

US OPEN

Saturday, September 2, 2023

New York, New York, USA

Novak Djokovic

Mixed Zone

N. DJOKOVIC/L. Djere

4-6, 4-6, 6-1, 6-1, 6-3

Q. Can you talk about how you were able to adjust in the third set.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I would say two different matches, the first two sets, then the last three. Scoreline maybe doesn't do justice for the third and fourth. I think it was much closer than 6-1, 6-1.

I thought he played terrific. I mean, I honestly have never seen him play like this. He was feeling the ball extremely well. Everything was kind of in his striking zone. He was tactically prepared very well.

I think he started off the match very, very good. He was far more comfortable than me. I was defending mostly in the first two sets.

To be honest, I could have and should have played better, on a high level in these two sets, but huge credit to him for making me uncomfortable on the court and playing really some of the best tennis I've ever seen him play.

Congrats to him. Tough luck to him. I told him at the net he should keep going because if he's going to continue playing this way, he's only going to work his way up in the rankings. He's a terrific guy, works extremely hard. Tonight he shows that he deserves to be ranked much higher than he is.

Q. Coming out in the third set, how much do you know you have the mental edge?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I'm not sure I have a mental edge from two sets down. Maybe when I won the third, I felt like maybe I'm back in the match, I kind of got him, if I can say so.

But he was fighting. He stayed cool and composed. He didn't show too many emotions in a way. He didn't, I would say, lose it somehow. He just was very consistent.



I feel like I raised my level and was reading his game slightly better in the third, fourth and fifth than I have in the first two sets.

I think I served well when I needed to, especially in the fifth. It was only one break. He had a break point to come back to the match. It was a nerve-wracking last game.

Yeah, so relieved to get this one.

Q. How does this help you as you look ahead to the rest of the tournament, to be in a situation you were in, pull that sort of a match out, your confidence?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, look, of course winning a match is always better than losing a match. It's as simple as that.

I think the message is sent to the rest of the field that obviously I'm still able to play five sets deep at night. Coming from two sets down always sends a strong message to the future opponents.

At the same time I'm not really wanting to be in this position, to be honest. I prefer a straight-set win. Hopefully I can get back on that track in the next match.

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