

# National Bank Open

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Milos Raonic

### Press Conference

M. McDONALD/M. Raonic

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MILOS RAONIC

THE MODERATOR: Tough luck, Milos, today. But how do you look back at your National Bank Open experience this year?

MILOS RAONIC: A lot of fun things, a lot of good things. A lot of things to look back and be proud of, and to kind of look back with a smile.

And just happy with how the week went overall.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. What are you most going to be proud of when you look back on this week?**

MILOS RAONIC: I think it's just, you know, I did everything I could from -- you know, as soon as Wimbledon was over. And also it's accumulation of weeks before. I've kind of done everything I could, step by step, to try to make the most of it.

Some things came together well. Still some things that I can hope to do better. But, you know, I just did everything I could, and it took me where it did.

**Q. It was your first event on hard court in the comeback. First time in a tournament where you're playing three matches. How do you feel your body held up this week?**

MILOS RAONIC: Yeah, it's, you know, a lot of things kind of expected.

So I wish I could have been better on court today, but, you know, you can't kind of discredit what two years away does; right? from that intensity of playing in all these kinds of things.



So just a lot of good things, but, yeah, I'll probably sit down and think about what I could maybe do better and see what the next steps are.

**Q. What was your assessment in particular of the match today, and physically was there anything that was taking a little pop off the serve out there?**

MILOS RAONIC: Yeah, it was a tough match. I think just some sloppy mistakes. I think I was up 30-Love that first game, and I think I missed three forehands in that first game. And then you start off that way, he gets comfortable.

And then, yeah, I didn't have that same kind of speed on the serve that I needed to. And it's just a buildup over the last few matches and these kind of things.

I just needed to be better in that case, and I wasn't able to be.

**Q. There's been a lot of encouraging moments during this comeback run for you. Obviously, this event isn't back until 2025. Did it feel like this was farewell today, or do you entertain the possibility of maybe being back here one day?**

MILOS RAONIC: It's a long ways away. That's kind of the idea has always been behind that.

I tried to enjoy each aspect of it as much as I could. And I don't know. You know, two years away is a long time. I've been gone away for two years. You get a sense of how much -- how many things can change in that period of time.

So it's a long ways away. And, you know, I probably won't even know that answer in 12 months or anything. So I've just got to keep looking forward and keep it short-term.

**Q. A lot of top seeds are now eliminated. Now that you came back, do you feel that the level is much better than few years ago?**

MILOS RAONIC: In what sense?

**Q. In the sense that, you know, top seeds are eliminated. Some players over the top 50, top 60 can**



**now beat top seeds. So do you feel that the overall level may be better and more competitive?**

MILOS RAONIC: I don't know. For me, obviously, I haven't played enough of the top guys to know, but I would actually say it's a little bit the opposite.

I think just three guys, to have three exemplary kind of legendary athletes in one sport, not even in one generation, period, but in one sport at the same time, you kind of mess up with everybody's expectation of what is normal; right?

If you look back at a lot of tournaments, yeah, you would have the three of them playing. Obviously, I'm talking, like, when all the three guys were taking Masters series seriously. I think, you know, we've kind of forgotten a little bit now because it's been kind of just a pure focus on Grand Slams for them for the last couple years.

But when I was first on tour, it was pretty much them and Andy. Pretty much, I would say, 60%, 70% of the semifinals were them. And maybe when it came to clay, David Ferrer was kind of the guy changing things up a little bit.

So, yeah, you had three guys that were there all the time and winning most of the events. But I think you were still seeing the same kind of thing, the rotation of guys from 16 to 5 in the world, let's say, that were kind of maybe losing early in events. You know, they weren't -- like, it's not like every week the top eight seeds were all in the quarters; right? So it's quite different.

I think three guys just messed with everybody's expectations for a long time. In sport, and just in a lot of things, we have a very short-term memory, and I'm guilty of that as well.

But tennis was quite different before Roger came around. And then, you know, I think it's just this kind of next period is probably what tennis -- obviously, Novak is still around, and he's still going to be very involved in later stages of Grand Slams.

But I think it's kind of like what tennis was when Andre and Sampras were kind of aging out a little bit; right? You have a lot of different players that will win slams. And if you look at history and you just look at the trend, there's many players with one or two. And then, you know, the higher up you go with the numbers, the quantity of players there drops off.

I think just three guys really messed with everybody's caliber -- or recalibration of what's normal.

**Q. What can you take from this tournament going forward, by which I mean, specifically, the US Open?**

MILOS RAONIC: Yeah, you know, if all things are well, I can get myself in the right position. I can get myself ready. I can produce a high level of tennis. And then you step on court and you play, you give it everything you can, and you kind of see where you are.

But I think I can still play a very high level that isn't very different from where I was, which is crazy to say, years ago now, but...

And then I've just got to give myself a chance and take it one by one.

**Q. Three tournaments in now. I'm wondering about your drive, your hunger. Are you feeling reinvigorated?**

MILOS RAONIC: Yeah, for a lot of things. I enjoy the competing. I enjoy the preparation. I enjoy the challenge.

You know, there's certain things which I never gave much thought to on tour that maybe I don't miss as much.

But, you know, there is a specific challenge. There is a specific thing to come up for and get ready. I really do enjoy that. I'm very competitive about everything. It's not tennis exclusively.

So having that kind of purposeful progress goes a long ways with me and really gets me motivated.

**Q. The lower body injuries you had during your career, how much do you think that stems from the fall you had at Wimbledon with the hip injury, I think, in 2011?**

MILOS RAONIC: Yeah. I think it's most of it. Most of it does center around that. Like, most of my injuries have been on the right leg. You know, that was the right hip surgery.

I think, you know, surgery is often to fix things, but it's also, like, you're asleep and somebody is cutting a hole into your body and they're trying to fix something. That's some kind of trauma on its own; right?

So, yeah, a lot of it probably does go back to that. But you're aware of it, and you just try to work around it and make the adjustments as you can.

**Q. Before you even waved good-bye to the crowd, I**

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**don't know if you noticed, but many in the crowd were on their feet standing, giving you an ovation. I wonder how that felt to experience that back in your hometown?**

MILOS RAONIC: Yeah, it's one of the most meaningful things. I think it's -- I don't know. I didn't really get a glimpse of it. I got the sense of it just through the noise.

And I think it's probably the most special and endearing thing about these three matches, from Monday night to yesterday to today, through the ups and downs of it all, that energy that you can't, like, quantify in any way or you can't put a name to it.

But it just -- you know, you can kind of just like close your eyes and wish you were kind of in that same scenario many times over.

But I'm extremely grateful for that. And, you know, all the ups and downs over the last months and years, that makes it worth it far and beyond.

Thank you.

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