

Roland Garros

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Novak Djokovic

Press Conference

N. DJOKOVIC/R. Berankis

6-1, 6-4, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Obviously you have called Rafa the king of clay, king of this court. Are there things that players like you, even at your level, learn from how he plays and that you go to school on?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Of course you can always pick certain details from the best players in the world and try to learn from what they do well.

But we have a completely different game style so I'm not really trying to copy his game or anything like that on any surface. I have my own authentic style I have developed over the years, but definitely when you watch him play, particularly on clay, there is always something that you can learn from.

I mean, I consider myself a student of life and student of this sport regardless of the career and success that I have behind me. I can always learn something not just from him but from any player that I get to see how he or she plays.

And sometimes just watching videos of random players and random matches can trigger something in you that you can see, that you can observe, that you can implement later on in your game.

So I try to have an open mind always when I watch tennis.

Q. Jim Courier had a great analogy for you in commentary. He compared you to F1 champion Lewis Hamilton, that your tennis is like the best car, that you're the champion driver. Firstly, wondering what your driving is like but also wonder how many for gears do you have to step it up here?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I'm honored to be compared to Lewis. I respect Lewis and everything he does in his career, but also, off the court with his activism and, you know, trying to spread the awareness of, you know, animal slaughtering and animal protection and animal



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rights. Just diversity of his brand is fantastic. I mean, something that truly inspires me and a lot of athletes.

I don't want to talk about my driving next to Lewis' name. I mean, honestly it's embarrassing to speak about my driving, and in the same sentence with Hamilton. But I like to drive fast but I have to respect the rules, I guess (smiling). I was never racing.

But the analogy and the comparison of my game with an F1 car, it's definitely something that pleases me. You know, as I said, I'm honored to be compared with Lewis.

Q. You know very well Lorenzo Musetti. He said that he didn't expect at all to be in the second week and playing you. But you have played, practicing a lot with him. Are you surprised of what he did? I don't know if you saw anything of his match, because you were on court also later on, but he played unbelievable. I tell you, he could be dangerous even for you. Do you expect he could be dangerous?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, you're Italian. Of course you're going to say that.

You know, I think Lorenzo is very nice, first of all, very nice kid, very nice guy. We did hit a lot in practice. We never faced each other, but we did practice actually this season on this surface in Monte-Carlo couple of times and other tournaments.

I really like how he plays. He's got a lot of firepower from both forehand and backhand. He can play with a lot of spin. He's got a great feel, come to the net. He can play short balls, dropshots.

He can flatten out his serve. He can open up with a good kick and slice. He's got really all-around game.

Not just for clay. Probably, maybe his biggest wins he made on the hard court so far. I think he won against guys like Dimitrov, I think it was in Mexico, somewhere like that. So he's already established himself at that level of tennis.

I know very much so that he is a big challenge to me. So there is no question I have to go out playing on a high level, because, you know, he will not have much to lose. I'm sure he's gonna come out and really try to play tennis of his life playing on one of the two big courts.

Q. I have a question regarding doubles and singles. You haven't played much doubles lately, but in 2019 you played a number of doubles. I want to know if you think that doubles helps become a better singles player. If so, how?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, it's very subjective. I play doubles actually to serve my singles, to be honest. It was always the case, even though few times -- you know, every time I play doubles I want to play all the way until whenever I am in the tournament. So I don't retire matches in doubles because of singles. I don't do these kind of things.

I know a lot of singles guys, especially from the top, do these kind of things that where they tank doubles, and I don't like that at all. I would rather not play doubles, rather not play than play that way.

So if I'm in the tournament, I'm really gonna try to win. I haven't been terrific in doubles in my career. I haven't had so many great results. I won only one title.

But, you know, I have tried to play doubles in the tournaments where I felt they could also help me kind of feel better on the court. Usually I will play doubles before my first singles match, like Indian Wells or Monte-Carlo as the start of the clay season. So that was kind of historically the tournaments where I would play doubles.

But I don't play them much these days. Obviously it's a bit different for me now. I just try to focus on singles and save all the energy for there.

But doubles can be really frustrating for singles guys. Everything happens very fast. No ad.

I think it helps a lot with the return and serve. Probably those two elements in the game can be improved if, you know, if you play whatever, one or two or three doubles matches, it can make you feel better. That's at least, you know, on my end.

I mean, that's how I felt, after doubles match I could return better, you know, I had more time, because in doubles if someone is constantly crossing and they are putting pressure on you that you have to return a perfect serve. In singles it's different. Obviously different rhythm.

Yeah, it can help, but again, it's very individual.

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