

Roland Garros

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Paris, France

Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference

D. MEDVEDEV/R. Opelka

6-4, 6-2, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Obvious question: How are you feeling about clay now?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Clay in Roland Garros feels great this year. Especially Wilson balls. Said it from the beginning. I think it's going to stay till the end of the tournament.

As I said after the first round, now I know to beat me, guys have to play good. I mean, this is always possible. This was not a question.

It's better to feel like this when you know you can lose to yourself just playing bad.

Q. You've joked in the past you hate clay. Now you're playing really well. Everyone is saying you look great on clay. Are there any things outside tennis that you also hate but you're really, really good at?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I mean, yeah, definitely. How you call it in English? The beliefs, they can change. I don't know. When I was young I never ate fish, like I hated it. Now I love tuna, but raw tuna.

Talking about things I hate but I'm good at, probably there is none. I like the things I'm good at.

So, yeah, this year I'm enjoying myself in Roland Garros. I don't hide it. I'm really enjoying. Let's see. It's the last clay tournament this year. Let's see how it's going to go next year.

Q. Recently I hear that many player saying men's tennis is changing, it's getting more powerful, players are fit, it gets speedy. You are still young, but you have been on the tour for a pretty long time. Do you feel the same way? You, yourself, do you think you're spending more time on the gym to get more fit or powerful?



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DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I think definitely we can see it by the age of players retiring, playing good, that the age is growing. That's why for younger guys it's tougher to come in right now than before. Well, that makes more experienced and fit players that know how to win matches and how to stay in top hundred. Hopefully I can have a long career, too.

Yeah, I work a lot in the gym. I have my team around me that we make the calendar, make the fitness sessions, everything physical just to be in best shape, try to be in best shape all the time, prolong my career.

Yeah, talking about men's tennis in general, I actually feel in contrary. Before everybody was doing serve and volley, there were not so many points. Now starting of course with Novak, Rafa, and Andy, it's 40-shot rallies that are normal for every match to have maybe one. Even today playing against Reilly, we had some long rallies.

I think tennis becomes more physical because of this. With everybody becoming more physical, we have longer rallies.

Q. You broke his serve five times today. When you see his name in the draw, what is your reaction? I think it must be a nightmare to play someone with his serve. Do you enjoy that challenge? How do you go about breaking his serve? Are you guessing or can you read it?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, it's definitely never an easy draw to play Reilly. Of course, indoor hard courts would be tougher than outdoor clay courts. He made his first semifinal in Masters 1000 on clay. It is a tough draw, that's for sure, for a third round.

I think a little bit rainy conditions, wet, heavy court which I totally hate on clay, helped me today. I knew it would probably help me today. That was definitely the positive for me.

That's why I felt like definitely against such players you cannot read them, you have to guess one side. But in these conditions, even guessing one side, I could still get back to another side if I saw the serve coming the other way. That's what usually you don't have this chance on a faster surface. That's why you play tiebreaks and stuff.

But, yeah, definitely happy with my game and my return

today because I actually hit more aces than him. That's a great achievement (smiling).

Q. How surprised are you with players who are almost 40 years old like Roger and Serena still being competitive out here? How do you explain it?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I think there are two explanations. First of all, they're greatest athletes in tennis. I don't say like the greatest, like only one. Of course, Rafa, Novak, and Roger on the men's side. Serena, yeah, is the only one on the women's side.

So first of all, many other guys still can see that 35, 36, start to get tough, they drop out of top hundred. But they're absolute legends. They play amazing tennis. They have amazing feel for the game. That's why they can still beat many guys and still win a Grand Slam. That's first thing.

Then again, we coming back to all the small exercises, sessions. The physical work around tennis players has improved in last probably 15, 20 years. Maybe some medicaments also, of course authorized ones. I don't see any explanation why before it was not possible.

I feel that's great. In every sport I think the longer you can be on top, the better it is.

Q. I would like to understand what is the perception of the players about this Italian phenomenon. Some people came to me to ask today why there are five Italians in the third round. French have no one now. What from your point of view is the explanation? Is coincidence? Also, you will have Garin next match. Is the first clay court specialist you're going to play.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, let's talk about Garin first. Great player. We played in Madrid. I feel like same again. Here I can play like in hard court. I think that's what's going to make me play well. Not be a favorite, but at least know that he needs to play well to beat me. As I say, that's the most important.

Even in Madrid, I didn't play a bad match. But I felt like any moment I could throw up my level, like that's what happen in third set. Here he needs to play well. That's the most important.

Talking about Italian players, yeah. In the top 100, there are maybe eight, seven. This is amazing result. Ten? Nine? It's a lot. I would compare it to football. There is definitely some luck into it for sure. With all the best work you can do and everything, with all the best generations, still you need some luck to have so much in the top 100.

Of course, I think there are a lot of challengers. People love tennis there. Italy is one of many countries, maybe not so many countries where I would be recognized

everywhere, and I cannot go out on the street. In Russia I can easily. Yeah, that's why kids go to play tennis.

A lot of challengers, a lot of futures. That's important for the level of tennis. Probably the federation is doing a good job, but of course some luck also.

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