

**August 22, 2010**



**Western & Southern  
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**MASTERS**

R. FEDERER/M. Fish

6-7, 7-6, 6-4

An interview with:

## **MARDY FISH**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. On that third game of the match, 1-All, it was probably the longest game. 11.5 minutes. How critical was that for you to hold within the context of the whole match?**

MARDY FISH: Yeah, it was a big sort of starting point of the match, trying to feel each other out a bit. We haven't play in a while, two and a half years or so.

You lose that game there, and you know he might steamroll you and get some confidence. He plays unbelievable ahead. So that was huge to keep myself in it.

Clearly the first set was huge. I would have liked to have played a little bit better tiebreaker. Maybe put a little bit more pressure on him. But I can't complain too much.

**Q. I know it's hard right now, but talk about your entire summer heading into the Open. How do you feel?**

MARDY FISH: Yeah, I feel great, obviously. I've done some things that I've never done before. I'll be able to put this match in perspective very shortly. You know, it's a great tournament. It's as well as I've played. I played well today; he played well today. It was a pretty high level, I thought, for the most part.

So, you know, one break against Roger in two matches -- in two matches he's only broken me one time in five sets, so I've played really well against him the past couple times.

**Q. What beyond the obvious, the one break, what was the difference between you and him today?**

MARDY FISH: Well, it was just a few points. You know, in that game I had a breakpoint in the third set; I had maybe two forehands on my racquet. Might have been 3-2 me or something. That's one point that goes the other way, and you're in a really good spot there to win.

That being said, there was probably a ton of those. You know, some deuce points, he served -- God, he served so well at the 30-All points. Had a lot of 30-Alls. He went most of 'em down the T and made almost everyone of them.

I didn't have many looks on the second serve. He really took care of his second serve really well.

**Q. Have you ever made the final of a tournament when you were the wildcard entry?**

MARDY FISH: I don't know. I can't think off the top of my head. This is my 17th final, so maybe one of those in there. Maybe Indian Wells. I was ranked 98 Indian Wells '08. Maybe I was a wildcard then. It was close. I don't know.

**Q. Seemed like you did better on the longer rallies than he did. I think the longest rally was 19 shots. Talk a little bit about maybe your strategy. Were you trying to draw him into longer rallies?**

MARDY FISH: He plays on his terms. You know, he works his forehand around the court, goes after the ball, and keeps you on your heels. I would have liked to have played -- if I were to change anything, I would have tried to play a little more aggressive on his serve games, maybe on some second serves.

He must have served 65% at least. That's not very many looks.

**Q. How helpful was the crowd?**

MARDY FISH: They're great. It's one of the best stops of the year. Clearly with the new improvements to the site, I mean, it's an awesome

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**M Fish - 08 22 10**

tournament.

I'm glad to have played well here twice and almost won twice.

**Q. Throughout this tournament and throughout this year, you've played some very inspiring tennis. So what would you tell someone who is striving to give their best, be their best at what they're doing? What words of encouragement, inspiration would you give them?**

MARDY FISH: I think you got to really love what you do. I love what I do. I'm not much of a preacher, but you got to look yourself in the mirror every day. If you're comfortable with -- I know I wasn't comfortable with what I was doing prior to last -- you know, to the middle of last year.

So I set out to lose a lot of weight and to try to put myself in position where I didn't have any regrets. So if you can try to do that, you know, try to not have any regrets or be comfortable with everything you've done, that's important.

**Q. Did you think that he was being a little too aggressive on your serves? Seemed like you had a lot of return errors when you were serving.**

MARDY FISH: I would like to think I had something to do with that.

**Q. 17 aces.**

MARDY FISH: Yeah, I tried to mix up a ton of speeds on my second serve with him. He can get you in a rhythm where he's chipping that backhand short, and it's an awkward and uncomfortable ball to hit.

I tried to, you know, mix up spots and speeds. You could tell he was uncomfortable with it.

**Q. Can you talk about your emotions right now playing such a tight match and having it come down to the wire like that? What do you take away from this match?**

MARDY FISH: Well, knowing that I can play with anyone. Him and Murray playing this in tournament, you know, and coming close to winning both those matches, I can't tell you the confidence that it gives you going into probably our biggest tournament of the year, for Americans at least.

You know, it's a really good run, good week for me, and I know that. It's disappointing to

lose. I've played three Masters Series finals and lost in three sets in every one. I desperately want to sort of have my career maybe be remembered by a big tournament or something like that.

I've finished second in a lot of big tournaments: the Olympics and here a couple times and Indian Wells I've played really well. So I've wanted badly to win a real big one. This would have been perfect, but wasn't meant to be.

**Q. Have you thought about maybe I can play my first ATP finals in my career?**

MARDY FISH: Well, I mean, it's tough to think about it right now. I don't know where I am in the race. I would assume I'm far away.

But weirder things have happened. You know, we still have a Grand Slam and we've still got a couple Masters Series to go. Still have very big tournaments to play. If I can stay healthy and keep winning matches, you know, you never know.

**Q. Talk about the importance of your support staff.**

MARDY FISH: Yeah, they're huge. Christian is as good as it gets as far as physio is concerned. He's been a great friend for the past year and a half that we've been working together. You become really close with the guys out here that you travel with. You're with 'em day in and day out. He works as hard as anyone I've ever been with.

The USTA has been terrific with me. I have been able to share a coach with Sam Querrey who has also been spectacular in allowing me to sort of take David Nainkin when he's not using him. I've benefited a ton from them.

So they've been as good as it gets.

**Q. Looking at current form going into the US Open, would you say that Federer has at the moment just that a little bit more than the other guys? Is he the man to beat really?**

MARDY FISH: Probably. You know, he's just been there so many times. Clearly he loves the US Open. He's made the finals there I'm pretty sure six times in a row and won five of those.

His record is incredible in Grand Slams. I feel like he's a different player even in Grand Slams as opposed to even Masters 1000 tournaments.

**Q. In what way?**

MARDY FISH: I think he realizes the importance that -- you know, when you speak about the best players ever, you speak about how many Grand Slams they've won, let's face it. I know that Mats Wilander won eight Grand Slams, but I have no idea how many Masters Series he won.

I know that Agassi has won eight or nine...

GREG SHARKO: 16 Masters Series.

MARDY FISH: And eight slams. But I'm not sure. So I think he clearly wants to win. I think he's got a different mindset set maybe in the Grand Slams.

He's almost as unbeatable as it gets.

**Q. You've played Roger now seven times. Do you think his level has fallen off just a little bit from when he was really dominant?**

MARDY FISH: No. I mean, no. Everybody's gotten better. Rafa has really improved his game, particularly at Wimbledon. Roger has clearly owned that tournament for a while. He's as good as anyone at the US Open. Has been maybe ever. So I don't think so, no.

**Q. Where do you go from here?**

MARDY FISH: Um, that's a good question. I'll probably go back to the locker room. (Laughter.) No, I don't know. I just came straight up here, so...

I mean, I'm in the draw in New Haven, so we'll try to make a decision on what's best for the US Open there.

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