

Australian Open

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Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference



J. SINNER/D. Medvedev

3-6, 3-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. You spoke in 2022 after the loss to Rafa about how you had that little boy inside who stopped dreaming, and this is obviously a similar scoreline. Can you talk about the difference between how you handle this right now and how you did back then?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, different feeling, different circumstances, I would say. Now I'm dreaming more than ever, probably not today, but in general in life.

But I would say it's not anymore a kid who is dreaming. It's me myself right now, a 27-year-old who is dreaming, and who's doing everything that is possible for my future and for my present. I love it. That's why I made it to the final. I wanted to win. I was close. Was I really close or not? Tough to say, but was not far.

Yeah, the scoreline is similar but I think the match would be a bit different. But yeah, probably next question someone is going to ask me about today and then I'm going to answer (smiling).

Q. On today's match, were you thinking at all about two years ago? What changed in this match? You were starting so aggressive and so strong and up till 5-1 in the second and maybe started to change a little bit more even before the third set.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I didn't think much about Rafa match, because I really tried to leave it behind, so I don't think it had any issues.

Otherwise there would be many, many matches during the season where I would lose. And today, again, I didn't feel like suddenly when I was two sets to love up I stopped playing and let's say went behind the baseline and started doing like lobs. I didn't really do bad mistakes. I think what happened is he started to play better, a little bit different tactically, because I propose him something different in the beginning of the match, which was very aggressive.

I got a little tired physically, but like every other match before, just every other match before, my opponents didn't manage to take advantage of it or them also, they became tired. Jannik didn't really, because in the fifth set I was, like every other match, I was trying to be proud of myself, and I am. I was fighting, I was running. I was, like, I will try to, if tomorrow I don't feel my legs it doesn't matter, I'm going to try everything I can today until the last point, and I did it.

And there were some points in the end where he was not -- I mean, adrenaline going, but he didn't seem as tired as my opponents before. He started playing better. I got a little bit tired. Serve went a little bit worse. So the momentum changed and I really tried in my mind to change it back again, because that's what tennis is about.

But I didn't manage to do it, and that's why he's the winner and has the trophy.

Q. You've got my deepest respect for how you played four five-set matches. Can you tell us how that takes a toll on your body and are you ready to run a marathon tomorrow?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: No, no. Tomorrow I'm not ready to do anything. I'm taking a flight. The thing is, at least when I take flights, I don't like it. For my body, I don't know what is it, the pressure in the cabin, the position you sit in or whatever, my body doesn't like it. Tomorrow the way I'm feeling right now, I think I'm going to be, after the flight, I'm going to be dead for a week (smiling).

But five-setters are tough for the body. I'm actually, it's crazy, I would say the worst I felt was after Hurkacz match, the day after, and after Zverev's match, the day after. Yesterday when I was on practice, I was like, Damn, how I'm going to play the final, how I'm going to move. We really worked hard with my physio especially, he made a tremendous job to every time when I stepped on court I was ready again.

During the match, every time it was the same story, after two sets, my energy level dropped, was dropping because I didn't have a perfect sleep, I was playing long before. So let's call it my fault because I needed to win easier matches, but sometimes it's tough.

So it's not easy for the body, but at least I feel like I have no injuries. Some blisters, which is unfortunate, which is rare for me, but whatever, it's going to go away.

I'm ready for next step this season. Still strong start (smiling).

Q. You mentioned the four five-setters. When you played Rafa two years ago you had a five-setter and a couple of four-setters. How important is it to maybe look at this final as something that happened in the previous two weeks and be able to get through those early rounds? How do you go about that and how do you say how do I win these matches easier?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Every match would be different, because with Ruusuvuori I felt like same kind of like today a little bit. Two sets, he was playing like me today, a little bit aggressive, putting a lot of balls in the court. I was playing very bad. So he won these two sets. The only thing I had left to stay in the tournament and be happy to be in the final, I had to win the match. There we go, the five sets.

With Hurkacz, same. It was so hot, my energy level was dropped already in the second set. I'm just happy I managed to win this match against.

So, yeah, like, for sure it's better to come like Jannik, losing one set to the final, but sometimes you don't have other choice.

Like I said in the court, it's very, very tough when you have a mentality, I don't want to say champion, but a good mentality, a sport mentality, it's very tough to lose in the final. It kind of hurts more maybe than to lose in semis or quarters. But you have to try to find positives, and the positive is, well, the final is better than the semifinal and quarters. That's the only thing I can say, yeah.

Q. A record 24 hours spent on court. Has this been the most taxing tournament you have every played?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Oh, yeah, by far. It's unbelievable. As I say, after Sascha's match I went to bed at 5:00 again. Never had this late, such late sleep time, crazy.

I remember one that was really tough was ATP Finals that I won in London, because I think especially after Rafa, I went to bed at, like, 4:00, we played a crazy match, and then the next day I had to play again against Dominic, and I managed to win in the tying match. That was brutal.

Five-setters can be okay than four-setters because you have a day off. But then when you go to sleep really late the next day you feel horrible, and then you try to recover for the next day.

But at least I got a record in something. I'm in the history books for something. Let's take it. (Laughter.)

Q. You mentioned how you were playing so aggressively at the beginning. Just curious what made you decide to start in that way and, you know, differently from other matches and how difficult is it to sustain that level of aggression through five sets?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, that's the thing. In a way that's the only thing I ask myself, did I keep this aggression or lost it in the third? Even if I lost it, I would connect it to physical level, which is better than mental level, if you, I don't know, become scared and try to retain the ball a little. I felt like in my mind I was still going full but the body was a little bit worse.

What made me decide it is my physical condition, I knew that I'm not going to be able to, because Jannik right now he can play long rallies, he can stay there, if I would be 100% fresh physically, maybe with my coach we could decide before the match, look, I'm going to get into these rallies and let's see who is stronger physically.

But I knew that today I'm not in this shape so I needed to make the points as short as possible. I knew there was still going to be long points but I needed to make the points as short as possible, take his time, and it was working well. To be honest, I think it was working well until the end. I still had two breakpoints or one in the fourth set, he made an ace, I didn't choose the right side.

Yeah, I think that's what I needed to do. So again, I'm proud of what I did.

Q. Darren Cahill was just in here and he said what sort of struck him about Jannik was the sound the ball makes coming off the racquet.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: You mean he said it about when he first saw him or today?

Q. First saw him.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah.

Q. So I just wondered, what's it like facing Jannik when he really unleashes those shots, and is his ball different to other players?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, he hits strong. We should, like, average speed, I would think he's top three, top five, on tour maybe top one, because he hits very strong. Before he was missing a little bit, because it's tough to hit strong. You can miss.

Now he doesn't miss much, and that's why he has a Grand Slam and why he has a lot of titles and why he's

winning a lot of matches. I personally hope when I play him that sometimes -- you know, tennis is an up-and-down game, otherwise you get 24 Grand Slam (smiling) -- but I personally hope that next time I play him he's going to miss like he did a little in the first two sets and then last three sets he barely missed. Last game, I'm, like, who knows, maybe he can get tight, I went a little bit back, I tried my final shot, match point, forehand down the line, probably 160 kilometers an hour and the match is over.

Q. Going up two sets, second time in three years, a lot of people feel bad for you. I'm wondering if you feel bad for yourself at all or understand the sympathy people have for the situation just as a human?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I think sympathy is always nice. I didn't have time to answer, but I really got a lot of friends, some text me after everyone match, some other tennis players, my friends, some of them 200, 300, and some of them I saw already the messages, I'm proud of you, bro, or big man hug to you and stuff like this.

You read these messages, and that's a nice feeling. That's a nice feeling after a tough loss, because I was always, like, in Russia, we have a say -- better have -- how is it? Anyway, I forgot it. Better have three very good friends than a hundred just people that are there when you win or when you lose, they don't really care.

I think I follow this advice really well. I really have people in my life, I try to have people around me that I trust and they can trust me. And some others, I don't want to be loved by everyone. It's impossible. But I want people that I love that they love me back but, like, close circle.

Sympathy is nice. So I felt really bad after Rafa's loss. I don't know how I'm going to feel in one week or in one month, because sometimes the deception comes after, and, like, after Rafa's loss, was it the reason or not, I had my worst season. I don't know what's happening next, but I'm really going to try to keep the mentality that I go for next Grand Slam, and I go try to win there and in the middle there is going to be some other tournaments. If I play them, I play them to win. Otherwise I would stay at home with my family. Yeah.

Q. The way you played in the first two sets, the style of play, standing tight to the baseline, does it make you think that maybe you can do that more often?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Maybe, yeah. That's something I worked a little more in preseason. I'm getting older. That's true. I'm still very young, but, you know, if we look at Novak or other big champions when maybe in the beginning of their career we could say they are a little bit defensive or something like this, I feel like all of them that wanted to go higher and higher and wanted to stay on

the top of the sport when they get older, they try to do.

So I will see if I can try to do it. My volley was pretty impressive this tournament, and I'm happy about it, so yeah, I think I can do it more often. I still think the main core of my game is going to stay, try to put as many balls in the court, make my opponent work. But if physically I'm not feeling well this day or if tactically I feel like that's the thing, I am going to make it more, yeah.

Q. Two years ago after the final you came out with some fairly dark statements about your dreams as a kid being dead, and today you look much more positive. Is it because the match went a different way and you feel different about the match, or is it because it's just a different Daniil?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I am different. I am different. When I was giving my speech, I tried also to give it to myself and to, let's say, change myself and then think less about others and think more about myself, because that's a very important way to feel well and to achieve your dreams and stuff like this.

But I actually didn't manage to do it. I actually didn't manage to do it. As I said, probably this loss also didn't help me do it. But now I managed to find this state. I managed to find, to raise this level and become a different person with different mentality. I'm really going to try to make everything possible with myself, with my mind, for this loss to not affect my future tournaments and future seasons, because that's part of sports.

Again, first round, so now I can say it, you never want to say it, like, two, three minutes before my opponent cramped, I say to my team, I'm starting to cramp. When I say it was the first match of the season, for me, so I felt like it's not like a crap, you cramp a little. I felt like in five minutes, I'm done, like, I cannot move.

One minute later I go to return, my team is in panic. They look at me. I look at the guy, and he starts cramping. I'm, like, wow. I just say this I could lose in the first round. If he would be stronger physically probably he would beat me.

Then two games after I really did try to not show it. I barely could walk, and he too, and I was, like, just try to not show him. That was crazy.

I say all of this to say that I could lose in the first round, I'm in the final, I'm happy, and I'm looking forward.

Q. Novak has been remembered to say that a very important element of his maturing as a person and player was parenthood. I believe that this is also very important for you or you have also baptized your child last year and so on. Could you please share the emotions which come out of that and make

Daniil Medvedev a different player and different person?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I always say, I don't know if this exactly made me different player or a different person, but I hope so, because it's an important step in life. It's an amazing emotions from the beginning till apparently, everyone says, till the end, till you die.

Yeah, what else can I say? I hope that my children can be proud of me, my wife can be proud of me, and I think this tournament is definitely in this category, because there are some other ones, maybe where it's less, yeah, and that's all I have to say.

I'm going to try -- I think still tennis and parenthood is two different stories. You can be a good tennis player, bad parent; bad tennis player, good parent. I hope I can be a good parent and on the other side, a good tennis player also.

Q. Can I get you to talk about Jannik and the ATP Tour Finals. You mentioned if he keeps playing like this he's going to be No. 1 in the world and win a lot of slams. He's got that slam. Does he feel like the best player in the world right now or do you still feel that's Novak?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I think that's why we have rankings in tennis. This tournament he was the best player in the world, and that's why he won this slam. But we never know what happens next. Right now he's No. 1 in the race. He continues playing like this, continues winning tournaments like this, he's going to be No. 1 in the world at one moment. We never know what can happen. Many, many things can happen in the tennis career.

That's why I think tennis is a beautiful sport because you cannot look in the future. You don't know. Again, if he stays healthy and plays like he played this tournament, one moment he's going to be No. 1. Two months, in one year, in two years, one moment.

But, you know, many players went through different moments in their seasons and careers, so let's see how Jannik handles everything that is going to happen.

I myself put myself in a good position. I guess I would be No. 2 in the race. I'll try my best to be somewhere there close by also.

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