

Roland Garros

Tuesday, 24 May 2022

Paris, France

Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference

D. MEDVEDEV/F. Bagnis

6-2, 6-2, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Easy first round. How much did you enjoy the support of the crowd? Of course you speak French, so you have a special connection.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, since last year French Open has definitely been warmer to me in terms of everything.

So really happy about my first round. You know, on clay I have to focus even more on myself than on the opponent. Just have to, you know, don't do mistakes. Put the ball in the court. Today I managed to do this well. Feeling good physically, mentally. Ready for next round, which is not going to be easy.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. You used to tell us that you hated clay. Then last year you told us here at Roland Garros you were learning to love clay. So was that like a holiday romance and just a special moment in time, or could it be something that becomes more deep and meaningful?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I mean, I still love hard courts more. I play better on hard courts. I understand the game better.

But, no, here in Roland Garros, even when I was losing first rounds, I was a little bit surprised. There were some tough matches, tough opponents, because I was feeling that Roland Garros is just a little bit different clay. It's a little bit faster, bouncing just a little bit lower.

So usually in my mind I have to play better here. Last year I managed to do it. This year I like my level so far. Of course, then again, it's Grand Slam, can have tougher opponents, can lose second, third round, and you are not going to be happy.

But, yeah, I feel like I can do well here. Other clay courts it's a little bit tougher, but I always remember few good moments that I had, some great players, Barcelona, Monte-Carlo 2019. So I know I'm capable of doing some good things. But, yeah, I need to be 100% focused and



ROLAND-GARROS

ready for what clay has to give to me. Right now I feel ready.

Q. What is the worst thing for you when it comes to playing on clay? Is it the movement or is it the mental side that you have spoken negatively about playing on clay in the past? So is that an aspect that plays on your mind or something else?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I would love to think that it's not mental, because every time I start playing on clay every year, because you have to, I'm like, Come on, you know, just be better. This year is going to be different, is going to be, for you, the clay, and then I feel like I need a lot of time to adapt.

Like first week, two weeks of playing on clay, on practice, I feel like I can lose to anybody. Like any player that I'm playing in Mouratoglou Academy where I practice, some of them, juniors, don't have points. I'm like, I almost kind of win points on clay, adapting, adapting, trying to find with my coach some solutions. Usually at the end it gets better and better if my body feels okay, because on clay my body feels a little bit worse usually.

Answering your question, yeah, it's about the movement, and I think my strokes are given like in the air because the balls are much heavier, they have dirt on them, so a lot of my balls, not at Roland Garros but other courts, for example, it was the case in Geneva, I feel like I'm doing a good job but it just goes in the net.

When you don't know what you can improve, that's where it's tough because you're, like, What do I do next shot?

Yeah, it's not the case here, so I'm happy about it.

Q. I wanted to ask you about that incident you spoke about on the court when you were 14 and you threw a racquet. I'm wondering if that happened right here at Roland Garros? What really happened? What changed after that for you?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: No, no, it was some junior tournament around Paris, Tennis Europe Under 14. I think one of my first like big European tournaments. If I'm not mistaken, I lost quarters, one round before quarters, a lot of guys playing now, like I remember (indiscernible), I do not remember others, but everybody plays juniors so there were a lot of guys that might be

here in main draw.

I was just playing a match, and, yeah, that's how I was in juniors, I was winning 6-0, 5-0, lost again, got completely crazy, won the next round, and everybody was, Who is this guy who goes crazy when it's 6-0, 5-1 for him? That's how I was.

In a good way it's competitive, but then at one moment I understood that it can negatively affect your tennis. But I definitely didn't understand it after this match. It was much later.

Yeah, I'm still learning, because I have some tantrums, if it's the right word, sometimes on the court. Usually I'm not happy about it. The most important is either to know how to react them or better how not to do them and just, yeah, stay focused on the match.

I think looking even two, three years ago, two, three years back, I improved big time on this.

Q. I'm curious about your thoughts on the Wimbledon decision, ATP decision about Wimbledon to take away the points. Also, it directly helps your chances a lot of getting back to the No. 1 ranking. What are your thoughts on how it all unfolded?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I think, first of all, I really want to focus on Roland Garros, because a lot has been said about Wimbledon and everything. But, yeah, just want to focus on Roland Garros where I can play so I want to do good here.

You know, about ATP decision, not easy to comment, but when I read the FAQ of ATP, why they made this decision, because they are explaining themselves, they are not just saying, Okay, we decided that, I found it very logical what they say at least. This is what I didn't find in Wimbledon explanations.

I'm not saying which decision is right, but at least so far in explaining their decisions, I found ATP just more logical and more consecutive.

Q. Is it a strange situation for you, as things stand currently, like you might not get to play Wimbledon but you might just become the World No. 1 without playing there?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Very strange (smiling). I need to be honest, but yeah, as I said last time, I'd be really happy to play Wimbledon. I love Wimbledon. I love playing on grass. I will play on grass after Roland Garros.

But if I cannot, I mean, just going to prepare for next tournaments, and, you know, just follow what's happening there. There are no points, I become No. 1,

well, great for me. If there are points, I cannot become No. 1, I'm going to be gutted. It is what it is. I cannot change some decisions, both about ATP and Wimbledon.

Q. I wanted to ask you a question about Carlos Alcaraz, if I may. A lot of people are saying he has one of the best dropshots in the game and it's rare for such a young player. Is there anything that you have seen that makes that part of his game unique or particularly effective?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I remember we practiced in Indian Wells. I was feeling pretty bad, to be honest, in my game. So I lost, and at this moment he didn't -- he won Rio but he didn't win Miami and Madrid yet.

He was doing a lot of dropshots with me on practice. Some of them I won; some I lost. In my mind I was, Wow, he's doing really a lot. It's tough to say, but he's doing them good, is it going to be the same in matches?

In matches it gets tougher to do them. I definitely, like I didn't watch a lot of matches on clay, but I saw the highlights, some of them, and yeah, I saw him only doing dropshots, never missing them on important moments.

That's great. He has this chance also that his groundstrokes are super heavy, like I would say one of the heaviest on tour. So when you're waiting for his groundstroke, you are going to be on the back of your feet so he can use a dropshot much better than some other guys.

Yeah, I wonder if all his career, like, it's going to be like this just do them, never miss them, because so far it's really impressive and a big part of his game, and that's why he wins a lot of matches also. Just interested to see how it's going to be throughout his career.

Q. A lot of us have had hernia operations and aren't moving like this after you are after a month. Can you explain, or are you surprised? What exactly happened that allows you to move this way? You seem to be moving with a little discomfort but a lot of comfort today.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Well, I don't have a lot of experience to compare, actually none. So I don't even know if I'm surprised or not. The thing is that, yeah, for sure when I made surgery, I didn't know -- I thought I'm not going to come back on clay. I thought I'm going to come back for grass.

But straightaway we made a good plan with my team, with my doctor team and physio team, to try to get me back on track as fast as possible. Because also what is tough is there is no sign of when you can actually start playing tennis. It's just kind of you start, and if you feel

pain, you should stop straightaway.

So I started after four weeks, which usually it can take up to six weeks, I heard, average. I never had pain, so we are going step by step slowly, first day 30 minutes and then 45.

Same, yeah, I went to Geneva to see how my body is. I felt great physically. I managed to put really strong practice hours here before Roland Garros. I feel 100% ready physically, so thanks to my team.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

Q. On social media, all the players get lots of insults, threats of being killed. Is it the same for you? What would you say about this?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: It's not easy to answer this question. There are different moments when you start, I don't know if you're ranked 700 you play futures, and you get, I mean, lots of people who bet on you, as well, and I think that then this is going to affect you more. Because if you have lost for the second round of the futures, then people are going to insult you or your family. You don't really understand why.

Okay, I'm doing my job. That's a loss, but there is always one of the two players that's going to lose and he's going to be insulted.

There are moments when you see mentally this is really tough, and then you understand that the higher you go, the more you play tennis, you understand that this is the way it is.

I don't know which solutions I could find. Look at any of these matches. If someone is losing, look at their Instagram, look at the comments. They are going to receive comments immediately.

I think it's never something pleasant, but, quote- unquote, that's part of the job. It's not good for me to say that, but it's the way it is at present.

We have to know how to manage these situations. I have no solutions. I don't know if other players have solutions. It could be better without these insults.

Q. (Off mic.)

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: No, I'm not affected. Each match I lost in my life, well, you know, when I was playing futures and challengers, these are the types of things that happened. You have to make due and try and continue to win matches.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports