

April 3, 2009

Sony Ericsson Open

A. MURRAY/J. Del Potro

6-1, 5-7, 6-2

An interview with:

ANDY MURRAY

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What gave you most satisfaction about coming through this evening?

ANDY MURRAY: Well, I mean, I had to fight hard in the end. I played a great first set, you know. I'm sure it's easy to say that I dropped my level a little bit, but I was playing great tennis in the first set.

The guy served like 80% first serves in the second set and served big. It wasn't like he was just rolling them in. He was serving like 125, 130 and made it tough for me.

I did play one bad game from 40-Love up on my serve. Apart from that, it wasn't like I was making a lot mistakes or missing balls that I shouldn't have been.

He served really well in that set and put pressure on my service games. In the third I managed to fight back and played well again.

Q. In the first set I think he won 14 points in the whole set. How does that set rank in terms of the best set you ever played?

ANDY MURRAY: It was very good. I mean, I played a lot of good sets before. I mean, it's just whether you can sort of manage to do it for the whole match.

Today I didn't necessarily play that level the whole way through. Like I said, I managed to come through in the end. But, no, it was up there. I played very well and made him do a lot of moving and changed the pace of the ball. Didn't go for huge serves, just served smart.

No, it was very good.

Q. Was it your mindset that he had played three hours in his previous encounter and it might work in your favor?

ANDY MURRAY: No, I mean, obviously he was going to be a bit tired at the end of the match. I think the difference between playing three sets and five is that if you're behind, you know -- like in the second set, you know, he played a few good games and got a bit of momentum and was always ahead and served well.

You can always sort of see the finish line kind of. Whereas in a five-set match it's tough to sort of keep coming back and fighting when you know you're going to be on the court for at least another two and a half, three hours.

So he obviously gave it a good go. Just at the end, I don't know if it was physical thing why, you know, he started to miss balls at the end or not.

But, you know, I'm very happy with the way I played. So whether he's tired or not doesn't really bother me.

Q. Have you ever felt this good going into a Masters final?

ANDY MURRAY: Well, I mean, in Madrid I felt good. I think each time you get to the final, you know, of a big tournament you're going to be feeling pretty good about your game.

The one thing that is tricky here and, you know, obviously last week, you know, with Rafa was playing well going in and had some very nasty conditions to deal with. I struggled with my game.

Here it can be very windy as well. It will be right in the heat of day so it's going to be physically challenging. There's a lot of things you have to contend with.

I'm feeling good and I'm hitting the ball well, and I'll try and do the same thing in the final.

Q. How did you feel regarding the crowd? They were sometimes against you.

ANDY MURRAY: No, I mean he had great support in his match with Rafa yesterday, and tonight as well. But it's sort of more like a Davis Cup atmosphere. Yeah, they got behind him.

But I felt like, you know, I dealt with it very well. Got me a little bit more fired up when they

booed when the Scottish flag came on the big screen.

I thought it was a good atmosphere. It wasn't too bad. You know, but the Argentines love their tennis, and there's a reason why it's so tough to play against in Argentina. The crowd really helped them out, and they did the same tonight.

Q. You've beaten Djokovic in the past. Do you think you have an edge over him in the final?

ANDY MURRAY: No, I think if both of us play well, it'll be a great match. You know, I'm sure he feels the same way. You know, I know I'll have to play well if I want to beat him.

The last couple of times I played I sort of figured out a way to play against him; whereas before I struggled a little bit. I feel confident, and I've had a really good run so far this year. Not going to put any extra pressure on myself for the match tomorrow, or Sunday. It's going to be a good match.

Q. Could you just take us through what you were thinking when he took his breather, so to speak, on the third breakpoint? You were in a great position to win the match, and he bends low for a volley and walks off and has treatment and you've got to wait until he comes back on. Do you think's slightly against the spirit in which the game should be played?

ANDY MURRAY: Well, I mean, the tough thing is, yeah, he could be badly hurt. So, you know, you have to obviously look at the player's health.

What obviously you don't want is if the players are sort of using the medical timeouts and toilet breaks to disrupt the rhythm of the opponents. That's obviously not -- it's pretty unsporting if you're doing that.

But if guys are hurt, they're more than entitled to take the injury timeout. I just think that sometimes -- you know, I understand obviously that the physios have to come out and assess the situation and know what the problem is and whatnot.

But, you know, it was probably a good -- by the time that point had finished, before he actually hit the next ball it's going to be six, seven minutes. It's a long break. I think they could maybe speed that up a little bit and reduce the time that the physios are allowed.

You have to look for the player's health first. Sometimes guys, yeah, might exploit it a little

bit and use the rule to their advantage. But, you know, I'm not the one to answer that. You know, Juan will, I guess, tell you the truth.

Q. What other sport can you stop it at such a really crucial juncture like that and have a seven-minute timeout for what looked like a rub, basically, on his thigh?

ANDY MURRAY: That's obviously the thing that is tough. I mean, you can't. I guess in football guys would get substituted if they have a problem at the end of the game. They're taken off with obviously one-on-one sport. They have to stop the play.

Yeah, I mean, I'm all for, you know, saying guys, unless there's some sort of taping required or whatever, that you shouldn't really be allowed to sort of stop and just have a massage, because I don't think that's making a huge -- doesn't make a huge difference in two minutes.

A massage on your groin or whatever is not going to cure it. If there is a problem, it's not going cure it.

Q. Were you really pleased with how well you coped with that situation and served out so well for the match?

ANDY MURRAY: Yeah, when I broke him I played quickly. I knew that he was taking a long time in between points. You know, I don't know if he was trying to slow the pace down or if he was a bit tired and trying to make sure he was feeling good going into each point.

I served well at the end of the match. I played aggressive. You know, my service games, you know, didn't give him any chances when I got ahead in the third.

Q. Did you watch any of the Federer/Djokovic match?

ANDY MURRAY: Yeah, I watched it on the TV.

Q. Did you have a wish for an outcome?

ANDY MURRAY: No. Obviously both are great players. Wasn't the best of matches. I'm sure Roger and Novak will tell you the same thing. But the conditions are tough, I'm sure.

People watching me in Indian Wells in the final last week wouldn't have thought I was a particularly good player. Sometimes the conditions

are very tricky. You know, Federer made a lot of mistakes in the second and third sets. Really lost his rhythm. Sometimes that happens in the wind.

But, I mean, after the first set I thought Federer was going to go and win it.

Q. Did it give you any insight on how Djokovic might play on Sunday?

ANDY MURRAY: No. I think one of the things that -- you know, obviously you can watch matches to sort of see what guys, what sort of patterns they play or what they like to do on big points and whatnot. They're going to change the game depending on who they're playing against.

There's not one way of playing tennis. Every guy has his strengths and weaknesses. I'm sure he'll try and change the way that he played today against me. I'll play probably differently than Federer played today.

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