

National Bank Open

Sunday, August 15, 2021

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference

D. MEDVEDEV/R. Opelka

6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: We have our 2021 National Bank Open champion, Daniil Medvedev, his fourth ATP Masters 1000 title.

Questions, please.

Q. Congratulations, Daniil. It must feel so good, but can you just explain your emotions, your feelings at winning another big title, and you're going into another couple of big ones that you have also had success at?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Super happy, because that's what tennis is about. After I lost at the Olympics, I was really, as I said, probably one of toughest losses in my career, because I really wanted to do good there, one of not so many tournaments where I was, like, Okay, this tournament I want to do good.

I didn't manage to, so you know it can have an impact on next tournaments, but what can I say? Now I'm more happy to win here in Canada than I'm disappointed to lose there.

And it's the same. If I go to Cincinnati and I lose early, I'm already going to be disappointed about Cincinnati and not as happy about Canada. That's what tennis is about, but this moment right now I'm really happy to capture a Masters 1000 here in Toronto, especially, yeah, some tough matches, good semifinal, good final, almost in control of the match except a few moments.

Super happy and want to continue this level of play to Cincinnati and New York. That's what I managed to do two years ago. Let's see if I'm able to do it this year.

Q. What do you think made the difference today? Was it more a case of your experience at this stage of big tournaments? Do you think that was the big factor?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Well, first of all, when you play



Reilly, I think still the biggest factor is how you serve and how you return. Actually, my serve was not on top point today. That's why I had breakpoints to save. That's why it was sometimes close calls on my serve.

But I was very good on return. I managed to put pressure on him almost nonstop. I think he didn't almost have maybe one or two easy games in the match. That's what made the difference, if we talk about tennis.

Of course, yeah, I played my first Masters final. I was happy just to be there playing against Rafa. I always try my best, but something was wrong, so I lost super easy and super fast. It can be the same for everybody. I know for me I think experience is the key. I think Reilly, too, because took him long time with his strong game that he has to be even in semis and he did it on clay.

This week he beat some really strong guys to be in the final, so probably next time in the final can wait for a more dangerous Reilly than today.

Q. Congratulations for the trophy. I wanted to ask you about something outside of Toronto. A few hours ago Federer announced his knee would be operated for the third time and he would not play until 2022. I wanted to know your opinion about Roger's absence from the tour and what it means for you, a professional tennis player, to lose him again for some time?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Well, it's a pity for everybody. We love watching him play. I don't know exactly his problems with the knee. I'm not a doctor.

So it's just (indiscernible) but, I mean, age takes over. Hopefully we can still see him back on tour, because I think that's what he wants. That's what everybody wants.

Of course even if he's going to be back on tour, we're gonna try to beat him every time we play him, because even if it's Roger, I know we are still competitors on the court, but the only thing I can wish him right now, because I saw it before the match is health, speedy recovery, and seeing him back on tour, yeah, because we never know what's gonna happen next.

Q. Congratulations on your victory here in Toronto. I



mean, this was a tournament where you won it in different ways. In the quarterfinal you had to claw yourself out a of tough one and you had a couple of back-to-back straight-set wins but you won the big moments in those matches. How much confidence does that give you knowing you can win matches in different ways just going forward into Cincinnati and the US Open?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: A lot. I mean, the quarterfinal of course was a huge match, because I was on the edge of losing. Managed to win it. That's how sometimes you win titles after. We saw it many times with many players.

And again, that's what tennis is about, because there are always two players; only one can win. Sometimes it's gonna be tight. Probably Hubert is pretty disappointed right now, but again, he's going to have his chances throughout his career, for sure.

The way I played, the way I fought, and, yeah, the way I won few of these matches gives me a huge boost of confidence for next tournaments. But again, confidence is such a thing. Can get it quite fast, but you can lose it very fast also, so I'm just going to try to build up on it and try to keep it at least for US Open Series.

Q. I wanted to ask you about your returning of the big servers in the last couple of days. You have done an exceptional job. How much of a role in your opinion does anticipation play in what you're able to do against guys like John Isner and Reilly Opelka, maybe reading, having a feel for where they are going to go? Is that part of what helps you against these guys?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, no, me, I still don't understand many things about tennis. Sometimes when you don't feel your best, and it happens, you get out from against somebody who serves much worse. Of course in Reilly and John, because it's probably not -- it's 99% of the tour that serve worse than them.

Sometimes they do, I don't know, a kick on 160, and you cannot return it and you don't see it coming, it's like these days where you feel really slow, you don't feel your best. Exactly the semifinal and final, I don't know what happened, but except few moments, I could kind of read and feel where they were serving and just get a racquet on the ball and get it in court, because I don't know how many aces Reilly served today but probably around six or seven, which is for him not a lot. He got a lot at the end.

I remember throughout the match at one moment I was in front, but, yeah, I don't know how it works, but I'm really happy that I managed to anticipate and feel, as you say,

these two matches really good, because I had a lot of opportunities today and yesterday.

Q. A great match today. Again about the serves, there is a quote from Khabib Nurmagomedov, from your part of the world, where he says he's going to take his opponent to the deep ocean. I feel like that's an appropriate quote for what you do with some of these servers, because there were some of Reilly's serves today that I think would have been aces against anyone else. Just kept coming back. Was getting balls back and keeping constant pressure on him part of it today? What do you think about that quote?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Nice quote. I'm not too much into wrestling, but, yeah, Khabib is a great champion, so his quotes should be taken not just for granted.

Yeah, I think it kind of works for what I did today, because definitely the goal was to try to get as many balls back as possible, maybe don't go for some crazy shots, just make Reilly play, make Reilly move, make him doubt.

There were a few serves where I thought, okay, okay, this one, I'm not getting it, I just try to keep a racquet on it. You put it back. Sometimes you hit a winner from them, sometimes it was an easy volley, but the more balls you put back, the more pressure you put on these opponents.

It's the same with me. There are some matches where I serve really good, and it's this feeling where you get an ace where you get more and more confidence, and when the opponent puts an easy ball, easy ball before the serve, you're going to think, how do I do so I don't get this ball back at 30-All? It's tougher, yeah.

Q. Firstly, congrats on your title and amazing performance this week. The last time you reached a final in Canada, you went on a crazy run, six finals in succession, and including the US Open final. Do you think that's something that works for you in a sense, building up a lot of momentum, playing a lot of matches, or do you think you need to change your approach a bit and conserve your energy a little more this time for US Open? What's your plan going forward? Are you going to play as many matches as possible in the next few weeks, or will you take it a bit slower this time?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I definitely like to build momentum. I remember last year where I won Bercy, London, and I think I had 21-win match streak coming into Australian Open final, which is a huge achievement. I'm really happy about it. Hopefully I can beat it one day by myself, but, yeah, it's a great achievement.

You know, Cincinnati is a Masters 1000. I'm still young. I don't feel any pain coming out from this tournament. I will work physically next few days to try to prepare my body the best way possible, to preserve it also for US Open.

I'm going to go full power at Cincinnati because again, yeah, it's a Masters 1000. I'm not yet at 12 Grand Slams where I'm going to prepare US Open to where I have to get the No. 13 to get closer to 20. No, I have zero.

No, I need to build the momentum and confidence coming into US Open. Cincinnati is different conditions. I would say maybe closer to US Open than here. Yeah, I just want to play good there and then play good at US Open.

Q. Congratulations. I was wondering, what have you learned about yourself as a player this week?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Not too much new, to be honest. I definitely learned a lot throughout my career.

This week I think I didn't learn anything new, but I just, yeah, built up on confidence, played some great matches. Yeah, I need to be honest, didn't learn anything new but just happy that I managed to, let's say, conclude what I know. Continue what I know, not conclude.

Q. How are you going to celebrate?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Not much. Maybe drink a glass of Champagne if I'm gonna have the chance on the plane to Cincinnati or in Cincinnati already, because we're gonna have the flight all together with many players in few hours. So no chance to celebrate before.

Or, you know, sometimes when the tournaments come back to back, you do it later in the season, just celebrate a great win you had.

Q. I'm just wondering if you're going a bit soft. First, Gilles says you don't smile and then you smile. Then you actually say hello to Oli in a presentation ceremony. What's going on?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I'm not gonna say about Oli, why it happened. But it's a funny story where it's more fun of course in the team, because he's part of the team, so I'm not going to make it public because then he's going to get a lot of things going because of this.

Yeah, to Gilles it was after the match with Hubert, because I like the style. I want to call it a Russian style, so it was a crazy match where I was really close to lose super tight one. And so after the match, my wife and Gilles are, like,

Come on, let's go. I'm, like, what are you talking about? Easy.

Gilles left, waving his hand at me like, Okay, go rest with yourself. And then in the locker he says, Do you smile to the fans? I say, Of course, a little bit. He say, We? Can we get the smile?

That's why I said it in the speech. Nice question. I like it.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports