

# Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Miami, Florida, USA

## Grigor Dimitrov

Press Conference



G. DIMITROV/A. Zverev

6-4, 6-7, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. 3-All, he's serving, 15-40, it's double breakpoint, you hit an incredible reflex sprawling volley, and it just felt like all the momentum went your way. Did you feel the significance that we all felt out there to that point, or was it just another point?**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: I don't actually remember the shot that well. I saw the ball was coming. Just make sure you get it over the net.

He was on the stretch, I remember that. I was waiting the down-the-line. I know that's his favorite shot. That alone, hitting, clipping the tape, that was definitely no fun.

I'm going to have to see another replay, but I think definitely after that I kept on staying in the moment. I think I played an excellent game after that. I didn't pull back.

I think actually overall the last three games of the match, I played with a lot of authority, played serve and volley a few times, came to the net three times. So that was, you know, that was a moment where I knew I had to use into my advantage, absolutely.

But, you know, I didn't overthink it or anything like that. I just had to, regardless of that point in particular, I really had to step up in order for me to win that match.

**Q. Grigor, congratulations for your amazing run here in Miami. In the second round, you were 5-2 down against Tabilo in the tiebreak of the second set. Do you think there was a before and after, after that, a specific moment against Tabilo?**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: That was no fun; I tell you that much. You know, you always feel like -- for me, I always feel like I have a chance when I'm on the court, whether I'm down and about to lose a match or anything like that.

So I think with each match you build up, and I think definitely after that match I felt like I could step up a little bit and play a better game.

The conditions are very, very different throughout the day. I mean, he played also an outstanding match. I saw the stats after, it was actually one of his best matches. So I could definitely start building off that.

And then after each match I felt like I was getting, you know, accustomed and acclimatizing to the weather, to the balls, to the courts and everything like that. So it's been a lot of, like, difficult days overall: Windy, hot, humid, you know, it rained, you play at night. So it was just a lot of adjustments to be done.

But I think that itself gives me a tremendous amount I think of confidence being able to, you know, to position myself, to prepare my body the best way possible.

Of course with each win you get, it's inevitable, you get more excited. The adrenaline kicks in. You want to do better and more. Here we are in the final.

**Q. Grigor, the renaissance continues. Third Masters 1000 final and that all-important back in the top 10. Can you just comment about how you're feeling about all of that, and how difficult is it to put it to one side because the job is not finished over here?**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Definitely not. For me, I think you miss one important thing for me is what's better, above all that, I have been able to put those matches back to back. I think the consistency of beating top players, that to me is way bigger success than anything else.

I mean, if you do that, you get the ranking. If you do that, things are just getting better for you. But in order to do, it's where it all comes through. The discipline, the hard work, you know, all the dedication, the adjustment to very different players throughout that time, I mean, you need to be able to do that on a constant basis.

That's been happening for the past 8, 9, 12 months. It's been difficult. I had very, very difficult match that I have



lost and that I'm in a way still pissed about. But I kept on believing, kept on doing the work.

I think the discipline brought me I think to that moment. There is nothing else. I didn't kind of deviate from my target, not even my goal. I had small targets throughout -- every single week I had a target, and also to be able to put my body through all that on a daily basis was also very important for me. Every single day when I wake up and I don't have a big pain that would stop me to practice 100% was already a success for me.

So when you start putting all that together, I think it's where I'm most, in a way, most proud with. Of course competing against top players and beating them sort of back to back, it's definitely what I'm the most happy with.

**Q. Grigor, that was part of my question of your recent success. But I wanted to know also too your game can be very dynamic at times, especially with a lot of finesse to it, too. What comes to mind when you're able to put into that practice and you see the success on the court, especially recently as of now?**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Yeah, it's a big, physical game, as well. It looks easy, but because it's so physical, and I think in a way you have to be able to do that for two-and-a-half, three hours, and God knows how long more if you play a Grand Slam tournament.

So that's what I'm saying: Adjustments. But to be able to navigate some sort of a game, it's just different. I mean, it depends on the opponent and how you are physically and all that. I know I have a lot of tools in my bag that I can use, but also I need to make sure that I use them at the right time.

I think today, for example, I was able to, especially in the third set, I was able to use those ones, you know, the finesse, use the slice a little bit more, be a little bit more aggressive with my forehand, serve and volley, coming in.

So the diversity is what I think spooks a lot of players overall, but if you're able to do it in very crucial moments, that's, in a way, the basic of the game. That positions me to do that. Then it helps me to be more in control of the game.

**Q. You had a special visitor in the stands today. Serena was watching you. Can you talk about the meaning of having her here, supporting you, like, watching the match and supporting you?**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: She's amazing. We stay in touch. We nearly speak on a daily basis. She said, I'm gonna

come watch. I was, like, Okay.

It's always very humbling to have such a supporter in your corner, and I think just before the match she came, we had a little chat.

Actually, I remember she was even here when I had my first top-10 win. It was a very nice moment. I think we both remember that.

It's friendship, man. I think this is the best part. Tennis is tennis, but, you know, we are all living our dream right now. I think the real life begins after, and I think we have managed to be such good and close friends after so many years.

And again, to be able to lean on, to share thoughts, ideas, and sometimes to even vent, someone that actually played tennis, right? It helps a lot.

**Q. If you look back on your career, like 10 or 15 years of your career, you are part of that generation which always had to compete against very best, Big 4, like Roger, Rafa, Djokovic, Murray.**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: And Andy.

**Q. Have you ever considered yourself kind of like unlucky because of that, you know, time you have to go through that era, or, you know...**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Totally the opposite, actually. Totally the opposite. Very lucky.

How often you say I played in an era against the best players and you have beaten them all? It's great. I'm sorry, but I can live with that. You know, all that, the titles and all this, yeah, it's great. But the journey, the ride, it was, for me personally, not having these guys around, it's a little sad.

I don't want to play them, don't get me wrong (smiling) at the moment, but it's kind of sad. I love watching them play. I love competing against them, and you can always learn something.

I think throughout the years I have had so many quarterfinal matches and third-, fourth-round matches where I had to play against them. But that also maybe shaped me to have that mental toughness and to do certain things different at that point in my career, like them.

You can certainly learn a lot from each one, very different. I think each one had a very different way of doing things, but each one of them had amazing qualities.

I think in a way they are the pioneers of nowadays tennis for us. I don't know. I think overall, to have players like that with such a diversity that all of them had, Novak is still playing and Andy, as well, but to really see that is I think going to be a little bit more rare.

**Q. I'd like you to talk about your relationship with your coach, Jamie Delgado. When you hired him, being back at the top 10 and at the big finals, what did you ask him when you started to work with him, and what did he tell you in terms of potential future plans?**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: I asked him, Can you work with me? That's all I could ask (smiling). I was, like, I'm very difficult to work with.

**Q. Why?**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: I don't know. You should ask him that.

**Q. I want to.**

GRIGOR DIMITROV: No, I think overall we sat down I think a year and a half ago or so, I don't even remember how long it has been, and we sat with Dani Vallverdu and everyone from my team.

We always wanted to add another person to our team just to make sure we cover, first of all, all the weeks, but someone that have a good dynamic duo, as well, because it's very important for them to be connected.

When Jamie came on board, we kind of hit it off right away. I think we kind of understood the importance of what we had to do every single day.

I think he's definitely one of the hardest workers that are out there that always, in a way, expects good excellence from me on a daily basis, but also being kind enough with me when I'm not recognizing that part of myself, I'm very hard on myself on weeks of practice, and, I mean, I think overall, but he's been able to, I think, to balance me up on that end a little bit more and on good days to keep me, you know, grounded and humble and aware of things.

Then when I'm having, you know, a bad day, he's always kind of looked things a bit more on the positive note and kind of keeps me, kind of restores my faith a little bit more and making sure that every, next day, that I'm going to step out there on the court with a better attitude and good working ethic.

So it's honestly been a pleasure so far I think for each one

of the members of the team. I think we are also at the same time having a lot of fun. Yeah, we will keep on doing that.

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