

**August 15, 2012**



**N. DJOKOVIC/A. Seppi**

7-6, 6-2

An interview with:

## **NOVAK DJOKOVIC**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. A lot easier than Roland Garros, no?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: But still, you know, first match here, you know, I don't think I have done anything special. You know, really just trying to put another ball more in the court than my opponent today was enough to win.

Yeah, obviously not very satisfied with the performance. I will have to play much better than I did today in order to go far.

**Q. I know the top 8 get byes, but what's your opinion of having a back-to-back week of 1000s at this point in the year?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, look, you know, the schedule is as it is, and we're trying all to adjust to it. Obviously there are many things that we would like to change, that we would like to see differently, you know.

But unfortunately it's not always about players' wishes. It's about tournaments, sponsors, TV rights. All these different things matter when you're trying to organize the schedule, which is very long.

So this year we're going to have it two weeks shorter, which is a good thing, but the intensity is even bigger because if it's two weeks shorter but commitment events stay the same.

Sometimes it's really hard to try to stay, you know, fit for every single tournament and try to perform your best, you know. I mean, in last three, four weeks, I have changed three different, you know, cities, places, surfaces, conditions. Still trying to figure out where I am.

**Q. Seppi said that he felt that your confidence grew there in the second set, especially after that break. Can you talk about kind of what's going on from you from the first set to the second?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, look, you know, a lot of unforced errors from both of us. It wasn't really pretty match.

I mean, I had many opportunities in the first set, break balls, I should have stepped in and used those. I didn't.

I have managed to play good in tiebreak. Second set was much better, much better rhythm and, you know, going through the balls.

So hopefully that rhythm will continue on tomorrow.

**Q. Did you ask to play on night session?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I asked to play a bit later, yeah. But, you know, I'm not angry with the tournament, you know. Of course there is many matches; it's a combined event. You know, I had to accept it the way it is.

**Q. You probably heard that Rafa pulled out of the US Open.**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah, I heard.

**Q. I'm just wondering what your thoughts are about that and his long term processes, if it seems like he has this chronic tendonitis.**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I really don't know what the injury is and how serious it is. Obviously it's that serious that takes him, you know, out from the tour for last couple of months.

You know, he's a great competitor, and, you know. He's somebody I know really well on and off the court. I'm sure that if he was able to perform in US Open he would come.

So I wish him a quick recovery, obviously.

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**N. Djokovic 0 08.15.12**

**Q. A lot more players are starting to wear clothing from Asian companies; you most recently made a switch. Can you take us through how that was decided?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, Asian market is a growing market, and then UniQlo is a company that is very successful, especially in that part of the world, and they are spreading all over the world. They have a big flagship stores in New York and London.

They have a great strategy and philosophy of the company that kind of matches my own, and that is to try to be innovative and creative and, you know, young company.

So I decided to go with them, and so far so good.

**Q. You played Rafa four out of the last five Grand Slams. Obviously great rivalry. Going into the US Open I realize there are a lot of other great players, but does it take away a little bit of the excitement for you knowing he's not going to be there, one of your great rivals?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, my excitement is always the same when I am approaching any Grand Slam. Obviously it's the biggest tournaments we have in sport.

Yes, the fact is that tennis is going to lose a little bit because of Rafa not being there and playing, because he's somebody that has made a history of this sport. We all know how good he is and how popular he is.

Again, there is everybody else except him who is going to play there, so I am sure we will have a good tournament.

**Q. As a top returner, I'm wondering, do you pay any attention to the speed gun?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yes.

**Q. I mean, do you believe it? How does it affect how you...**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, if somebody aces me and I don't even see the ball, then I have a look at the speed gun just to know if it's over 140 miles.

**Q. How significant do you think it is for sports in Serbia that at this year's Olympics you guys got a gold medal in women's Taekwondo on top of the traditional sports you do well in, like water polo?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah, it was a great surprise, and obviously they made me and all the

people from Serbia very proud. Of course we were hoping for as many medals as possible. We took four medals in total, which is one more than Beijing.

We may have expected a little bit more, but look, you know, it's the highest, the most difficult, and most well-known sport competition in the world. Everybody wants to be there. Everybody fights for a medal.

So it was a great success from Milica for Taekwondo? Ivana was the other one in shooting, and then we had the water polo team and another medal in shooting.

It's great. You know, usually we are the nation of team sports. Water polo is a sport that always brings success. Unfortunately tennis this time didn't bring any medals, so we hope for more in Brazil.

**Q. Do you think that hope for more and maybe acknowledgement a little bit of disappoint is what Divac meant when he said, Serbia remains a sporting nation?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Oh, of course. Look, I mean, there is different kinds of expectations, but people have to be aware of the fact that there is such a big competition in each sport.

Sometimes you perform your best on a given day; sometimes not. You fall under pressure. It's normal, you know, ups and downs of professional sports.

So, you know, we always try. Hope is always there and we never give up. You know, I think every medal that we won in London is going to give more motivation to all of us to try to prepare better for next one.

**Q. You talked about the crowded schedule, how physically demanding it is. After the Olympics, which is as important and a pretty successful best-of-three tournament, there was talk about possibly making Grand Slams best-of-three as well some day for the men. You played a six-hour final in the Australia. How would you feel about that happening some day?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I wouldn't deny it, definitely. You know, it just depends. You know, from one side it would be maybe better for us because then we could get more rest and not get into those long couple of hours' matches.

On the other hand, it's been a tradition of

this sport for many years, and we all try to respect the tradition. I think that is why tennis is so global and respected throughout the world, because we keep our tradition, keep our tournaments.

So it's a very fine line. It's very hard to say. But at least we have a day between the matches of best-of-five where you can rest.

**Q. You've got Davydenko next. Can you talk about how you match up with him?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I haven't played him for a while now, but he's been around for a long time. Great competitor and one of the quickest guys on tour. Very good from the baseline. I think these conditions here suit his game.

It's going to be a tough one.

**Q. Three weeks in a row for you. I think you're the only guy in the top five to have played the Olympics, Canada, and here. Do you consider that a physical risk at all?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: For now I'm feeling really good, so hopefully it says that way. I'm doing everything in my power with my team to stay fit and, you know, try to get as far as I can in this tournament.

**Q. But did you consider, before the Olympics, taking one of the events off?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I did consider the option, but right now I feel good, so after Toronto I felt also physically well. And even though I had a lot of interruptions with rain and a lot of days where I, you know, struggled physically, I am here now and feeling good.

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