

Roland Garros

Thursday, 1 October 2020

Paris, France

Karen Khachanov

Press Conference

K. KHACHANOV/J. Vesely

6-1, 6-7, 7-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What were your thoughts about a pretty tough match there?

KAREN KHACHANOV: Yeah, you know, honestly every match can go either way, and it was looking quite easy in the first two sets. You know, I was leading 6-1, 5-2, 5-3 with one break, and then he broke me. Actually it was just one break, and the match turned around a little bit and started to be much more tougher.

So I'm really happy I could fight. Honestly I felt pretty good out there. I had some ups-and-downs, you know, a little bit in the game in every set. Even like this I could manage to keep fighting, tiebreak in the important moments, important points, to get my way.

So I'm really happy about it.

Q. You're going to play against Cristian Garin in the third round. He's a clay specialist, he's feeling comfortable, feeling really good. What can you expect from that matchup on Saturday?

KAREN KHACHANOV: Honestly, we never played against each other, but we know each other from juniors, from a young age but never met before.

For me it would be a really interesting match. Excited about it. Third round, playing against a good player, same age.

So, you know, looking forward to it, yeah.

Q. What is the skill that you need to win a tiebreak? All three tiebreaks.

KAREN KHACHANOV: In the tiebreak, you know, you need to win seven points, so that's the secret. But the first one who goes until seven points wins. Pretty easy.

Q. Social media, you gave a very sort of polite tweet to Nick Kyrgios this week which drew quite a



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personal response from him. Are players, perhaps you're the latest player, who he has been quite rude about on Twitter, are players in the locker room getting a bit tired of Kyrgios chipping in in this manner on Twitter?

KAREN KHACHANOV: Honestly, I was expecting a question about that. You know, again, I don't have any problem with Nick. I always said that I respect him. You know, I don't want to talk much about it, honestly. I don't have any problem with him. I don't know why he acts sometimes the way he acts. Maybe you should better ask him, not me.

You know, I wanted to be kind of more polite just to explain also my opinion. But maybe, you know, just I want to let it go and that's it.

Q. Following on, I don't want to ask you about that specific incident, but you have referred to the fact that there is almost an unspoken code of conduct that couldn't professional players on the ATP Tour show themselves and each other the professional respect, and also that there is professional respect for former players, as well. Do you think that that is important that players continue to show each other respect and former players respect? And how do you feel about players and ex-players also expressing their opinions publicly, as well?

KAREN KHACHANOV: It was a long one, eh? I try to remember one by one.

But for me, you know, I was raised like this in my family, you know, to always respect older people, first of all, respect higher-status people. I'm not saying that you need to do something unbelievable, but just to show respect, especially to players in our sport, you know, which done a lot of things.

But even like this, you need to show respect to the players who are lower in ranking, as well. I'm not saying you need to go either way.

So for me I was, like I said again, I was raised like this, I try to follow up on this. And, yeah, I wish everybody could but, you know, everybody is different in this world.

Q. There are differences of opinions in terms of what it will take to win Roland Garros this year. Some people have said that the slow courts will help the defensive players who can stay in the rallies longest.

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Others have said that the big hitters can just hit through the courts. You're regarded as a big hitter with a big serve. What are your thoughts on which styles of play are best suited to the conditions at Roland Garros this year?

KAREN KHACHANOV: Honestly, it's tough to say, because I agree a little bit with the opinion about the players who are going more through, you know, more hitting flat, because the ball actually doesn't bounce so much. Because, you know, with the slow conditions, with the balls being heavy, courts heavy, it's like, I don't know, 14, 15 degrees, so it's really tough to roll the ball with a lot of spin.

But actually today I still could do it, so I don't know. I would say you need to be more patient than normally, because it's maybe more difficult to finish the point in two, three shots unless you have a really great serve.

But otherwise you can see there are a lot of rallies, a lot of tough, long matches, like four, five sets from the beginning. It's clay.

Yeah, right now I think it's a little bit slower than normal conditions, and that's why you need to work for the point much more.

Q. I have two quick questions. Today, how significant or how key in your head was it to get that over in four today instead of having to go to the fifth? Then I have one other small unrelated question if I could.

KAREN KHACHANOV: Yeah, you know, in the fourth set actually I was leading 2-Love with a break and started to lose 5-2. Sometimes you don't want to accept that, like, you know, why it's happening. And these thoughts, you have it, but in the head during the whole set. But at the end maybe I shut up and I started to just keep trying to do the same things what I was doing before, which gave me some success in the previous sets.

Yeah, I could manage still to come back and, you know, win the tiebreak. So I'm really happy in this case that I could manage to do it.

Q. Silly, off-topic, way back in Cincinnati, Western & Southern Open, I wonder if you remember your first point there against Bublik and his underarm serve and what you thought about that. You hadn't played in half a year, and that's the first point you get.

KAREN KHACHANOV: Well, you know, honestly coming into the court against players like him and the other guys who sometimes do it, you know, you need to expect this serve. Honestly, it was funny, but I was expecting that he could start like this. I won the point, and after that, he didn't use it anymore.

So sometimes if you play against the player who stays so far back, I don't see it disrespectful. I see it kind of tactic if you do it on that purpose, you know.

So no problem about it.

Q. Winning the point is the best way to make them stop?

KAREN KHACHANOV: Exactly, exactly.

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