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MASTERS

M. FISH/A. Roddick

4-6, 7-6, 6-1

An interview with:

ANDY RODDICK

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How much did the second rain delay affect you?

ANDY RODDICK: Well, I mean, the first one really helped; the second one obviously didn't. That's the thing with rain delays. The momentum can shift really fast.

I benefited from it the first time for sure. He came out and served kind of a sluggish game right away, and I kind of matched that. And then once he got back into it, he completely outplayed me in the third set. He was swinging from the hips. Even the breaker, I didn't play a bad breaker. I made first serves and he played well.

A lot of it comes down to one of the most important points was the ball I missed, the first point of the game where I was serving it out. You know, it was a short ball. I kind of think I hit it -- because he had been hitting his passes pretty well, I think I overhit it. I make him play there, it might be a different story.

Q. Did you feel uncomfortable approaching the net today?

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah. I mean, I didn't -- you know, this whole week I've kind of been surviving and I've been competing real well. Ball-striking has been okay.

Got exposed a little bit today by a player -- he's probably playing a little bit better right now. He's very confident, and, you know, he has the last five, six weeks to build up on that. You know, he played better than I did at the important moments today.

Q. On your forehand, you had 15 unforced errors. Actually more than your backhand unforced errors, which is kind of surprising. Anything going on specific with the forehand today?

ANDY RODDICK: Just wasn't falling. I was trying to put good swings on the ball, and it was extremely erratic today. I was pretty happy with almost everything else in my game, even the net stuff. He hit a lot of great passing shots. You know, a lot of times I put myself in positions I wanted to, and he came up with the goods.

My forehand was something that I was in complete control of, and donated a little bit. So that's something that I need to work on. But, you know, ten days ago I feel like every shot I had felt that way. Now we're down to one, so it's a good thing.

Q. Not a lot of aces today. Do you attribute that to him knowing your serve a little bit and knowing where you're gonna go?

ANDY RODDICK: Possibly. I don't know. My percentages weren't where I wanted them to be all week. You know, as far as the other thing, he was doing a good job of -- he wasn't really being aggressive on first serves. He was putting ball in play.

I think more so than that was he was hitting the second ball real well from a defensive position and he was neutralizing really well. I think more so than the serve or the return or anything like that, I think he was -- the part of his game that's changed the most is his ability to neutralize off that second ball and really dig in and then get back to even terms.

Q. How do you feel health-wise going into the Open? I know you were suffering from a little bit of mono.

ANDY RODDICK: I feel okay. You know, to be honest, I came here and I had no expectations. For me to get in five really tough matches is more than I could've asked for going

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into the Open. Honestly, when I came here I was thinking maybe two matches we'll see. I hadn't really put too much time in.

So beyond the disappointment that's gonna linger for the next couple of hours, I think this week has been a complete positive considering how I felt and kind of where I was at 11 or 12 days ago.

Q. You mentioned his first serve wasn't doing anything much, but you only won four points on his first serve all day. What was going on with that?

ANDY RODDICK: Well, you know, a lot of times that's a credit to him. You know, he's mixing it up well and he wasn't real patterned. I didn't do that well against his first serve in Atlanta when we played either, so that's something that I probably I need to look at.

But he's doing a good job controlling that first ball, also.

Q. In terms of your game, what do like about what you're doing into the Open, and what do you need to improve on?

ANDY RODDICK: Well, I can improve on a lot. I won a big number of second serve return points this week. If I can get my serving numbers where I want them to be and kind of just maybe tighten up the errors a little bit, I feel like I'll be playing real well.

I feel like I took a lot of good strides this week, but there's just a couple fine details now that I think can turn from playing good to playing really well.

Q. What do you do during the one-hour delay?

ANDY RODDICK: Sat in the locker room.

Q. Was Mardy there with you?

ANDY RODDICK: No. I made him get out.

Q. Is the fan support you get here consistent with what you get around the U.S. and around the world?

ANDY RODDICK: I think this is up there with the most that I get. The fans are so enthusiastic here about the sport, and really get behind their countrymen. You know, it's a place I've certainly always appreciated playing, and always look forward to coming back, too.

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Q. Del Potro pulled out of the Open today. How do you see the field heading into the Open? A really wide open field this year.

ANDY RODDICK: Um, everything is different at a slam. Everything is different. You're gonna have the normal cast of characters as the favorites, and then that next kind of tier of four or five guys -- I think Mardy has played himself into that discussion, and I think with this week I've kind of put myself back in that discussion.

Obviously you've got to favor the guys that have been there and done it before. A slam is a little bit of a different animal. So Del Potro pulling out, I don't think that has much emphasis. It would have been a pretty tall ask for him to come back and his first tournament be a major player. That's something that's built up over time.

So I don't think it's that much different than what we've seen over the last year or so.

Q. On a positive side, you only had four double faults the whole match. That has to make you pretty happy.

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah, that's...

Q. Timing may not be great.

ANDY RODDICK: I normally keep my double faults pretty low. I've actually double faulted probably a little bit more this week than I normally have.

But, again, overall I'm a lot further ahead than I was 10, 11 days ago where I didn't know what the hell was going on with myself. Mentally, when you have that many questions, physically, whenever else, it's kind of a miserable spot to be in.

So to kind of come here and actually be talking about how I let a final slip away is a position I didn't think I would be in. So I'm gonna have to try to have a positive perspective about things, because I'm a lot further ahead than I was this time last week.

I'm disappointed that I let this one get away today. Overall, I feel like it was a very positive week.

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