

National Bank Open

Tuesday, August 8, 2023

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Gabriel Diallo

Press Conference



G. DIALLO/D. Evans

7-6, 7-5

GABRIEL DIALLO

THE MODERATOR: Well done. Was this your best career win ever?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Yeah. Obviously, it's my first ATP win. And, of course, doing it at home in Toronto, it means the world.

So I would say this is individually my best accomplishment so far.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. Congratulations, Gabriel, on the win. What are you most going to remember about this match, this day, this accomplishment?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Well, something that's definitely going to stick with me is that no matter what's going on in the match, and I know it's really difficult, but if you can try to remain calm and try to remain still and try to be unphased with everything that's happening.

Obviously, I was up a break multiple times in the second set, served for the match at 5-4. And, obviously, the nerves come in. And first ATP match. I think I was 0 and 3 or 0 and 4 in ATP main draw matches. So, obviously, the doubt starts to creep in. But it's part of the game and everyone goes through that.

So I would say, you know, what I did, what I'm proud of is I was able to bounce back right away. And every time I got broken, I was able to break right back, and it also sends a message to my opponent.

And, luckily, I got the job done.

Q. You played Dan Evans. You beat him on grass a few months back. How helpful was that previous

matchup in today's matchup today?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Well, obviously, I wasn't unfamiliar with the player. Like I said, we played, like, a month ago, month and a half ago. But, obviously, we played in different circumstances. We played on grass and we played in England. Conditions were a little different.

But in terms of game style, I think my team and I were aware of what he was going to try to do in terms of game style, and we were aware also of what my goal was.

And, luckily, I was able to execute and get the win.

Q. Congratulations on the victory today. Throughout the week you've been working with children and taking part in events on Sunday. Now with this win, do you sense your life is about to change for the better throughout this huge year?

GABRIEL DIALLO: I don't know. I would like to. Every week you go in a tournament hoping that your life is going to change.

But at the end of the day, you know, it's just sports. And, obviously, I try to make it not as big a deal as it is. But, obviously, it's a pretty big deal.

I mean, my life already changed just playing the match with the atmosphere that was there. And we were both able to play a pretty competitive match. It wasn't one-sided at all. So I was proud about that.

And I think both of us were able to give a good show to the crowd, and that was what I was preaching the whole week.

Q. Your last day was the Davis Cup ceremony. You were part of that team. You've been around the guys. How much was winning that in the fall and being with Felix and Dennis contributed to you getting your level to winning this match today?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Well, it's inspiring. Like I've been saying for the last six, seven months after the Davis Cup, I always said that what they did, and Vasek as well, it's extremely inspiring.



You know, the hard work they put in behind the scenes, not just the players, but the staff as well, the physios, the doctors, the coach. You know, they get up extremely early and they go to bed extremely late to give treatment to the players.

So at the end of the day, we're just the ones playing the match, but there's a lot of work that goes behind the scene. And just being a part of that and seeing it's not just the players, it's a whole team effort, and I think that's what me and my team were able to do since I was on tour.

You know, everyone try and does their job to the best of their abilities. And at the end of the day, I'm the one that's going and performing. But yeah.

Q. Your reaction at the end of the match, you, obviously, seemed quite excited. Can you just talk us through the emotions that were going through your head after match point?

GABRIEL DIALLO: A lot of frustration because I was up a break three times.

But no, I just, like I said, try to stay calm, but it doesn't mean that I don't have emotions. I was angry because I wasn't able to keep my lead. And, you know, I wasn't -- I started missing a lot of first serves. So it was starting to get on my nerves a little bit.

But I was able to get a couple breaks that brought me back in the lead. And then, obviously, at the end, I was proud of myself. And the nerves just took over.

And for the, like, maybe the next 20, 25 seconds after the match point, you don't really know what's going on. Like, you have no idea. It's all instinct. It's not like you're saying before the point, okay, if I win, I'm going to do this.

It's just like everything is happening, and whatever your reaction is is your reaction. So I was extremely happy.

Q. For those of us who aren't that familiar with your background, could you just give us a little bit of what inspired you? Where did you get the inspiration for the sport and for the style of game that you play.

GABRIEL DIALLO: Well, obviously, you know, I'm quite tall, so I would say Milos was a big part of it. Because he was always one of the guys on the taller side on tour.

Just the way he plays, you know, he goes after his shots and goes after his serve no matter if he gets broken or he's up a break. He just -- every point he tries to dominate, and I think that was a great example for myself.

And outside factors, I would say my parents. You know, they worked extremely hard to put me in the position that I am today. I was able to finish my high school degree and go to college for three and a half years. And about, hopefully, if I don't fail my classes, about to get my college degree. And then me being able to play professional tennis, a lot of sacrifices from them.

So, you know, when it's the last set of a tough workout or it's the end of practice and you're not feeling like you want to finish a practice, you know, those thoughts start to pop in my head, it gives me a little bit more strength, and yeah.

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