

**August 13, 2014**



**N. DJOKOVIC/G. Simon**

6-3, 4-6, 6-4

An interview with:

## **NOVAK DJOKOVIC**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Congratulations on the win. Gilles had five consecutive games against you at one point last part of the second set, early in the third. What was the problem at that time?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Just wasn't able to hit the ball as well as I did first set and a half. I think he's a very tricky player, very solid from both sides, from the baseline. You know, he's not going to give you too many unforced errors and free points, so I knew that.

His lateral movement behind the baseline is very good. He's making player, you know, play an extra shot. So try to mix it up, change the pace, get the right angle. Was working quite well, and then suddenly I start making unforced errors and backed up a little bit and he started, you know, dominating the rallies. That's what happened.

Then it was a pretty even third set up to the end. But again, you know, it's a fight. I'm just glad I managed to win this one.

**Q. You had a lot of irritated looks on your face in the course of the match. I'm just wondering if you feel like it's good to get that win even though you're not playing that well? What were you feeling out there?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, look, let's be honest. I don't enjoy playing bad. I don't enjoy missing a lot of balls from the baseline. You know, that was frustrating for me.

But I managed to get a W in the end, and that's what matters. You know, I spoke to my team before trying to get the right mindset, and, you know, competitive intensity on the court.

You know, I think I did well for the most part of the match. End of the second, start of the third wasn't that great. But, look, I try to take positives from every match. I know I'm not playing at the level yet where I want to be and it's obvious, but I keep on pushing myself.

Every day is a new challenge to try to, you know, look out for a better game tomorrow and after tomorrow, and hopefully it's going to come.

**Q. You said in your on-court interview you just didn't feel comfortable on the court. Is that the conditions or your own game or a combination?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, it's a combination. The conditions were the same for both of us. Truth is that they were quite strange, you know. It was cold. Started to rain a little bit. It was very windy. It's not easy to play, especially when you play somebody like Simon who gets every ball back and makes you play.

Sometimes you feel like you're not able to take advantage of the short balls, and I lost my footing there a little bit and framed some shots.

You know, it's easy to lose the confidence in your shots. That's why for some part of the match I was irritated a little bit, but I managed to come back.

**Q. How easy is it for you to concentrate on tennis right now compared to other times?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I mean, look, tennis is a big part of my life. I enjoy the sport. I love this sport. I love competing, traveling, you know, being around people who care about me, who sacrifice their lives for me to be here and most of their time. I don't take that for granted.

I understand that many people who are not as fortunate as I am to do what they love to do. To be top of the world in this sport, it's quite a remarkable, so I always try to remind myself of that.

Things have -- big things have happened in my life recently. Of course I got married and

soon to be a father hopefully, so of course these are the joyful moments in life one can experience.

That obviously is going to affect my, you know, priorities in life. But tennis-wise I'm going to, of course, as long as I have this passion for the sport, keep on going and keep on practicing and working and hoping that I can win many big titles and stay No. 1.

**Q. You construct points very well. It seemed a little odd that on a fast hardcourt some of the rallies were extended 15, 20 shots. Seemingly you came up on the short end of most of those. Any thoughts on why there were so many long rallies tonight?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: As I said, I think it worked well for 6-3, 4-2. Most of the rallies I was in control. I changed the length of my shots, the pace, the spin, the angles.

But then again, as I was saying before, Gilles is a very consistent player from baseline. If you start making some unforced errors and if you start doubting your shots for a little bit, that's where he strikes.

That's what happened, really, and it was kind of difficult to make the shots that I was making for most part of the first part of the match.

**Q. Obviously the conditions were not ideal, but there were several times in the first set and some in the second where you stopped your service motion or you caught your toss. I'm wondering if you ever feel bad or embarrassed when that happens? And alternatively, if it happens to you, do you find it disrupts your return at all?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I don't feel embarrassed. It's part of the game, you know. You can't always have an ideal toss. Or if the conditions are as difficult as we had tonight, it happens. I mean, he did it; I did it. It happens to the best servers, not only me.

This is the life of a tennis player. You have to always adjust to different conditions. That's why the sport is very unique.

**Q. Obviously you and the top guys get byes in the Masters 1000s, and every time your first match you're playing against somebody that already has a match already under their belt. So many people say they just want to get through the first match. What's that like having to play somebody who has been here, has had a match under his belt already?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, it can play to their advantage looking from that perspective. But the other hand, it's been like this for many years. Looking at the big picture, of course if you have high expectation from yourself to go far in the tournament, then maybe playing a match less each day it helps physically for you.

But, again, it's good to be seeded in one way, but in the other hand, you know, in this particular condition on the court, it's also good to have a match under your belt before you come into the big one.

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