

Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Miami, Florida, USA

Grigor Dimitrov

Press Conference



G. DIMITROV/C. Alcaraz

6-2, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Grigor, well done. What are you most proud of tonight?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: That I was able to keep up the level throughout the whole match. I think it was very important for me to be clear and execute every opportunity I had. I think that was the most important thing for me.

Yeah, just trying to do the best I can. It was a very, very good night for me.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. From 1 to 10, how do you feel right now, your level?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: I mean, I feel good. I'm not rating anything yet since I have to play again tomorrow. I'm trying to stay on point. This is how our sport is. You appreciate it, of course. You're very happy with the current win. Then you have to quickly move on and start focusing on the next match.

I think at the moment I'm just very pleased that I was able to go through that match, you know, to go through it in such a manner, and I already have another match to play tomorrow. To be completely honest with you, everything kind of shifted already for tomorrow, but again, I'm very proud of myself that I was able to play such a good and clean match overall.

Yeah, very grateful to be, again, to be that far into a Masters event, and I'm very excited for what's next.

Q. You played an amazing match. Congratulations.

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Thank you.

Q. You moved well, you served well, returned well. You did everything well. Carlos was just in here said you played 10 out of 10. He said you played perfect.

He said he played well. Did you feel like you were in the zone? Were you feeling that?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Well, I mean, of course when you win a match like that, you can say so, but again, Carlos is such -- you know, I always call him like a firecracker. He's amazing. I love watching him play. Honestly, I love watching him playing, I love practicing against him, competing against him.

I mean, I'm 12 years older than him. It's honestly a lot of fun for me to challenge myself. It's a great opportunity for me.

But also, against him, you cannot really let him hit the ball. I think we saw what happened even when I was up a break in the second set the game he broke me. It was straight up four forehands. Absolutely nothing I could have done.

Can I get mad? Yeah, I can. But there was no, you know, there was no reason for me to kind of drift away. I just had to stay patient.

I was aware of what was happening, how it was happening, and I knew that if I had another chance and opportunity, I could really, like, step in, and that would have given me another opportunity.

That's what happened I think in the last game. I didn't pull back. I kept on believing in the game that I was playing, and again, the execution was very good.

Q. Interesting you say that you're 12 years older than him, because he just said you made him feel like a 13-year-old.

GRIGOR DIMITROV: (Laughter.) That's a great comment.

Q. You have touched on there is no time to celebrate. What do you do now going in against Zverev who has a pretty good record on you?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Just like every other match. As I said, you know, we have, like, limited time to celebrate, to get ready to prepare. Right now the most important thing



is to prepare for the match.

I'm not going to think from now what I can do. I think it's just very important to stay in the moment. I think that's what our game is about. I think that's the beauty of our game, and it's always the most simple things are the most difficult to do.

I think this is actually what I did tonight. I was just trying to do everything as simple as possible and any execution that I had, a sitting ball, ball to come in, ball to hit a slice, to do something with the ball, I was just on it.

I think in a way, same thing tomorrow, the same thing every match that I'm going to be playing from now on. There is no pulling back.

Q. When you play such a level, is it something, I don't know, in the afternoon at the warmup, do you feel it coming by, I don't know, your practice session, the warmup? Do you have signs that it could be a very good evening?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Yeah, I love reading the horoscope every morning. (Laughter.) I love doing that.

But I don't know. Man, that's a good question. No, not really. Not really. Also, the past two, three days, to be honest, I barely hit any balls at practice. Conditions are very different throughout the day and night.

You always try to focus on what works. I think this has always been a tournament that somehow I have been doing well but then not well. It's been a very interesting relationship that I have had with this event.

I think every year I'm trying something new, and finally, after I don't know how many appearances here, I feel like, okay, I'm doing something right and I think I'm just going to stick to that.

I think, again, the basic stuff. You know, the recovery, preparing for the matches, resting, food, all that, it really adds up.

You know, it's been a long trip overall the past, I would say, three, four weeks, plus coming from California. So it's been, you know, an absolute pleasure for me to be as professional as I can be and really have zero regrets.

I think I'm, most of all, I'm very proud of myself but of course with my team and everyone that has been helping me to stay also in that bubble, if you say, like it's very important.

I think also after years of experience, you kind of learn a thing or two, and yeah, I want to live every moment out there.

Q. Well done. Are there things about your game that you think match up well against his game?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: I mean, I like his game a lot (smiling), so I think overall I like his game a lot. He's, for me, one of the craftiest players out there. Sometimes I can put myself in his shoes in certain moments and I can kind of guess, so to speak, what might come, but what might come, it's not like it will.

But as I said, he's so explosive throughout the court, so you really need to put him in uncomfortable position. I think sometimes you need to deliver that power yourself in order to be able to sustain also his shots.

So it's a very interesting game sometimes, especially when you have delicate points. Sometimes you have to play a little bit cat-and-mouse to see who is going to hit that first shot. That is all in the game. I'm sure he feels it the same way.

He's already such a complete player at such a young age. You could see that he generates, he slows down the game, goes with the kick serve, great dropshots, coming into the net. So he's a very completed player already.

But again, in the same time, I like that type of a game because it also keeps me alert throughout the time, so maybe that's one thing I would say it's the closest to matching.

Q. Just to expand on that, did you find anything specific in these last two matchups against him? Because obviously you have been successful. Did you find anything in terms of strategy, things you could do just to hurt him?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Completely different matches, completely different conditions. I'd say I was actually thinking last night to watch a little bit of our match in Shanghai, and I was just about to press play and I stopped.

It was, like, okay, there is no need to see this. Everything is completely different. It's end of the year, you're playing, you know, in Asia, the courts are very different, the weather, everything, everything was a completely different matchup.

So I just wanted to kind of come out there and have, like, a clean sheet, and then start building from point one. Of course I tried that right away. Also, I didn't have much time

I think to lose out there on the court. I couldn't allow myself to do that, to kind of put the ball in and wait to see what he's gonna do.

So what is the next best thing? You know, look on your side of the net and try to basically hurt him on every shot, every opportunity you get. I think that was the simplicity where I think it really, like, added up as the match went by.

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