

# Nitto ATP Finals

Saturday, 19 November 2022

Turin, Italy

Pala Alpitour, Torino

## Novak Djokovic

### Press Conference



N. DJOKOVIC/T. Fritz

7-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, Novak. You're through to your eighth final at this tournament, your first one since 2018. How much do you look forward to finishing the season on a high note?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I was looking forward to being in this position. I'm very happy to be able to compete for another big trophy, one of the biggest ones that we have in our sport.

So far a great week for me. Four out of four wins. Of course, the last match of the season, I'm going to give it all. I'm going to obviously try my best.

I like the fact that I was able to win against Medvedev after a very long battle, then come back the next day after not too much time for recovery, be able to win another tight match against Fritz in two sets. That's something that has in a way defined my career over the years. I've had similar situations where I was able to bounce back and really make some big wins.

I would love to, of course, win the trophy, but I'm not going to be the only player who is going to want that on the court. Hopefully I'll be able to play at the level that I've played most of the matches this week and get a trophy.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Can you tell us a bit about your physical constitution. You look better than yesterday, but maybe not at 100% today? I don't know.**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, 'physical constitution' is pretty good, I think (smiling).

Physical situation and state is obviously different than most of the matches where I was feeling fresher coming in. Today, because of yesterday's over three hours with

Medvedev, I did feel heavy with my legs a little bit, a bit more than any of the past days of the week.

I knew that coming into the match that I will not be freshest, but that I will have to find a way differently to adjust my game, to the lack of reactivity on the court today. Also due to his serve, that is huge, very big server.

I wasn't, let's say, game-wise feeling the best. Physically I was okay. Not great or not so bad. I didn't feel that I was too exhausted that I wasn't able to play. Actually, in contrary, I was fine competing and I could have gone another set, no problem.

I just felt that tennis-wise I was not hitting the ball cleanly as I have throughout the week. That's also due to the heavier legs, less reactivity time.

At the same time I think that these kind of wins value double because you're not feeling great maybe on the court game-wise, but you still manage to win against a great player, two tiebreakers.

Of course, I have to be pleased with that.

**Q. The fact that you play less than you used to in the past, the topic about the physical side, is it helping or not? Usually at the end of the season you're struggling because you play a lot. It seems having not played so much this year is not helping either.**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, maybe I have not struggled as much as some other top players in the past 15 years at the end of the season. I didn't have majority of the seasons that feeling of struggle at the end. I actually played really well throughout my career indoor last three, four tournaments. I won this World Tour Finals five times, won another few finals, won Bercy many times.

I had a very strong finish generally, so I can't talk about being in a position of struggling. Whether I play less or more, it has always been a case of a strong finish for me.

**Q. Yesterday you got very philosophical about tennis. I was curious, is that the way you always understood**



## the game or has this evolved over the years?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I would like to believe that I'm evolving, as anybody else, hopefully in a positive way. I'm experiencing changes on my body and of course with my mentality, my mind, my character. We all are evolving and moving along. Every single year we are different people.

Of course, with the different circumstances in life, you adapt to them and you try to be the better version that you have been the year before, not just in terms of athleticism or results or tennis, but just in general.

There is more experience. I like to maybe believe there is more wisdom, as well, in terms of how I see things related to my sport and my life.

Of course, I'm seeing tennis different and the life around tennis today than I've seen it 15 years ago. I've always been very thorough with my approach and analysis on and off the court.

I was taught and educated and developed basically, I developed that kind of approach and mentality because of Jelena Gencic, my first tennis coach, who passed away. She was very professional and had that holistic approach to everything. I inherited that from her, learned that from her. Throughout my life I was always like that, always cared about every single aspect.

Of course, as I was getting older, each year was passing, more things, more lessons learned, more things added, some maybe put away. It creates a formula of success that is obviously working for you, but maybe not for somebody else.

## **Q. You serve huge, you return incredible with big servers. You have a special relationship with the lines. If you have to choose the surface where you play the match of your life, you will choose this one and why?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I don't think I would choose this one, to be honest. Even though I've been playing well, I mean, don't get me wrong. If I have to talk about indoor, I would probably choose a surface that is slightly slower than this one. It's really, really fast. Of course, when you serve well, it helps. But when you don't serve well, you have to struggle a lot, find a way to win from the baseline. That's what I can say.

Historically I've always played pretty well indoor, different speed of the court, different balls. So I adjust well. I think that's probably one of the virtues and one of the strengths that I had throughout my career. I adjust very well to the opponent, to the surface. I always wanted to play equally

well on all surfaces. Even though I grew up in Serbia mostly playing on clay, and I haven't played on grass till I was 17 I think, first time. Over the years I have a special relationship with the grass.

I'm really happy that I was able to develop this kind of all-around success on all the conditions and tournaments.

## **Q. The ATP information sheets suggest that you've got your earnings of more than God's got. Over here, if you go through and win, there's \$4, 740,000 in earnings. Do the dollars come into your mind at all?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: No. Only euros (laughter). Only euros and dinars.

Ibrahimovic said something the other day. It was so funny. He was playing in L.A. Galaxy at the time a few years ago.

The journalist asked him why he refused \$100 million to move to another football club.

He said, Yes.

But the journalist said, That's a lot of money. He said, Isn't that important?

What did he say? Wait a second, I'm trying to remember.

He said, Money's not important. A lot of money's important. And \$100 million is not enough.

That was pretty funny. Not that I'm thinking this way, don't get me wrong.

Look, it's all public information. Of course, people can see how much we are earning. What the media is not writing about is all the taxes and also the other expenses. But that's fine. I cannot sit here and talk about money as an issue in my life or anything like that. I've been very blessed and lucky. It comes as a consequence of my tennis and the success that I've had, along with my family and my team.

I think that every euro that I've earned was through hard sweat and tears. I don't take anything for granted because I know how it feels like having zero on the table, five family members, war, sanctions. Let's not forget where I come from, in which kind of era I was growing up.

I know exactly the opposite side, which helps me in life I think to appreciate everything I earn more.

## **Q. You are going to play your eighth ATP World Tour Finals. What do you remember as the best of the five**

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**that you won? What was the biggest disappointment on those two that you lost? About Serbia, what you just said, the only thing that doesn't seem fair in a way is that only two journalists from Serbia are covering everything everywhere. You should help also the media.**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Also I should pay for the media? Okay, no problem (smiling). I get the point. That wouldn't be fair, I think. I don't know.

Anyway, the best memory from the Finals would be probably - trying to remember the year against Roger, when I made the passing shot down the line on match point. I think it was 2014 or '15 when I won against him.

The toughest loss, in the Finals, I had two of them, would probably be against Murray that year in 2016. We were actually fighting for year-end No. 1, and he won.

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