

National Bank Open

Wednesday, July 30, 2025

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Gabriel Diallo

Press Conference



G. DIALLO/M. Gigante

6-3, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Congrats, Gabriel. How does it feel to get over the first round just in two sets today?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Yeah, never easy to play a first round here at home, so yeah, very happy that I got through it.

It was looking like we were maybe heading to a third set, but happy that I got to squeeze it into two sets, and happy with the way that I competed, and, yeah, happy that I'm through.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You came back down a break in that second set. Just talk about your growth this year mentally. Even dating back to the clay court season, how have you grown from a mental standpoint this season?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Yeah, I mean, you know tennis, sometimes it's pretty crazy the momentum switch that you see throughout a match. Things were looking really good, especially after the first set. Early in the second I had a lot of chances to go up a break, didn't get them, played a poor game to lose my serve. Then, all of a sudden, now it's looking like we're going into a third set.

So tennis can go that fast, especially in conditions like this where it's super fast, super lively. So, yeah, you know, you try to stay calm, try to stay composed, try to fix the little damages quickly, stay present in the moment. Yeah, happy that I got to squeak it in in two sets.

Q. Halfway through the second set, what adjustments if any did you make after that wobble, so that you could take control of the match?

GABRIEL DIALLO: I think it started on my serve, started making a little bit more first serves. Started getting my legs going a little bit more. A little bit more energy, intensity. I was a little bit flat in the middle of the second. So just

going back to my college days, you know, energy, intensity, things that you can control, and slowly my game came back.

Q. You mentioned that intensity, you were doing a lot of fist pumps, fist pumping to the crowd, your box. Where do you get that energy, is it from the box, is it from the crowd, where do you get that energy?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Well, I mean, it has to come from yourself. No one's going to bring it for you. Of course, the box is there and I'm very fortunate that I don't have to tell them, they're always bringing the energy, no matter the score.

I'm a firm believer that you have to be aware also when your energy is down. You can't wait for someone else to bring it or wait for something to happen. I think that goes back to my college days, where you try to bring energy as much as you can. Sometimes the level doesn't follow, but I'm a firm believer that if you keep up the intensity, the energy level, I mean, you don't have to scream in the guy's face. But just, you know, jumping around before the first serve, returning, and always get the legs going, I think that's the best way to get your game back, and today that's what helped.

Q. I wonder how you sort of reflect on the last time you were here two years ago, I think it was your first ATP win here.

GABRIEL DIALLO: Yeah.

Q. You were 141 then, and now a seeded player. Playing on centre court, from grandstand to centre court. How do you reflect on the differences between those two extreme experiences?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Yeah, I mean, two years ago if you would have told me that I would have come back here as a seeded player, I probably wouldn't have believed you. It's definitely an adjustment.

Yeah, ultimately I'm so happy and proud of myself and of my team, of the work that we've been able to put in. Yeah, now the tables have turned a little bit. Now I'm expected to perform well here, so the preparation is a little bit different.



Yeah, we prepared really well, and again, very happy with the way I competed today.

Yeah, it felt a little bit different than two years ago. I feel like you have a little bit more to lose. But, no, I got great support from the crowd, and yeah, happy that I got it done in two sets.

Q. Your on-court style is sharp, is confident. Do you see fashion as an extension of your mindset on the court?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Yeah, for sure. I think fashion on and off the court is a great way to express yourself. Sometimes I don't have a say in my outfits, you know, kind of have to wear what Adidas tells me to wear. But they have been coming up with some great fits over the last few years, so I can't complain with that.

Yeah, sometimes I rock the headband. The leg sleeve now, it's more for injury prevention more than anything. But I've got some pretty good feedback about how it looks, so I might pull it out a little bit more often than not.

Yeah, I mean, I think also it's a good way to market yourself and make yourself a little bit more marketable. So, yeah, I'm just trying to make my agent's job a little easier (laughing).

Q. Now that you got this first one out of the way, what do you think you're capable of this week?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Yeah, like I said, I think the first rounds are never easy, so very happy that I got through it. Now I've got two potential tricky opponents, Carballes Baena that I played earlier this year, and we had a war in Hong Kong. I think it was 7-5 in the third, in conditions that are really similar to here.

Then obviously, on the other hand, you have Taylor, who is No. 4 in the world, who I just played against in Wimbledon, and produced arguably the best match I've played.

So I think, regardless of the outcome, it's going to be two challenging matches. But I'm really looking forward to the challenge, it's what you practice for throughout the week, to get on centre court and hopefully get a packed stadium and, yeah, a bunch of people coming to see you play and perform, so that's what I'm hoping to do on Friday.

Q. You mentioned it twice about first rounds being difficult, particularly in front of the home crowd. Can you just explain that a little further why people trip over their first round?

GABRIEL DIALLO: Well, I mean, I can speak from a Canadian perspective, we don't have a lot of opportunities to play at home. Americans, they have DC, they have Cincy, they have the Open, they have Dallas, Delray at the beginning of the year. So you kind of want to use that opportunity as much as you can and perform.

But you have to make sure also you don't step into the other extreme, which is putting too much pressure and expectation on yourself. So it's about this fine balance and the equilibrium right in the middle, where you're in the perfect state of mind.

In the first match, first round, obviously they're never easy, especially at home. Because like I said, you want to perform well, you want to play well here in front of the crowd.

But it goes back to just control what you can control. Intensity, the preparation, everything is done before. Once you step on the court you control what you can, and, yeah, luckily I got the job done today.

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