

Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Miami, Florida, USA

Karen Khachanov

Press Conference



K. KHACHANOV/F. Cerundolo

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Well done. Again, you have been in impressive form this year. What was the key in the match against Francisco today?

KAREN KHACHANOV: The key, obviously to serve good, you know, to take the lead, to start dictating with my forehand from the middle. Basically to try to play my A game, you know, and this is what I have been doing on faster hard courts, I would say, in Australia, US Open, and in general on the outdoor hard courts.

You know, I was expecting a tough battle because he has a good forehand, good serve, you know, and last time we played in Montreal was three-set battle, so it was a really difficult match, almost three hours.

Today it was better from my side (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. You mentioned the faster hard courts. Is there anything else that you think accounts for, you know, some really big highs, US Open, Australia, here great showing, and then things that probably disappoint a player at your level? I ask this, knowing that if you knew that you'd probably do that, but I'm curious what you have come to learn about sort of consistency.

KAREN KHACHANOV: Yeah, I would say, you know, after maybe in the middle of 2021 when I reached my quarterfinals, another one in Grand Slam, which was Wimbledon, you know, and then Olympics final, I got the silver medal, I think from that moment I started already to kind of improving and rising up again after certain drop before.

I think, yeah, it's a process, you know. It took a little bit more time, I would say, to get those results. You know, since last year US Open semifinals, I think this was kind of bigger change and bigger step forward, which gave me, you know, current results which I have right now.

I would say, you know, the confidence and self-belief and all these things, they appear stronger. You know, now I'm happy that I can, you know, show that level constantly and more consistently, you know.

Q. You're going to play Medvedev. You guys have played against each other for a long time. How different is this kind of match against someone that you have played for a long time already?

KAREN KHACHANOV: Yeah, from one side of course we know each other from young age. We have been playing against each other since we were kids, you know, but also on ATP we played, how many, four matches, I think.

I would say, yeah, we are good friends outside, but we are rivals on the court. Tomorrow is another match, which I'm very excited to play against him, you know, semifinals. Just will prepare and try to do my best. I think he will try and do the same. Who plays better tomorrow will win. That's it.

Q. Is it easy to put friendships to one side, especially when you have grown up with somebody like Daniil, and then also you're close friends with Andrey, as well. So do you find it easy to put it to one side when you play people like Daniil?

KAREN KHACHANOV: Yeah, I think so. I mean, at the end of the day, both of us, we understand why we are here (smiling). And we practice together. Even in the practice we compete, you know, and we play almost at 100%.

So at the end of the day, it will be a match, you know, official match tomorrow. That's it. You know, it doesn't change anything besides our friendship. It's another match, which both of us will attend, we will try to perform best to go to the finals, and that's it. We just put friendship aside for a couple of hours (smiling) and we will be rivals on the court.

Q. What is the most crucial thing you'd have to do against him to narrow the head-to-head? It's 3-1 to Daniil at the moment. What do you feel you really have to be right on the money with against him tomorrow?



KAREN KHACHANOV: I would say, you know, now he's again also playing a little better. I mean, he's been always playing good the last couple of years. But I would say, you know, comparing to a couple of results from last year, you know, and now lately the last four or five tournaments consecutive, he plays very well again.

So I would say, you know, in this moment it's a little bit of everything. I would say, first of all, I have to play my game, but at the same time, knowing what he's capable of, try to adjust more things. You know, maybe to come more forward, you know, and basically to mix the game a lot.

To just to go through, you know, unless you really, you know, winning those points and you see that he's, let's say, struggling or he's missing a little bit more, because this can happen as well, right, he's not a robot, and beside that, you have to really mix the game.

I think I have to watch the match Alcaraz against him in the finals (smiling). He did everything pretty well I would say that match. Maybe I have to try to play the same way.

Q. Are you at the point where, when you come to a tournament like this, you expect to be here in the deep part of the tournament? Also, as the tour gets off these fast hard courts and goes to the clay court season, what does that do to you in terms of your expectation of results?

KAREN KHACHANOV: First of all, expectation is not about result. You can expect to fight, you can expect to give your best, and that's it. You cannot expect that you will do very well in the tournament, you know, that you can go deep.

I want to go deep, and I want to win, but I think the expectation is something that you put different. You cannot expect yourself being in the final, I mean, from the first round, right?

But the expectation of doing well, it's always there, right? And I think that's the most important to put in your head and not to mix it up.

And about the clay courts, you know, when you go deep in this tournament, you don't have big time to prepare on clay unfortunately, but it's at the same time fortunately because you are playing well here, so it's like a sweet problem to have, I would say.

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