Roland Garros

Friday, 28 May 2021

Paris, France

Dominic Thiem

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You're placed in the bottom half of the draw where none of the big three is. Does this affect your attitude and give you extra confidence that you can get ahead in the tournament? What are your expectations?

DOMINIC THIEM: Not really, because maybe two, three years ago I would have been happy if would be that case, but I think the way I'm coming into that tournament, the way I also played the last weeks, the only thing I can focus on is the first rounds. I shouldn't focus at all on who is in my quarter or even who is in my half.

I mean, of course I know that big three are all in the half and I think Roger and Novak are even in one quarter. But for myself, it doesn't matter so much. I just basically focus now on the first round.

Q. I realize you obviously won't have the same amount of match play this year, but is that the beauty of a Grand Slam that you can still play yourself into the tournament, best-of-five sets, particularly on clay? And somewhere you've done so well before.

DOMINIC THIEM: That's my hope, yeah. First of all, to work myself into that tournament, I definitely need to play better than I did last week in Lyon. And, yeah, if I do that, I mean, I'm practicing and working hard to give myself a chance to play well at least. I hope I can do that in the match, as well.

That's also what's necessary. It's definitely a little advantage for me as I'm sometimes a little slow starter that I have at least three sets instead of two.

Q. You're among the first players to break the complete dominance of the big three. Which one of them is the hardest for you to play against and why?

DOMINIC THIEM: I think that all of them are super tough to play, and all of them have their favorite surface, as well. But in my opinion, to play Rafa here on the Chatrier court, it's still the toughest challenge.

But I guess also outside of tennis, it's probably one of the most difficult things ever in sports in general to beat him here on this court, as his 102 matches is incredible, and as I said, one of the biggest achievements ever in sport. So face him here is probably the most difficult still.

Q. The other day Naomi Osaka brought mental wellness into the tennis conversation. I'm wondering, since you did take time off to sort of regroup and give yourself a break, was that important to you? Do you think it had a huge effect on sort of your feelings going into Roland Garros, Wimbledon, and even the US Open?

DOMINIC THIEM: I mean, it's a tough sport we play with all the traveling, and it's 11 months a year, probably together with Formula 1, the longest season of any sport. So it is mentally very demanding.

And the same, you can have physical issues, you can also have mental issues, no? The same, you need time to recover a physical injury or issue; the same sometimes, if you are mentally not in your best shape, you also need time to recover for that.

That's why I think it's pretty normal from time to time to take some time off and to feel fresher after, and that's exactly what I did now before I came back in Madrid.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports