

Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters

Principality of Monaco

Friday, 16 April 2021

Daniel Evans

Press Conference



D. EVANS/D. Goffin

5-7, 6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Four years ago you described appearing in Monte-Carlo as a pointless exercise. Can you just describe maybe how this week has changed your attitude towards clay as a surface.

DANIEL EVANS: Yeah, I think the answer is in the question. My attitude, obviously pretty poor back then to developing my game on the clay and to try and put my game onto that surface.

It's been fun. Like I'd say all my matches have been totally different. I think I serve-volleyed a lot, nearly every ball, against Lajovic. I stayed quite far back against Hurkacz. The other two matches were obviously high-quality matches.

It's been good fun to play. But it's definitely got a lot to do with the movement aspect on it. I feel a bit more comfortable moving. It's been a lot easier. Obviously I have worked with a fitness trainer for a few weeks. We did a lot of footwork stuff, sliding. It's definitely helped.

Q. David Goffin said you were probably the only person who didn't believe you could play on clay. He said he thought you always would be able to. That mindset, has that been the key thing? Do you now kind of wish maybe you'd given it a bit more of a go before?

DANIEL EVANS: No, I mean, there's no point in looking back. If I look back all the time, I'd be forever looking back and disappointed (smiling). Yeah, it is what it is.

It's been a good week. I'm enjoying it. I mean, it's easy to say everybody told me I'd be able to play on it before. It's not that simple, is it? Otherwise we'd all be winning matches all the time. It's one of those things.

Yeah, I've definitely found my way. Like I said, the movement aspect of it has been a little easier. I definitely think with last year having the clay so close to this year has definitely helped, yeah.

Q. When would you say that mental switch happened? What do you put it down to? Is it the fact you looked at yourself as an ATP Tour winner, top 30 player, there's no reason why I can't compete with these guys on this surface?

DANIEL EVANS: No, I mean, I got bounced around last clay season by whoever I played. But there wasn't easy matches. I thought I hit the ball well. That's a big thing for me. If I feel comfortable hitting the ball well, I'm happy, I feel comfortable. I moved better last year on it, as well.

Yeah, I think I played Tsitsipas, who is obviously a tough draw first round - where did I play - in Hamburg. I played Nishikori. I can't remember who I played in Rome. They was all tough matches. Hurkacz. They was all tough matches. I think I lost in five to Nishikori. I lost in three to Hurkacz. Tsitsipas is not an easy match.

I felt coming in I had a good chance to do okay. I wouldn't have said I was delighted at the thought of coming into the clay court season which is here so quick.

Q. I think you had a bigger reaction today over Goffin than yesterday. Does this mean more to you than the win did yesterday?

DANIEL EVANS: No, I mean, how the match ended yesterday, I was so close to him, I didn't fancy screaming or shouting. I was very close to him. I was probably in a bit of shock, as well, yesterday.

But today was definitely a big day because I found yesterday extremely tiring after the doubles. I felt way more pressure to step up today to win. I mean, by no stretch of the imagination is Goffin an easy match, but winning such a big match the other day, then coming back, it's easy to put on a bad performance.

Today didn't mean more, but it was definitely a big, big

moment, yeah.

Q. You mentioned both today and yesterday you ended up too far behind the baseline at points. I'm wondering, on this surface, how much is success accepting sometimes you're going to have to be on the defense, grinding out points?

DANIEL EVANS: No, yeah, definitely I think actually if I'm 5-3 in the first set until around, yeah, 1-Love or 1-All, that happened a bit too much. Yeah, you got to accept it at some points. But it's happening all the time. I needed to change something.

I think I did a good job mixing serve-volley. But, yeah, it will happen. When that's happening, you got to ride out the storm a little bit, try to get back on the front foot.

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