

Rolex Shanghai Masters

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Shanghai, China

Novak Djokovic

Press Conference



J. SINNER/N. Djokovic

7-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Novak, bad luck today, but what positives do you take out of the two weeks in Shanghai?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I think there's quite a few positives that I can take. First of all, I think the level of my tennis was really good this tournament, probably best after Olympic games in terms of how I played, how I performed, how I fought.

I did my best tonight. Under the circumstances, you know, I felt maybe not a hundred percent fresh, but at the same time big credit to Jannik for playing the big points better than me, and that's what made the difference. He deserved to win, he was just too strong in important moments. But, nevertheless, I still think that even in the finals today I played pretty good, so, which, you know, gives me, I guess, reason to believe that I can still play with these guys that are best in the world at this level. Hopefully I can maintain that level in the upcoming months, and also for the future.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Not quite the result that you wanted today, but an incredible tournament overall, and I just wondered if you could talk about the resilience and persistence at this stage of your career.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah, I mean, my main motivation comes from love and passion for the sport, and also the desire to keep competing. These are kind of the matches and challenges that I still strive for, to be in a position to play against the best players in the world, on the biggest stage, in the finals of some of the biggest tournaments in the world.

So, you know, that's what I work for and why I still keep on pushing myself. Yeah, I mean, that's all that can be said about that. I don't know what future brings, I'll just, you know, try to kind of go with the flow to see how I feel in a

given moment. I still plan to compete and play next season and, yeah, let's see how far I go.

Q. What's the plan for the rest of the season?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: The plan is to go home, I mean, actually, Saudi, Six Kings Slam is happening next week, so I'm playing that, then I'll see where I play next.

Q. You came so close to your 100th career singles title, how significant is it to you to sort of get that 100th title, and, yeah, what does it mean that you were so close to it today?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I mean, that's a bonus, you know, if that can happen. I mean, I definitely wish it to happen today, but it wasn't meant to be. I mean, I got to keep striving to make it happen somewhere in the near future, hopefully. And, yeah, I mean, it's not live-or-die type of goal for me, I think I've achieved all of my biggest goals in career. Right now it's really about slams and about, you know, still seeing how far I can kind of push the bar for myself.

Yeah, as long as I perform the way I performed actually this week, and I think I can go toe-to-toe with the big guys, yeah, as long as that's the case, I guess I'll still feel the need to keep on competing, and motivation to be out there, and let's see how long that's going to last for.

Q. The end of the season is coming near, and how did you expect your whole season at the beginning point of the season, and are you satisfied with your performance up to now?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I mean, comparing to most of my seasons throughout my career this has been one of the worst-performing seasons in terms of results. But, you know, it was going to come at some point where, you know, I wouldn't win slams and maintain that highest level for so many years in a row.

And that's okay, I'm happy with my gold medal from Olympics, that was the main goal for this year. And, you know, of course I wish that I could have gotten at least a



Grand Slam title or won big title, but it's fine, you know, it is what it is. It's a kind of a season that you just have to accept, embrace, and I'm more than happy with what I have achieved throughout my career, so I'll just, yeah, see what next challenges bring to me.

Q. Could you comment on any parts of Jannik's game that remind you of yourself?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: All around, you know, every shot he's got in the game. He's improved his serve tremendously, I think that became a big weapon. He's just very aggressive from the baseline, as soon as he's got a shorter ball, he's taking the initiative. Just very solid from forehand and backhand, doesn't make too many mistakes, and just tries to take away the time from the opponent. You know, that's something that reminds me of myself throughout my career, that's what I've done for so many years consistently, you know, playing fast-paced tennis, taking away time from the opponent, kind of suffocating the opponent, if you want, in a certain way. That's what you want, you want your opponents always to feel under pressure from your shots, from your speed, from your presence on the court. So he's got that, I mean, this year he's been so consistent, it's really, really impressive.

Q. China has the very loyal and supportive fans that you have, I guess you must have lots of story to tell, but if you have to name like one moment or one specific fan or one special gift, what would you say during your stay in China?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I mean, it's hard to pick one because, I mean, these kind of special moments happen almost on a daily basis, really. I mean, I don't have that kind of incredibly passionate, devoted support anywhere else.

I mean, China, you know, people wait literally every single night and day. I mean, I've been here almost two weeks, every single night they're there in front of the hotel, morning when I leave to tennis, it's amazing.

I don't know what to say. It's hard to express the gratitude that I feel. At times it's almost like uncomfortable, you know, that they are coming every single day, and they show so much, yeah, so much love and care and respect, it's unlike any other place in the world, for sure.

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