

BNP Paribas Open

Saturday, March 18, 2023

Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference



D. MEDVEDEV/F. Tiafoe

7-5, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: First of all, congrats, Daniil. 19th win in a row, first Indian Wells final. Talk us through your feelings today.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, first of all, really happy to win, for sure. It was a crazy match. I mean, the ending, tough. I still feel not stressed but like it's definitely better to win like 7-5, 6-3, because then you get the energy level down. That's fine. I know how to go through it, so that's not a problem.

But still, always better to finish on your first match point and not on the eighth. But that's what makes tennis also a fun sport, and I'm just really happy that I managed not to lose this match and not to have regrets, nightmares, whatever.

Happy to be in the final and looking forward for tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. I'm sure you expect once in a while when you're back that deep to return that guys are going to try to serve and volley on you. Do you like that challenge? Do you enjoy that sort of matchup?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I mean, it's just an opportunity they have, and that's always for sure the question to me if they start doing it, do I advance my position? Sometimes I do, sometimes not.

Today I felt even when he was serve-and-volleying I had my opportunities, I mean, I broke him two times, but I had more opportunities in the second set when he started doing it. Then even on the tiebreak. I was doing passing shots.

I felt like, again, yeah, it didn't bother me today what he did in serve and volley. At the same time, he sometimes made great volleys.

So I give this opportunity, and then I try to kind of use it to

my advantage to try to pass them, and at the same time I know that if my return is a little bit somewhere off, there is a big chance they just go open court.

Q. Do stats mean much to you when you -- why I'm asking is, when you look at what you have achieved with this last run, the last man to reach four finals in five weeks was Andy Murray in 2016. The last one to win five in five weeks was Lendl in '81.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Whoa. That's strong (smiling).

Q. Two different surfaces, too.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Wow. I didn't know this.

Q. Do those things register for you, or it's just part and parcel of playing?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Tough to answer, because for sure I like these stats, especially when you do well. Like, you don't want to be the one who lost the most matches in a row on the ATP Tour or something like this.

So for sure when you do well and then you hear some of these stats, it's just great, but at the same time, I know that it comes with wins. So first and the most important part is to win. Once you win, you never want to stop. No matter which record maybe I broke or made even or first one, yeah, since 2016 to go in four finals, I just want to win tomorrow.

Yeah, it's just great sometimes when you beat some records or become World No. 1 or win a slam that you know that when you're 70 you can still say, Yeah, I remember the year when I made four finals in a row. That's great.

But in the moment, it doesn't matter for me. The most important is to try to win this tournament and to win these matches.

Q. You're not famous for your post-match celebrations. I think today it involved just walking to the net shaking your head, like you couldn't believe all

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those match points had gone. I noticed you were very calm generally in that situation, weren't you, and you were calm in the quarterfinal as well. Do you feel you're on top of your emotions now?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I feel actually it's true. I mean, in quarterfinals just a little bit less with the wind, I got a little bit frustrated. Today it's true in a way I was on top of my, let's call it, bad emotions, negative emotions like frustration and stuff.

But finally when you don't realize that many match points means that somewhere I was not on top of my emotions where I had to finish the match. But in a way, that makes me even happier mentally that I still managed to win, because try playing a tiebreak when you just lost seven match points, and I managed to start it well straightaway doing great shots and great rallies.

So I feel like mentally in general, even with the, let's call it, tantrums that I had this week, in general mentally last four weeks have been amazing with its up-and-downs, of course.

Yeah, I feel like it's getting better and better here, so hopefully tomorrow it's going to be even better.

Q. I know sometimes you talk about the slowness of the courts here and obviously they're very slow. It was a little breezy out on the court earlier. Did that come to your advantage or did you not like that?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: "Breezier" means wind, right?

Q. Yes.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I feel like after quarters, quarters was hell. It was so windy. Then today I almost didn't feel it. I made, I remember, only one double fault when, for whatever reason, it was a little bit more windy.

But in general, for whatever reason, today felt faster. That's what we say with my coach. We laugh about it because every day in Indian Wells, different. Sometimes wind, sometimes the ball is flying, sometimes it doesn't fly. So it goes in the net. You have to adapt. If it's flying, you have to adapt.

Today I felt like it was flying a lot. He was doing a lot of outs on the depths. Today felt quite fast conditions. As soon as someone hit a good shot, it was not easy to come back in the rally. That was good. I liked it.

So I don't know. Let's see what Indian Wells has for us tomorrow (smiling).

Q. I wonder if you could look forward to tomorrow and maybe talk a bit about both players who you might face, starting with Carlitos, who I know you faced only once at Wimbledon, and the progress they've both made over the last couple of seasons.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I would say our match for sure it counts in head to head and it has to count. That's how tennis works. I also have my matches which I lost when I was not at the top, but he was definitely not the same player as he is right now.

So in a way, it's going to be like a first match between us in terms of how we gonna go tactically or physically or tennis-wise.

I mean, he's amazing. He has amazing skills which are tough to compare to everyone, I would think maybe to Rafa, but it's tough to compare because Rafa is lefty, so you cannot really compare their ball. Once he hits through the forehand, it's amazing to watch. I don't think there is anyone who can hit this strong and also with topspin.

That's why he was No. 1 in the world, youngest No. 1 in the history. That means something. It's gonna be great and fun to play against him if he manage to close out the match.

Jannik is also amazing player. I feel like he's getting -- I feel like what he was missing, he was playing great last year. Maybe even sometimes close to Carlos' level. That's what we saw in their matches. But he was definitely missing the consistency because he's yet even not top 10 and he's playing really great. That's what he's doing now. A title, final of 500, now semis here, still didn't lose a match.

He's also a player that is going to be there for a long, long time. We had amazing final in Rotterdam. I feel like was top-level match. I'm just looking forward to tomorrow, and first of all, let's see who wins.

Q. I was wondering when you had your sixth match point today and...

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Which one was it, 40-30?

Q. You were 7-6, 6-5, 40-Love up. I think you lost a couple and he came back.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Don't remind me (smiling).

Q. What did you say to yourself when they all had come and gone like that?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Well, first of all, the only thing you can say is -- and the crowd goes crazy, for sure, for him. The only thing I was saying to myself was, like, Whatever, doesn't matter. I'm going to try to win again. That's the first thing.

And at the same time, you're like, Damn, you're saying this to yourself, like Damn, that's tough. I lost so many match points, I just have to somehow put myself together and just stay with my game because I was playing great.

That's what I managed to do, because tiebreak, first few points, I managed to continue playing well. What's also crazy, he was missing more, to be honest, when there was no match points. Then on the match points, I mean, that's why he saves them, he didn't miss once. Then on the tiebreak I remember like second, third point, he just missed straightaway. I was, like, Okay, I tried to get to the match point and I made an ace, so he didn't miss.

Yeah, that's kind of what was going through my head.

Q. As a top ATP pro, you spend a whole heck a lot of your life here in America and you have had quite a history here. You started with that incredible turnaround at US Open. But as you spend time here, do the downsides of our culture sort of annoy you or do you really like the up, the good parts, the creativity, the vibe, the freedom that's America?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I have a funny story about this, because it's normal for Europeans, it's not easy to pass -- I mean, some people come to live in U.S., but generally, if you like to live in Europe, it's tough to, let's say, maybe spend more than a month in U.S., just because the culture is different, the food is different. I mean, everything is different, even the roads, the cars, whatever.

I remember my wife told me this story when she was having lunch in Monte-Carlo Country Club, and there is really great restaurant, great food, and there were some Americans sitting there. So it's the same for many Americans to come to Europe, I guess, it's not easy for like clay court swings or stuff like this.

They were four all sitting there eating, I don't know, maybe burrata, I don't know, whatever, European stuff. They were like, I cannot eat any more of this food. Like, they don't even have a burger here (smiling).

So yeah, there are many things I like in U.S. and for sure there are some times, sometimes it's tough to be away from home. Honestly we could speak about this for an hour, which things exactly I like, which things I don't like.

I think people in U.S. generally drive great, and since I like cars, they keep their line great. In Europe, I don't know, for whatever reason, at least in France, people sometimes swerve. Maybe it's the phone, they are on the phone or something. I hate it. So I love it in U.S.

But I could speak for hour what I like or what I don't like, but in general I like coming to U.S. I play good here.

Usually Indian Wells, Miami was a tough swing for me, so now great in Indian Wells, so loving it even more (smiling).

Q. Obviously this match could go either way still, but on Carlos, have you watched him more as a guy who's like observing your competition, maybe enjoying his tennis than you would a normal guy? How much connection have you had with him?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I would say, to be honest, more enjoying his tennis. But when I say "enjoying," even kind of surprised, because again, I feel like me, Zverev, Tsitsipas, Sinner would be tough to say, he's younger, but who else, Andrey Rublev, we all have great skills, we all can some of us serve better, some of us are better at the net, some of us have better forehand, backhand.

Then Carlos, when he was there at like 17, I was, like, Wow, this guy, he's strong, but you never know, sometimes guy hits strong and then makes a lot of unforced. Let's see how he does. Then in one year he's No. 1 in the world. There are matches where he doesn't miss much, hitting just stronger than his opponents.

That's like surprising or amusing to see, because, well, you're like, If this guy is on fire, what can you do? I remember Madrid I didn't watch the matches but when he beat Rafa and Novak back to back on clay, that's amazing at 18 years old. So he has amazing skills. The question is, we know that he knows how to use them. Then the question comes, does he win 10 Grand Slams, 5, or 23 and maybe he beats the record.

It's going to be enjoyable to see and enjoyable to play against him. That's why, if he's the winner, I'm gonna be, yeah, it's going to be great to play him, especially I'm feeling confident now. I think surface is better for him, but I'm gonna try my best to show my best tennis and hopefully have a great final.

Q. Would you say you have watched him more than you've watched other guys?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Oh, no, not really, but when I watch him, I'm more surprised sometimes when you see just

crazy highlights where the guy is running everywhere and then manages to steal or find the best shot at the best moment.

Again, that's not like I'm talking about someone 50 in the world. That's why he's No. 1 in the world. It's not like I'm watching him more, as soon as he's playing I'm turning on the TV, no, I just like to watch tennis.

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