

# Rolex Shanghai Masters

Friday, 11 October 2024

Shanghai, China

## Novak Djokovic

Mixed Zone



N. DJOKOVIC/J. Mensik

6-7, 6-1, 6-4

**Q. You're ninth semi-final through 10 appearances here in Shanghai. What does this one mean at this stage of your career?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: It means more because I don't get many opportunities. I mean, I have a selective schedule, so, and I haven't played at my highest level throughout this year, except maybe few occasions, Wimbledon, Olympics, and so forth.

So, you know, but China has been always a happy place, a place where I really played my best tennis throughout my career. So, you know, these kind of matches, against teenagers, (laughing) it's something that really motivates me, you know, keeps me going, and pushes me to really dig deep, and to show to the world that I still got it, you know, in my legs, can still go the distance with the young guys. So, I'm super glad that I managed to win this very challenging match.

**Q. Was there any point in the match today where you thought, Oh, my God, I am too old to be doing this?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Not really, to be honest. In terms of, mentally I felt good. I mean, I did feel quite tight at the end of the first, and I wasn't playing my best tennis at that point, so I was a bit upset with myself for not closing out the first set.

But I bounced back, you know, I started off the second very well, won 6-1.

Third set, I had a lot of opportunities in his service games, but, you know, his serve is tremendous, so much pace and power and precision, very difficult to play him. I know him for three, four years, I've been following his rise through the rankings, his development. He's a nice guy, super talented player, great prospect. He's got a bright future, for sure, if he keeps going. He's got good people around him, his physiotherapist used to be my physiotherapist, Sascha. So

I still follow him, he knows that he's one of my favorite players to watch, and I'm always supportive of him, so, you know, hopefully we can have some more encounters and big battles.

**Q. Are things okay with your left knee?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah, I mean, it's a strange feeling, to be honest, those couple of points in that game, but after that it was fine. So, hopefully when it cools down I'm not going to have any troubles with it, because I already have troubles with the right knee, so it wouldn't be great. Yeah, let's see what tomorrow brings.

**Q. After the three games, and challenged by the three young guns, do you think your form, level of performance has been to the ideal level that you can chase for the 100th title?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I mean, it's quite relative what the ideal is. I think you can always do better, but I think I played really well this tournament.

I was challenged by Michelsen in the first round, and today tough matches with the big servers. I'm going to have a big server opponent tomorrow, Fritz, so I have to be ready for another difficult match, tight match. Quick conditions, if you serve well it's quite a big advantage. I know what's expecting me, but, you know, hopefully I can be fresh, and now we are entering the last, you know, four players of the last couple of matches of the tournament, and, yeah, I mean, now is the time for me to really try to step it up even more, and hopefully I can get a chance to be in the finals.

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