

Davis Cup Finals

Saturday, 4 December 2021

Russian Tennis Federation

Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference

D. MEDVEDEV/J. Struff

6-4, 6-4

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THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Too easy that you are the strongest team? How does it work, this Davis Cup, three matches only?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: It's never easy, Davis Cup. Definitely if look at the score today, two singles matches, actually till the last game of the match we didn't face a breakpoint. Yeah, you want to say it's easy. No, it's never that easy.

Andrey, I looked on the TV, was pretty confident, his game. Talking about my match, until 4-All Jan played amazing, served amazing. On my serve tried to go for it. So was not easy. I managed. He had a little bit of a worse game, more second serves, more mistakes. I managed to break him, which was the main key for the match.

Again, before the match you cannot know the result, you cannot know what's going to happen. Against Jan, I had really tough matches lately. It can never be easy. But we're happy that we managed to do it. Less than six hours for two matches. Fresh for tomorrow and a lot of confidence for sure.

Q. The post-match scenes. Firstly, the stamping. What did that mean? You said on the court as long as the crowd continues to boo, you'll continue to win. We've seen that many times. Can you explain what happens in that moment that makes you feel better?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, to be honest, after the match, again if I celebrate I like to do something fun. In our team, especially what is funny is Spanish coach likes to say this in Russian. He doesn't know a lot of Russian words. Coach of Karen. He knows how to say, Calm down. When



we play cards or play tennis or football or anything, when somebody wins, he's like, Calm down, calm down.

When Cristiano played in Madrid, he was doing this celebration a lot of times. That's why I decided to do it. I felt it was fun. But, yeah, probably it was the wrong decision, which can happen. Yeah, I had to go with it and to stick with it because I like to stick to what I do.

Yeah, again, I always said it: to be honest, it's definitely better when people support you, but if they don't, you have to win both against them and the opponent also.

Q. Very often we read there are not enough characters in today's tennis, 20 years ago was different, so on. You seem to be different. I was there when you threw some pounds to the umpire in Wimbledon 2017 when you played Bemelmans, and August 27 Lopez. How much do you like to provoke the public? It's like you have fun, then you're able to recover because you're clever. It's like a game you're playing with the spectators.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: You're right in a way, it's a game which I don't play on purpose. Everything I do, especially on the court even more than in life, is pure emotions. In life I'm more calm. When you ask a question, you guys, I have time to think, Okay, what do I think? What should I answer? It's the same with any other person in real life.

On tennis court, it's different. It's a lot of adrenaline going on. I hate to lose. There is less time and less power in myself to stop and think. So I go with emotions which sometimes is good, sometimes is not good.

I think definitely if somebody says that we need real characters, and when I say 'real' I don't want to say strong, weak, good or bad, but just real. Everything I do on the court is what I feel at this moment, so it's real. People should like it then (smiling).

Also I didn't know it was 31st of August, so you definitely have a better memory than me. I definitely will be 100% honest: definitely don't provoke the public on purpose.

But, yeah, when you play a tennis match, you are alone there. There is 20,000 people, sometimes for you, sometimes against you, sometimes 50/50. If I do

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something to provoke them, it's actually not to make them mad or sad or against me. It's something that I feel in this moment. We see it in any sport.

Yeah, I don't see anything too bad in it. Of course, even from some of what you remember, for example what happened in Wimbledon, that was not nice and I regret it. Again, it was pure emotions. It was not something fake or something where I think about something. It was pure emotions. I regret and it was not beautiful, not good. But that's also how you learn. You make mistakes and you learn.

I think the tough part for the young generation, because we had Roger and Rafa - I go with my words - they are probably I want to say one of the most fairest sportsmen in all the history of the sport, and they were both playing together, and they both won an amazing titles. Now when somebody in tennis is not like this, people tend to not like them and say, How come you're not like Roger and Rafa? Guess what, everybody is different.

I think the moment when they retire and there are going to be new fans who didn't see Roger and Rafa live, that's what it's going to come back to where people are going to like other characters than this.

Pretty long answer, no (laughter)?

Q. Obviously the Davis Cup is a team competition. For you personally, how much of a goal has it been to be the one to lead your country to the title? Is it an important thing to have on your personal CV in tennis?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Really important, otherwise I would not be here. It's not an easy season. Some players didn't want to come here, and I completely understand why. I completely want to say even support them. It's not easy. The season is so long. Australia is coming, like, straight after this. Yeah, we have an amazing team. I like to play for my country. I like to play in front of my fans. There are few here.

I remember I was practicing with one player, he already retired like four years ago, in Cincinnati. I think at this moment me, I maybe was 30 in the world or 50. I was just up-and-coming. He asked how old I am, how old is Rublev and Karen. He looked at his coach and said, How many Davis Cup you think these guys going to win?

It was not easy. After his words, we lost quite a few matches. We lost to Hungary to be in the World Group, Austria the next match. It was not easy to break this Davis Cup.

Two years ago the guys without me were really close, one tiebreak away from being in the final. We won ATP Cup this year. I'm really happy that our generation, we played in the junior Davis Cups together, and we managed to be in the final tomorrow and have the chance to lift the trophy is simply amazing and really important for all of us.

Q. You just mentioned ATP Cup. It's exactly the same team, apart from Shamil. I asked Andrey earlier on if there's any thought or talk about bookending: winning ATP Cup in January and closing the year with Davis Cup. He said it was too early, you were still on court. Is that something you've considered or thought about?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Look, it's going to be cool. You can never know. We can lose tomorrow. Yeah, it doesn't work out (smiling).

We have, yeah, this moment in tennis two team competitions. Both of them see some positives, see some negatives. But they're both important. Actually what is funny in a way, yeah, one closes the season, one opens the season.

Both you can see on the TV, everybody is fighting for their country. I'm really happy we managed to win ATP Cup. I'm really happy we're in the final tomorrow. We're going to try our best. You can see it also the other way around. It's good to end a year with a win and maybe start a new one with a win.

I don't know which one is better, but we definitely want to win all of them.

Q. Thinking about tomorrow, do you think it would have been even more special maybe challenging against Nole like you did in the US Open, maybe find the title thinking you are the No. 2 and he's the No. 1 in the world?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Look, to play against Novak is always special. But that's why it's a team competition, because Novak won his match yesterday, but yet they are not in the final. That's what makes Davis Cup special.

Borna Gojo, I watched the match, made an amazing job to bring a point to the team, which he was an underdog, huge underdog in the encounter. As soon as he won, you knew even if Novak wins the doubles is not going to be easy against the best pair in the world. And that's what happened.

I want to say Croatia earned their spot in the final. I'm preparing for Cilic. It's the same every other tournament.

Do I like to play Novak? Yes. Is it special? Yes. But I'm preparing for Marin, and it's still going to be a super exciting show tomorrow.

Q. Earlier Andrey was talking about the fact that technically you guys can't have the Russian flag, you're under RTF, not Russia, but obviously representing Russia. How much is that affecting you at all? Is there any extra motivation, because you did well at the Olympics in general as a nation, now with Davis Cup?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I can only talk for myself. For others, they better speak themselves.

Me, when I'm on court, I know which country I'm representing. I know what is my national anthem. Of course, it's not nice I want to say to not have the chance, being in the final, no matter Wimbledon or lose, to raise your flag, to listen to your anthem, to have few other things which you were always dreaming to have.

At the same time it's still the same competition: Davis Cup. I'm still playing for the same country. If we win it, we're all going to be disappointed by the small details, but at the same time a win is a win, a victory is a victory.

So, yeah, doesn't really affect the performance on the court. Hopefully that can help us to win.

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