

**March 31, 2009**

**Sony Ericsson Open**

**R. FEDERER/T. Dent**

6-3, 6-2

An interview with:

## **TAYLOR DENT**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. So you how did you feel out there in general?**

TAYLOR DENT: In the beginning of the match I felt good. Just a little nervous. And then -- you know, it was going to be a learning experience for me one way or another, whether I won or lost that match.

And yesterday people were asking me what I thought, and I just said that I hope I play, you know, average or better to give myself a fair chance to see what I need to get to the next level just in case it's something that I didn't know about.

You know, I felt like I played decent tennis, but it was kind of a vindication for what I've been thinking. The next level for me is going to be foot speed and fitness. I felt like that was the only thing really hurting me out there.

So it's pretty exciting for me. You know, just coming back, I really haven't had a whole a lot of opportunity to apply myself to just that. You bet that I'm going to be definitely killing my butt on the tennis court these next couple months. So it's really exciting for me.

**Q. Andy says he lost like 15 pounds. Do you see that in your future, as well?**

TAYLOR DENT: I hope so. I mean, I couldn't see me getting faster not losing weight. You know, I think that is going to be just a given. So it's going to be a definite concerted effort. I'm going working with the nutritionists down at Bollettieri's. I have been.

It's a fine balance between eating too little to where you can't do enough work, and eating too much to where you're not losing any weight. It's an

ongoing tinkering thing. Unfortunately for me, I've just been playing matches, up and down, so we've really been having a tough time pinning down what a good calorie number for is me and all that sort of stuff.

Hopefully I have some time coming up to really, you know, get it down to a science.

**Q. After that match like that, how does your back feel?**

TAYLOR DENT: No, my back's been fine. It's been perfect since I came back in January. I mean, like I said, it's exciting. I feel like my game is there. As soon as a my foot speed and fitness catch up to everything else, then I'm going to be tough to beat.

**Q. Have you adjusted anything in your game to make allowances for the back, or are you playing the same exact way?**

TAYLOR DENT: The only adjustment I've made is not because of my back. It's just because of the style of tennis that everybody is playing these days, and I'm just not serve and volleying on too many second serves.

If I wouldn't have been stubborn about it before I hurt my back, I would've changed. Not stubborn. Stubborn isn't the right word. More scared, you know, because if you serve and stay back on the second serve, you kind of have to have a weapon or you have to be a retriever.

I was kind of right in between. I didn't really have a weapon from the baseline, and I wasn't fast enough to be a retriever. So what's the point? Now I've been working on my forehand as a weapon, and every match except for this one, I've basketball hitting it really great.

I don't think that it was my forehand that let me down this match. Like I said, it was definitely a foot speed issue.

**Q. How about that really long game? Talk about that.**

TAYLOR DENT: Which one? No, there were a few. The first game I served was really long. That's just nerves. Just getting out there.

**Q. How about the one where he kept**

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**losing the breakpoints, eight or nine breakpoints?**

TAYLOR DENT: Oh, the one where I kept losing the breakpoint, where I had the breakpoints. Yeah, you know, again, it's the same thing.

On the deuce side, if he doesn't make a first serve, I feel like I'm going to win that point a lot of times. You know, I'm going chip and charge. He didn't seem to like it out there, so I like my chances.

On the ad side, I wasn't really catching that slice very well crosscourt very well to chip and charge. So I got stuck staying back, exposed my foot speed. It's tough for me to win those points if I'm not really knifing that second serve return at the moment.

Again, I'd love to play him again in a few months when I really get a chance to get my legs under me.

**Q. Do you feel that you're showing us some kind of tennis we've missed for so long?**

TAYLOR DENT: Oh, well, I hope so. Again, I feel like I've got so long to go as far as execution level, as well. It's a different taste. You don't see too many guys chipping charging second serves.

I don't know, I felt like maybe I showed a little bit of vulnerability in Roger out there. He didn't really seem to like me doing chipping and charging those second serves very much.

And, you know, it's good to see a little bit of variety. Obviously you're not going to see that too much on the clay court season coming up. But on the hard courts and the grass, you know, it's probably fun for everybody to watch.

That's the No. 1 thing I get said to me after a match: God, it's so exciting watching you play.

**Q. Are you going to try the clay and go to Europe?**

TAYLOR DENT: I'm really look forward to having those two months for myself and working on my fitness and foot speed. That's what I'm pretty excited about right now.

**Q. So we'll see you in England?**

TAYLOR DENT: Hopefully. Tell Alan Mills, hook me up.

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