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**Western & Southern
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MASTERS**

An interview with:

ANDY RODDICK

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Talk a little bit about your year. Started out pretty good with the title in Brisbane, and then good results in the spring. Tapered off just a little bit. Talk about what's happened with your game.

ANDY RODDICK: Sure. Yeah, you pretty much said it. I mean, there's not really -- I guess I'll go through the process of repeating what you just said.

My year started off pretty well and has tapered off a little bit recently.

Q. Is there a particular reason you can point to in terms of why?

ANDY RODDICK: Well, we're gonna fix that. It'll get better.

Q. When I saw you in Washington after you lost to Gilles Simon there, you said you were having with problems and feeling tired and fatigue and you were going to get tests done to figure out what's wrong with you. Did you ever do that and figure anything out?

ANDY RODDICK: Um, yeah. I pulled out last week on the advice of doctors. I got some blood work done in Washington, and then again in Texas, and one of them came back positive for -- I guess I've been dealing with a mild, mild case of mono for the last couple of months that I wasn't really sure about.

So they think I'm fine now. They think I'm most of the way through it, you know, if not all the way through it. So I think more than anything else, it's kind of a mental relief opposed to wondering why, if I was out of shape, this that, and the other.

So that's that.

Q. You looking really forward to playing here? You've had a lot of success. Won two titles; seems to be one of your favorite places to play.

ANDY RODDICK: I love playing here. I always enjoy coming back. You know, it's a little bit different now. I'm still trying to -- taking the wrong turns in the hallways and towards the locker room, the new facilities. They say, Go to press, and I really didn't know where I was going.

No, I mean, obviously it looks great. Looks like they did a really great job. I'm happy about that for two reasons: Obviously selfishly, we enjoy the spoils of it; and beyond that, they've shown a commitment to keep this tournament here for long after I'm done playing, which is probably the biggest issue that we're dealing with.

So I'm happy about it on both those points.

Q. Talk about your Huskers joining the Big 10.

ANDY RODDICK: We'll see. Still a ways away, you know. I'm not sure -- I'm excited about them moving the Big 10. I feel like they just kind of fit with everything.

Q. Ohio State's tough.

ANDY RODDICK: Ohio State is tough; so are Oklahoma and Texas, so it's kind of a case of pick your poison. But I was happy to see it. I feel like - and this is just a tangent - but I feel like once they separated into North and South and we lost the every-year rivalry against Oklahoma and Texas, it lost a little bit of something.

So I'm excited. There are so many great programs in the Big 10. Obviously you said Ohio State and Michigan and Penn State. I would be remiss if -- my trainer, Doug, would be upset with me if I didn't mention his Hoosiers either.

I feel like Nebraska fits in there real well, so I'm excited about it.

Q. Can you talk about your friendly rivalry with Chad Ochocinco. Do you think you'll ever play an exhibition match with him,

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or at all?

ANDY RODDICK: I don't know. We're gonna have to get something together, I guess. I haven't talked to him since I've been here. We both been flapping our gums for a little bit while, so I guess we've got to live up to it at some point. We'll see. Maybe it'll happen sometime this week.

Q. Do you talk beyond Twitter?

ANDY RODDICK: We kind of talk through T.O. sometimes. We kind of trash talk through him. So who knows what the other person is hearing. T.O. might elaborate, maybe add something to it.

Q. Are you gonna go to the game Sunday night since he flew down to Australia to see you?

ANDY RODDICK: Way to add the guilt on the back of that one. Appreciate it. We'll see. I mean, I could tell you yes and you would never know.

Q. Shorter trip.

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah, exactly.

Q. With your mono diagnosis, does that change your expectations and goals for this tournament and the US Open?

ANDY RODDICK: No, I mean, like I said, I'm through the worst of it, which is good. I think if anything, you know, like I said, I'm just glad that we found something that was causing.

It's weird not -- the fear of kind of the unknown and not knowing what's going on. There were some days where it was good and some days where it was real bad. So it was like you would have those two or three good days, and it was like, okay, you're just being kind of a wimp.

So it's nice to just have a little bit of clarity moving forward. It's not something that's gonna affect me, you know, anything super serious. So it was good. It was good to kind of at least figure it out, and well worth my time to take the time to really give the time to figure it out.

Q. So you were kind of getting drained when you didn't expect to be?

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah, faster. You know, I would get -- I normally -- I enjoy training all day and running all day and doing all that stuff. You know, I opted out of probably four or five

workouts this summer that I've never done that before.

So that wasn't fun. It was just me wondering if I was out of shape or what was going on, why there was this lethargic feeling. You know, like I said, it is what it is, and you move forward.

Q. How long had it been going on for?

ANDY RODDICK: Couple months, maybe. I mean, I guess that's about -- that's what the doc said. I said, I'm feeling better. I felt a lot better in Washington than I had kind of training.

So he said, you know the good news is you're probably ready to rock. Be a little careful, but he said, You should be fine to go. So that was a relief.

Q. Can you pinpoint why you've had a lot of success here? This is one of tournaments you've tended to do really, really well. Is there anything you can point to that your game just hits right here for some reason?

ANDY RODDICK: Well, I mean, I think there's probably a convergence of reasons. You know, it's probably my favorite surface. You know, I normally enjoy pretty hot conditions. No one really enjoys them, but I don't hate them as much as most.

I've always gotten great support here, especially I remember in '06 when I was in a similar situation. I think I was 12 in the world, and I think people were trying to retire me then. You know, the crowd really got behind me that year, and I was able to go through and get a win, which was desperately needed at that stage of my career.

From there, I made the final of the Open again. So a lot of that was the support I got here. I feel comfortable here. I have family close by here. You know, it's just a place that I enjoy coming to.

Q. Were you able to practice since D.C.?

ANDY RODDICK: Yes. Yeah, I didn't practice for a while, but I started hitting a couple days ago.

Q. You didn't pull out until fairly late in Toronto, I think. You didn't go to Toronto, is that right, or did you go?

ANDY RODDICK: I did not go.

Q. What was it about the timing in making that decision?

ANDY RODDICK: Well, it was just a matter of being thorough. I mean, if we get these things back and nothing's wrong and I'm just tired, that's something you go play.

Toronto was nice enough. We explained the situation. They were great. They said, We can try to guarantee as late of a start as possible, 3:00 on a Wednesday or whatever it was. So that gave us the flexibility we needed.

Washington I think I lost at Thursday night, so there was an a little bit of wiggle room as far as trying to come up with what our plan was. I think we worked with the ATP to see what our options were. Toronto accommodated, and then we got kind of our answers back.

From that point, I wasn't gonna play Toronto. But I didn't want to pull out on Friday and then not give myself any chance or any form of mental clarity, I guess.

Q. How important is it that you have fallen out of the top 10? For instance, now you don't have a first-round bye. You've got to play a first-round match.

ANDY RODDICK: That's fine. I've done it before. We only started getting the byes a couple years ago. I think people put a lot more stock in it. I've kind of checked out since Washington, but I'm just hearing from Sam and Mardy how much they've been asked about it.

Q. Do you think it might actually work for you? Because it gives you more matches, assuming you win.

ANDY RODDICK: We'll see. You can view that either way. I can't predict circumstance. You know, sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn't. But it doesn't bother me that much.

I know when I'm playing well, and I've proved that as recently as April. When I'm playing well and fit, I'm one of the best in the world. I don't feel the need to prove that on a week-to-week basis. I've been proving that for ten years.

I'm probably less concerned with that than everybody else is.

Q. Roger avenged his loss at Wimbledon last night. Do you think about

getting another shot at Lu on your favorite surface?

ANDY RODDICK: I don't know if I've thought about that one time in the last little while. You know, obviously it puts a little bit of an onus on it if that opportunity presents itself.

But, you know, I played him five times before that match. I will play him more. Obviously there's -- next time you go out there you are gonna want -- you do want a piece of that person, but it's not something that I have been consumed with or even thought about on a daily basis.

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