Roland Garros

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Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference

D. MEDVEDEV/A. Bublik

6-3, 6-3, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How does it feel to have won your first match at Roland Garros?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Feels great. But the most important is the level of tennis. I've been showing, as I said before the tournament, it was not mind games. My opponent can see I was really feeling good. I managed to play consistent today. I actually played much better on practices still than today, so there is room for improvement.

That was one of not many matches where I was really tight. Hopefully it can be only better for the next rounds. As I say, really happy first of all with the win and then with my level of play also.

Q. The things you mentioned before the tournament, you like the feel of the balls, hitting the ball well, can you elaborate what that is like for you? Is that why your range, you're able to hit more winners, less unforced errors?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yes, that's explanation for me. It's normal every tennis player feels the ball differently and every tennis player likes different balls. I don't want to say it was Dunlop ATP all the tournaments before. I don't want to say this ball is bad; but this ball is bad for me. I won't say that this ball is bad in general. And only on clay, because I like this ball on hard court.

I just couldn't control it. Actually UTS where I was practicing, I felt that I recovered from COVID completely, so I was practicing like crazy, a lot of hours. I just couldn't make shots work. I was really, I would say, disgusting feeling.

As soon as I came here these balls are much lighter, they go faster in the air, so that's why I can make them also drop faster before the baseline and stuff like this.

Yeah, as you say, I did 16 unforced errors today, 4 of them were double-faults, so it's 12. It's 4%. This is a huge statistic. This is how I can make damage in slams and can win great tournaments.

Q. You mentioned having COVID. Can you talk about how it affected you and the period you think it affected you the most? When did you make a full recovery?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: It's never easy to talk about this because coming with COVID is also isolation straightaway, which meant that 10 days I was at home, basically almost all the time lying on the sofa. Even if I tried to do some physical, I was also not feeling that well so I couldn't do much. And I have a small apartment (laughter).

When I was coming to Madrid, I felt like I was maybe 95%. But actually after coming back from Madrid and Rome, where I got injured also before Rome, I pulled my abdominals a little bit. Of course, I didn't say to anyone to try to play a good match.

Coming back, having two, three days off, coming back on the court, I felt that now I'm actually 100%. So coming to Madrid, I was like at maybe 70% or 60%. I think that's how COVID affects your body. It's always tough to say because sometimes during the year you're going to have these down moments. So maybe it was just one of them.

Yeah, I feel like COVID was tough for maybe five, six weeks since I got it. Now I feel 100%.

Q. At this stage of the season, do you still plan to attend the Olympics and under what conditions?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, to be honest, I'm looking forward to Olympics. It's going to be my first Olympic Games. We have a great team so we can do some doubles, mixed doubles, everything. At least I will sign for everything and then see how I play singles, of course.

Going to be amazing experience. Of course, with COVID maybe it's not going to be the same like every year.

Talking about conditions, of course, if you have to quarantine for 14 days in the room, I want to tell you nobody from tennis players will go there. But so far from what I know, you can come there five days before the tournament, get used to the jet lag and conditions. If these conditions stay, I think many people will go.

Q. You've been honest about how you feel about the clay. Now that you've gotten this win, conditions are better, do you feel a little bit more hopeful about what you can do?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I feel really hopeful. As I say, you could see it today in the match, I'm feeling that here, at least this year with this weather, with these balls, I can play like on hard courts. It doesn't feel different than Australian Open for me coming into this tournament.

Now when I'm coming to these big tournaments feeling like this, I know I'm capable of doing big things. After you're going to always have tough opponents. Australian Open I was in the final. I almost lost to Filip Krajinovic because he's a great player in the third round.

If I lose here in Roland Garros it's probably going to be because my opponent will play really good. As I said, I feel very confident, I move well, slide well. You could see I think he made maybe only one maybe dropshot winner. So I'm feeling great.

Q. About the COVID situation, what was it like when you were at your worst? When was that? When was it that you first felt 100%, how long ago from today?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: As I say, first time I felt really 100% was, to not be mistaken, one week and a half ago when I came back from Moscow to practice. That's where I felt like, okay, now I can play for three hours, practice for three hours, do physical later. Of course, I'm going to be really tired, but I know my body is going to be capable of doing this.

As I say, in Madrid I had two tough matches where I was kind of okay physically during the matches, but then I got injured like straightaway, which doesn't happen that often to me any more, especially the small muscle injuries. It was abdominal, something really rare for me.

The toughest moment was during the 10 days I think on the second or third day after I knew that I was positive, that's where I felt not so good. But nothing too serious either because I was able to, you know, leave. I was not laying down having hallucinations or anything.

Q. Does it help you that you're an honorary Frenchman in some ways? Is this something that could energize you?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I think definitely, especially till you are playing French player in Roland Garros, which is not easy. I had it three times. It's always a benefit for me. Yeah, a lot of French people going to support me. It's always nice. We have some public here. Of course, depends the court you play, you're going to have less or more people.

Today was a really nice atmosphere. I felt like people were going for me.

Q. May I ask you to look ahead to Wimbledon. It's been two years since anybody really played on grass. Can you think what it will be like to reenter the gates and what will be the transition like for people that haven't played on grass at all?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: It's actually true, I didn't even think. Yeah, I don't think anybody practiced on grass last two years because, well, there was no reason to do it. Tournaments are on hard and clay courts. It's going to be super nice to be back at Wimbledon.

Of course, with the French Open moving one week forward, if you do well, it's not going to be easy because you probably going to have to either skip Halle or Queen's and go straight to Wimbledon. As you say, first time in two years you have your first-round match. You play Kevin Anderson or somebody, let's see how you do.

It's not going to be easy this year, but everybody going to try to do their best.

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