

March 27, 2009

Sony Ericsson Open

N. DJOKOVIC/F. Dancevic

6-3, 6-2

An interview with:

NOVAK DJOKOVIC

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How do you feel today? You felt good?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah, I felt good on the court. I think most of my first-round matches this year I haven't got, you know, the right rhythm. But today I was pretty happy with the way I started this tournament.

Q. Any reason why your first-round matches have been awkward for you?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Obviously I wasn't focused enough, and today I played the right game. I was really -- every single game I played I want to give my best, and I think I was -- the concentration was quite important key today.

Q. How is the experience to have the ATP tournament in your country?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, it's a new experience for me and my family and everybody, I think, in Serbia. I think never had an ATP event in my country, so we look forward to that.

We have a lot of interest in sponsors and tennis fans around Serbia, and it's already being announced. Everybody is waiting to have a ticket and come to see the tennis stars.

It's the first year, so we're excited. We're going to try to make a great impression on the tennis world.

Q. The ATP is very happy about it as well.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah, of course.

Q. So now are you going to have to do something more than play? Like are they going to make you clean up and fix things and organize?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: For me I think it's a challenge. It's excitement in one way, because I'm a player and this is my job, my life.

I've been involved in the players' council, so I'm really trying, organization-wise, to do some things and to be a part of innovations, let's say.

So being directly a part of the organization of the event is quite important for my tournament, I think. And because there are certain details on the tournament that I can help out, you know, the organization.

From the perspective of the player, it's exciting. So I look forward to it.

Q. Are you prepared, though? Like some players might come to you and go, Novak, there's not enough water, or Novak...

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: No, I'm not going to clean off the court, for sure. No, they gave me three instead of four balls for practice and things like that.

Well, you know it might be. It was funny, because I was not -- you know, not literally negotiating with the players to come to the tournament, but I was just talking it through so they can think about some of the top players.

I know it's not actually easy week, because you have the 2000 events, Rome and Madrid, and we're in between. Most of the top players will probably not come because they want to focus themselves at major events.

We have a 28 draw, which is a great thing. It'll help our tournament to survive. Hopefully we going to save some wild cards for the top players if they want to come.

Q. Have you convinced anyone special yet?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Couple players. I don't know if you seen, but Stepanek and Croats, like Ljubicic and Karlovic and players like Cañas. So we going to have a decent first year.

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Q. Do you have an actual title at the event? Obviously not director.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Serbia Open, right?

Q. No, I mean you. Do you have a --

BENITO PEREZ: Top seed.

Q. Your uncle is the tournament director, right?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Yeah.

Q. If you could be a super hero, which one would you be and why? What kind of super power would you like to have?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I think it's unrealistic to look in that way. I wasn't really into that too much. I probably like to be invisible. Just sneak into the girls' locker room. That's one of the super powers.

Q. Why did you change the racquet brand this year?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I already played for a couple of years in my junior years, so I just basically went back to the old brand. So it wasn't really a -- it was a big change, a big responsibility for me, and quite risky in this period to change the most important tool in our sport.

But, look, I look forward to it. The guys did a good job, so I'm happy.

Q. Stepanek, he's not getting paid for it, but he plays with a racquet that's basically manufactured for him. Have you asked him about that at all?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: No. The only thing I know about him is that he played with my racquets his first match in Masters Cup.

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