

US OPEN

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Gilles Cervara

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Open it up to the floor. Questions, please.

Q. Daniil is such a temperamental player to coach. How do you manage him through matches, through training, through a match like tonight? How do you prepare him? Because he said before there were a lot of doubts before the match, which is something you don't hear a lot of players say.

GILLES CERVARA: Yes, well, I mean, for this match was quite easy, I want to say. And like two years ago against Djokovic, you know, in the beginning of the match, I was, like, Okay, let's see straightaway if he's in the zone and ready to do a big match.

As the final two years ago, I felt he was in the zone to make amazing match and the match he just done. But for the rest of your question, yeah, that's true that before this tournament was really, really tough. Every day was really tough on practice court, because Daniil is the kind of player, and I guess, I mean, every players are tough to coach. Everybody is different. But Daniil can be very tough.

So in defense for myself to be very, very strong also inside myself to see what is happening in the court, what is happening in his head to have the, you know, the good reaction, the good words, to not, I want to say to not shake when something is really tough at that moment and when he tries to push me.

I think when I see this tournament that again I had the good also from my perspective, I was in the zone to be the good coach he needed to be coached like to make him play his best tennis.

Q. How much different do you think playing on Ashe and in New York is from playing in Indian Wells? In other words, did it open up some options to Daniil that he could use against Carlos that maybe he couldn't use at all in Indian Wells?

GILLES CERVARA: Well, like every tournaments the

conditions are totally different. Indian Wells, it's very slow courts. Here, even if it's slower this year, it's still quite faster than Indian Wells.

So this make a big difference. Then, you know, when you play against players and you lose, you learn many things, you know, and so it gives you some goals for the next time. I think it's also all the matches he already played against Carlos that helped for tonight.

Q. What is one or two specific things that he learned that he implemented? You keep saying he needed to be better than himself, an 11 out of 12, but what is something specific he did better tonight against Carlos that he didn't do in the last two?

GILLES CERVARA: I think his preparation, I mean, in his mind that, you know, the strategy to use, because Daniil and, like, many players they think, first of all, with the strategy. This is the main thing.

Yesterday when we talked, we talked a lot of the strategy but at the same time me, because I need to use the strategy. And also the different thing I believe in sports, you know, the energy you can have, the determination, that makes a huge difference also in the emphasis of your game.

So we talked also about this part, and we tried, I mean, he tried to make a combination of everything we said, and because he's amazing player, he did it today perfectly.

Q. How important was it for him to win this match, considering the previous two, he hadn't even won a set against him, to put the rivalry a bit more on a balance?

GILLES CERVARA: I think how important it is, I can't precisely answer this question, but yes, I know that in a career, especially now because forever he would have this win in his head, and for the rest of the season and for the next year also, to know that he did it.

So I think it's something that you build your confidence like this. You're able probably to feel that you are still in the best, I mean, he knows that he's in the best player but it's different to be top 5 than ready to be top 1, top 2, or top 3. And I think this one will help like this.



Q. Talk a little bit about his athleticism. I think he gets overlooked sometimes how well he covers the court. His speed, his defense, and just where you think his athleticism stands up against some of the other top guys.

GILLES CERVARA: I don't sure I understood well your question, so you ask me about his conditioning, right?

Q. Yeah, just sort of how well his speed on the court, how well he covers, how well he plays defense. I think sometimes maybe people don't realize how well he does all those things.

GILLES CERVARA: Yes, for me, as his coach, of course I know how this part is, you know, one of his spine of his game.

You know, the thing he's quite fast but you see his arm and his legs, so he's able to cover the courts so well. Sometimes I try to be in the other, in his opponent eyes to realize how the opponent should play to win against him, and sometimes I'm, like, wow, it's amazing, because every shot are coming back and coming back. We know like tonight, because sometimes he had a long run to do, he had to be able to make strong shots, because Carlos' shots were very, very tough and powerful.

He was deep, far, and was able to counter these kind of shots and this is the spine of his game. This is something that he has since he's kid, you know. You can build, but at the same time, you have it or you don't have it.

Q. You spoke a minute ago about the mental effect that this night will have for Daniil going forward. What mental effect going against Djokovic will the match from 2021 in the final here have on the mental state going into the next one?

GILLES CERVARA: Well, I think I need more time to think about this part for the next match. But yes, you know, probably both players would have this in their mind, because it's the same place, the same big event when they played. Yeah, the last time they played here, yeah, it was there but they played in Torino. But yeah, the event two years ago probably would be in their mind, for sure. Then the effect right now, to be honest, I don't know yet. I need to think about this later on.

Q. Daniil compared to Indian Wells and Wimbledon against him, being so aggressive with his court position and being forceful, how pleased were you, besides him serving better in those two matches, was his positioning on court and being right in there to show Carlos that he was going to be forceful tonight?

GILLES CERVARA: Sorry, I think I didn't understood the question well. So...

Q. How pleased were you with Daniil being more forceful with his offense compared to the Indian Wells and Wimbledon meetings this year?

GILLES CERVARA: You asked me if it was our plan to build a game like this? Yeah, it was, I mean, like I said before the match and to Daniil, for me, I mean, you cannot calculate and not wait against Carlos.

You know, that's what I said in one of the questions, there is the strategy part where you need to, was one of the plan to be aggressive. Doesn't mean anything to be aggressive. I could say many things. But let's say like this, to be aggressive. It's one part of the strategy, but also in your mental and in your determination, he has to be with this. It's not just hitting the ball hard or, you know, fast. It's more than this.

But it's one of the part, of course.

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