

Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters

Principality of Monaco

Friday, 15 April 2022

Grigor Dimitrov

Press Conference



G. DIMITROV/H. Hurkacz

6-4, 3-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. What does it mean for you being in semifinals four years later on clay, again a good tournament?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Yeah, it's great. As I said, I mean, I didn't obviously expect anything from this week. All I wanted to do was just to practice a lot, to build up. I even have my fitness coach with me. I have been doing a lot of work on a daily basis, just taking one match at a time.

I think I would say the first matches on clay are always very, very important to me, and I just wanted to do well. I was not focusing on anything else.

I knew if I put the right amount of work and I kept on following a little bit of what I had to do, good things will happen. I also felt that I kind of started the clay court season a little bit later than everybody else. I took some more time off after Miami, and, yeah, I was just focusing on other parts I think of the game. Here am I.

Q. Do you know before a tournament if the sensation will be there?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Yeah, you know, it can be. Honestly, it can be. I think in my particular situation I didn't want to put any pressure on myself. As I said, it's just the first week, but I was putting a lot of pressure on myself to put a lot of work, if that makes any sense (smiling).

I didn't really want to focus much on, you know, if I'm gonna win or lose, because it's not always the best thing, because sometimes you can practice so much and then you come to play a tournament and you just lose early and you lose easy and you're not happy with yourself.

I think that's why I'm saying I was focusing on very different things rather than winning and losing.

Q. What you said about the pressure and the focus is really interesting, because there was an impression that one would get in the second set of this match that not only did you not put pressure on yourself, but it seemed like you really focused in the tiebreaker. Is that a good reading of it?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: It's a good observation, I think. I had to do that throughout the whole match. But one of the things that was very interesting to me was how we were both dominant at different parts of the match.

I think that's what probably made a bit of the difference, I will say, in the third set, because I felt like I was playing okay in the first set, nothing too crazy, and he was giving me a lot of looks, a lot of options. He made a few like unforced errors, so I felt like the match was kind of going in my way.

You know, the moment I was not doing certain things right, he was stepping on top and he was putting pressure on me. So that's why I didn't really want to overthink it, like Oh, my God, what am I doing now?

Especially on a clay court, the moment you can save a little bit of energy is very vital, and I think that proved again, especially in that third set, not even in the tiebreak, but at 4-5 down, I mean, a little late for the break back, but I knew I'm going to get at least another look.

I had to seize that opportunity. After that game at 5-All, I kept on obviously applying quite a bit of pressure and I was very calm within myself, but even after those two match points was -- I mean, nothing else I could have done except maybe play one shot a little bit different, and then the tiebreak comes around, and you kind of need to go all out.

I felt like I was seeing like quite a few cracks in the way he was kind of attacking the ball, especially in the tiebreak, so I think I used quite a bit of advantage of that. It helped, definitely helped.

But I can say yes, definitely was maybe a little bit more focused I think throughout those points.

