into their 40s, some of them, 35, which was not the case before, because we are taking care of our body a lot.

So I need to pick one more. I take Ivo Karlovic's serve. That's going to be the third one (smiling).

Q. Congrats. Dominic Thiem was just in here saying that the Big 3 have done so much for the sport in terms of increasing the popularity and the interest around tennis. He says it's now your generation's challenge to continue doing the same thing, to keep improving your level so that this sport keeps moving forward. I just wanted to ask you if you feel a certain responsibility now as one of the leaders in your generation in that regard?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: For sure. I said it before. Hopefully all of us young guys will keep continue pushing, will have some great rivalries. As I say, staying healthy is important. Hopefully we can be there for a long time, maybe let's say pushing the other generations back, because that's how we can be close to the Top 3, because they probably went through two, three generations without dropping their level, which is not easy.

But what is definitely good from us, from Dominic, from me, especially if we talk just about this tournament, we managed both to beat Rafa and Novak, which is amazing accomplishment. You know, just, yeah, for a new generation of tennis, even if we're not young anymore, we are the other generation than Rafa and Novak, which is just obvious. And it's great achievement from us.

Q. Great revenge on the defeat you had when you were 15 years old. And congratulations. I wonder, you had to save three breakpoints in the second set. What were you thinking at that time? Do you think that that slice backhand from Thiem was causing you a lot of troubles? But then in the third, when you had eight breakpoints to convert, you were finally able to convert it?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I didn't know I had eight. I didn't look at the statistics yet, but I remember some of them and he was playing unbelievable. You know, he could make one double fault or one fault, but I remember he was crushing the ball as if there was no tomorrow.

So, yeah, lucky and happy to finally make it in the third set actually in good style, going to the net, winning the point with a winner.

And talking about second set, I mean, a lot of things go through your mind at this time. You're standing there before the serve. You think, okay, do I go T, do I go wide, do I go to the net after because he's staying far behind?

Yeah, his slice is one of the best in the world. He doesn't miss it. Hits it low. If you go to the net, he puts it in your feet. Really tough to play against.

I can tell you that many guys would slice to me and I would not care at all and I would not mind it. When Dominic slice, is not easy.

Q. The next time we see you in London will hopefully be Wimbledon hopefully with a crowd. Is that an aspiration of yours in 2021, to improve your performance there, to improve your game on grass? Do you think you can exceed, excel in SW19?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: For sure I think I can play really good on grass. It's not an easy surface, because I actually don't know how, for example, Novak and Roger are capable to doing, to be so consistent there, because you can always get tough opponents like Vasek Pospisil, Reilly Opelka, Kevin Anderson, Milos Raonic in the early stages, which even third round is early stage of Grand Slam or fourth round.

Then you are there and you're like, okay, maybe I'm not going to have one breakpoint during the match. I need to win the tiebreaks, need to be consistent on the serve. Not an easy surface. I think I can play really good with my game there.

Yeah, so hopefully, I really like grass court season, especially after the clay season, so hopefully I can improve my results there (smiling).

Q. Congratulations. I just wanted to ask you, it's been such a weird year on tour. How do you think this whole season, for the tour in general, how should it be remembered, do you think?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I think what should be remembered that at the end of the season, and when I say "end of the season," starting from Cincinnati and US Open where I think at one point of the year we actually thought, okay, no more tennis for 2020, even I remember two weeks before US Open nobody was sure, and everybody was talking that they are gonna cancel it. Then USTA went with a statement that, guys, what are you talking about? We are holding it.

So I think it should be remembered for all these great matches and great tournaments that finally happened to be

there. We know that Australia is not a sure thing in January, so I think it should be remembered for this end of the year, which was amazing even without the crowd for tennis as a sport.

Q. Heartfelt congratulations for this amazing achievement. Before I ask my question, I'd like to thank all of the players and the ATP organization for providing us the opportunity to continue with our careers and to continue outreach towards our audience.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I agree with you. That's really great. I agree with you 100%.

Q. Thank you. My question is on many occasions Roger, Rafa, Novak, Andy, as well, of course, said that their rivalry has made them into better players and I guess persons that they are today. So do you, Dominic, Stefanos, Andrey, and all the respective others, already have this feeling about your current careers and what's going to be coming up in the next years?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah. It's not an easy thing to answer, because first of all, still, we are also here because of Novak, Roger, Rafa, and Andy, because first, we were watching them on TV, we thought, okay, we want to be out there playing against them. Let's say probably losing but playing against them.

Then we were there usually first match against such type of players. You lose not all the time, but it's tough. Then you want to continue to work harder to beat them.

I finally beat Rafa here, amazing, amazing feeling. I didn't beat Roger yet. Hopefully can have some more chances.

Yeah, then when it comes to our rivalry, we all already played a lot of matches together. Me especially, I think I played a lot against Stefanos, Sascha Zverev and Dominic. I think even with Stefanos and Sascha more.

Hopefully, yeah, the matches like today, the matches again, as at US Open, because I don't want to focus only on my win, you know, if we have a lot of matches like this, we definitely going to push each other through all our careers, and hopefully everybody will get the piece of the cake. (Smiling.)

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