

Rolex Shanghai Masters

Tuesday, 8 October 2024

Shanghai, China

Grigor Dimitrov

Mixed Zone



G. DIMITROV/A. Popyrin

7-6, 6-2

Q. What was the difference today?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: One point (laughing). I think that was that. I saw the stats a little bit, and that said it all. I think I was just very happy that I was able to play a good match, that's all. I didn't really want to expect too much of my game, but all I knew was that if I did the right things, if I was serving well, returning well, and using every opportunity I had, it was enough, it was plenty.

I think after that first set tiebreak I started to read the game a little bit more. I think his serve kind of changed its direction a little bit, I was able to read his serve very well. Ultimately, I found a good, yeah, a good distance between me and the ball and I was executing very well.

Q. In the last press conference last year here in Shanghai I still remember you used the word "spiritual" to describe your China experience. It seems a strong word, with a lot of emotion, why do you say that?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Well, as I said, every time I head out to that swing for me it's always very special. I feel like every year I'm experiencing new things, new feelings. It's always like my first time, almost, you know, and I think that's great.

I think this year also before the tournament, especially here, I've never been that, in a way, pleasantly busy doing things off the court. So, I'm starting to explore more and more of the city, get tiny bits of the culture, went to amazing museum. Yeah, just, overall, I've been able to naturally get myself in a very nice spot.

Of course, tennis is what I'm here for, but I'm trying to grab with both hands everything else I'm doing outside the court. When you combine them together, it gives you that natural, new experience, and I think that's what I've been able to do so far.

Q. You have another very successful season. Could you talk about how proud you are being Grigor Dimitrov and not anyone else?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Well, you know, it's been an interesting world so far for me, I think, on so many different levels. Like, over thinking right now I think doesn't really do me any good, in the sense that it's just another season for me, you know. Of course, I'm very appreciative and thankful of all the matches that I played so far, and I keep on playing, keep on winning, and the season is far from over, so who knows what's going to happen. I'm just really focusing to stay in the moment, a little bit more present, a little bit more than I could.

I know there were bits and pieces throughout the year where I did that very well and the results were there. Now I wish, if I could do that again, it would be something good for me. I think, obviously, at the end of the year I play well, I feel like I'm playing well. But still it's energy management and how the body will feel, so there's so many variables, and I'm just trying to take one day at a time on every aspect and then eventually things will come through.

Q. I have another very simple question, why everybody loves Grigor Dimitrov, not only from ATP, your colleagues, but also from WTA.

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Do they? (Laughing.)

Q. You must be more than just be nice, right?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: I don't know, maybe you should ask them. I think the one thing you'll always get from me is just myself. I think that's the one thing, I've always been very, I think, truthful for that sense. It's one of the first, I would say, not lesson, but I would say advice that my mom has always given me. She says, Before you become, let's say, a great champion, be a better person. I think all that also comes a lot from my culture and everything like that.

So, you know, I wear my heart on my sleeve, and I show my emotions as they are. I wish I was a bit better hiding them sometimes, I really wish. But, you know, it has

helped me a lot, but of course it has harmed me a lot. I'm learning. I think I'm far from perfect, but I'm trying to do what's right in my books.

Q. Your next match against Jakub Mensik, just 19 years old, your thoughts on that one?

GRIGOR DIMITROV: Oh, another battle. I mean, now I think the years are becoming (laughing) longer, like a bigger stretch, but that's okay. Yeah, another match, honestly, just another match. I played him once this year, Madrid, if I remember correct. Yeah, difficult match, I think, on both ends. He grabbed that one. So, yeah, very dangerous opponent.

But, again, I like how my progress is going so far, so I'm looking forward to it.

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