

US OPEN

Saturday, September 9, 2023

New York, New York, USA

Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference

D. MEDVEDEV/C. Alcaraz

7-6, 6-1, 3-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Just epic win. Four sets, 3 hours, 19 minutes. The other day when you were in here, you said you have to figure out a way to play better. How did you do that?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I managed to do it. All four sets I played great, but especially -- you know, third set I played, let's call it like this, I said I need to play 11 out of 10, all the three sets I won I managed to do it. In the third set I would say I was maybe 9 1/2, maybe 10 out of 10, and as we saw it was not enough against Carlos.

I managed to play well, I managed to serve well, hit some lines in important moments, some great shots.

Just really happy, but the tournament is not over.

THE MODERATOR: Another rematch from your Grand Slam victory.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, that's what I'm saying, against Novak, it's the same. He is always better than previous time he plays. For example, I beat him US Open final; he beat me in Bercy in a great match. Carlos beat him Wimbledon; he beat him in Cincinnati.

Novak is going to be his best version on Sunday, and I have to be the best-ever version of myself if I want to try to beat him.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. With how loud it was getting towards the end of the match, felt like you were trying to play faster to head off the noise. Is that what you were doing? How were you able to stay focused? Such an intense ending.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I don't even know what I was doing in the end. For sure you never want to serve during the noise, but I also sometimes I'm not someone who likes to,



if it's noisy, because either they want him to win or it's just a great moment, I don't like to bounce the ball like 15 times, because then it throws me off the rhythm. If I bounce it like three times and I feel like the noise is coming down, I'm like, okay, I'm going to serve it. Maybe that was the case, maybe I was a little bit nervous so that's why I went faster.

In general, even with this pressure, yes, some double faults but some good serves also, so in general I felt like I handled it great. The most important is to win, because he had the same game where he had some advantage for him, breakpoint this, that. I managed to win it.

And in the end it doesn't matter. We can always say yeah, first match point maybe I should make an ace and we don't talk about. Who cares, the most important is to finally get one match point done, and I'm happy that I managed to do it.

Q. You're known as a pretty good mover, especially for your height. How do you rate your defense tonight? That has to be some of the most running you have done in a very long time.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: It was great, because there were some points I lost, but after the point I was, like, wow, I have caught some balls that were really tough (smiling). I was like, okay, that's good. That means that next point I can do the same. Maybe either he's going to miss or I could make a better shot. I was in the zone.

So when I'm in the zone I'm a great defender. I run well, even there were some moments where I was, like, damn, I should have started to run faster, because sometimes you tend to look what your opponent is doing. But against Carlos it's dangerous because he plays so fast, dropshots so fast so you don't have this time to look. Every time I looked and was slow, I was, like, next time have to do better and I managed to do better next time.

Q. You're not a stranger to Grand Slam finals. Do you have a day-before-the-Grand-Slam-final routine?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Not really. I would say -- no, not really. I'm going to have a practice at the same time I did all the time but not because of the superstitions but because it's good time to have some sleep-in but also have



some time in the evening.

So no, I'm going to do all the same. It's just the mental preparation where you're, like, you want to go to war, you know. You want to fight till the end, you want to win, and that's how you should be in the final of a Grand Slam.

Q. Obviously it's important to win such matches. But how important do you feel? I asked this of Gilles a little while ago, how important is it that you won that match against Carlos tonight considering the previous two you hadn't won a set off him?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I don't know. I guess for the confidence and self-esteem, it's very important. At the same time that this thing about tennis, it's great that I won this match, but if I lose on Sunday, the tournament, it's like it's a good tournament but I'm going to be hell disappointed. That's how tennis is.

So yeah, it was a great win, it's great for the confidence. You know, I have hopefully long years of career ahead. And to know I'm capable of doing it on the big stage, every time you do it one more time, brings more confidence. You know you can do it again. You want to do it again. You want to feel this. And at the same time, what is the most important is to kind of use it but forget about it and go for the next one.

Q. How will you use the 2021 final against Novak for your mental preparation for this one, and how do you think it will affect you in the match on Sunday?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I think the only way I can use it is, as I say, thinking that Novak, when he loses, he's never the same after. So he's different. It's just a different mentality. That's why he has 23 Grand Slams, whatever, Masters 1000s, weeks at No. 1. So I have to use it knowing that he's going to be 10 times better than he was that day. And I have to be, if I want to still beat him, 10 times better than I was that day. That's what I'm going to try to do.

Q. Carlos was very complimentary of your forehand. Curious how you felt about your forehand today and what is the challenge of playing at that pace over best-of-five sets?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, the thing is US Open, and I don't really know the reason, I tend to play aggressive, fast, I serve well. Probably the speed of the court that helps me. Like, Indian Wells, I mean, that I did the final was amazing, because I basically can't hit the ball there. It has nothing to do, let's call it, with my forehand and so I beat some good guys there, some good matches, but as soon as I got someone like Carlos with his style of play, it was

kind of over for me.

I would generally think a court like Miami maybe I could have done the same like today. So for sure I had my plan in my head, but I kind of had the same one in Wimbledon and Indian Wells. It's just that the courts were tougher to use it. I mean, grass is completely different, so on grass it's just tougher to hit this forehand.

So I'm happy that I managed to get in his head.

Q. Mr. 12 out of 10, Carlos said you were returning from your house with the many great returns that you were hitting from deep. Just your thought about not only you being able to play more forceful at him and be right into him with your aggression, but also handling the crowd once again and dealing with all the celebrities that were in attendance like Tom Brady and Kevin Durant?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: True, there were a lot of celebrities they were showing all the time. I was trying to stay focused but I was like, Who is there? Who is the next one? I think I saw everybody who was there, and some of them, yeah, were pretty big stars. That's cool to see people enjoy tennis. That's amazing, because that's the sport I love.

So to see people I see on the TV and some of them I'm a fan and some of them I know just see in the movie or something like this, it's great to see them enjoy such a great match.

Talking about Carlos, I'm happy because in Indian Wells and Wimbledon he used well my return position from the back. But I knew that in my opinion it was not only this that made me lose to him, and I felt like even returning from back I can cause him trouble and I managed to prove it today. And that's actually going back to Craig's question, it's great to know that even against probably one of the best dropshotters and serve-and-volley guys in the game, can return from far, can win matches. So great.

Q. That sixth game on the fourth set, seven deuces, Carlos pumps up the crowd, it's probably as loud in Ashe all evening, then you get the break and then you have your own hand gesture. You said at the end of the match that you genuinely love the noise of the crowd.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: It was amazing.

Q. Was there a part of you that kind of had, you know, how about them apples or stick it to him a little bit with that gesture? How did the crowd help in maybe easing

the nerves or lack of confidence coming into the last couple of matches with Carlos?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, first of all, this game was absolutely amazing. Every time, because I think if you say seven deuces, he probably had like six game points and I managed to use my second breakpoint.

Every time he had these game points, I was, like, I was saying to myself, I can win this game. I can win this game. I managed to hit some amazing points. We were both pumping up the crowd, because the points were unbelievable.

When I won it, I was, like, Let's go, try to finish the match. I managed to do it. As I said, the crowd was unbelievable today. I felt like the energy was special. It's just that, as I say, for whatever reason the last game of the match, probably thousand Spanish guys started yelling and shouting between first and second serve. That's not nice, but what can you do? I can tell you if after my career I'm somewhere at a tennis match and someone does it, I'm going to be like, It's him, this guy, these guys should be out of the tournament. I'm not even going to watch the match. I'm going to be like, It's him who did it. Kick him out. (Laughter.)

When I'm on the court, I have to just focus and try to win it.

Q. What do you think was the key for you with your serving tonight? I also wanted to ask you, what memory for you is the strongest from that 2021 final here?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: The strongest memory is the last serve, because I did some double faults, I think two or three double faults on the match points, on important points.

40-15 double fault and 40-30, I have to make this serve and then play the point. I hit the serve. I kind of see in my opinion that it's done. I see him far from the ball and somehow he touches the ball and it almost went over. Oh, my God. It didn't went over. That was a big memory.

About the serve today, yeah, it was working well. Against someone like Carlos you have to serve well. You have no other choice. If he's all over your serve, he's all over you in a way.

I managed to hit some good serves, to hit some good zones, to mix it up in important moments. You know, we can call it lucky second serves, because when you go for it, there is part of luck, but you also take the risk, which if you're lucky this risk can pay off. Today was great, so as I

say, have to be the same on Sunday.

Q. There is this crazy statistic that your head-to-head is better with Novak when he's No. 1 and it's not good when he's not No. 1.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, yeah.

Q. So is this an extra motivation when he's at No. 1? It's like in a gray zone because he's going to be No. 1 Monday.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: That's funny, because as you say it, the statistic, now he's now still not No. 1. But, well, if we want to joke about it, I'm going to think, you know what, next Monday he's No. 1, so it's like if I'm playing him as No. 1.

Generally I don't know why the statistic is like this. I don't think it has anything to do with what happens in the matches. As I say, Sunday, I really don't care if he's No. 1 or No. 2. It's Novak Djokovic and I want to try to win (smiling).

FastScripts by ASAP Sports