

March 31, 2009

Sony Ericsson Open

A. RODDICK/G. Monfils

7-6, 6-4

An interview with:

ANDY RODDICK

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How did you feel out there?

ANDY RODDICK: Better than you after you finished that race. No, I felt all right. You know, even when I got down that break, I kind of felt like I was playing the way I wanted to and executed -- I just didn't execute that game that I got broken.

Still felt like I was doing the right things. Fortunately for me he gave me another look. From the breaker on I felt like I was in control.

Q. Is that something you're consciously trying to do?

ANDY RODDICK: No, I mean, I think he gives you ample opportunity, because he likes to do the rope-a-dope a little bit. He likes to invite you in.

Then if you don't come in, he beats you with length on the next ball. He's quick enough to be able to pass a lot, so I just tried to at least make my approach shots firm if I did it.

Q. Specifically, how has losing that 15 pounds impacted your game the most?

ANDY RODDICK: I don't know. I go into matches knowing I can play the points and play long points and not really have to worry about it and maybe force it too much. It just helps that I'm there on every ball. I feel like I'm in control.

And also, I think the biggest difference is after I hit the return, that first ball, if they become aggressive on it I can get it back to neutral quicker, because I'm able to scramble after that first one.

Q. How did you feel about all the French support?

ASAP sports

...when all is said, we're done.®

visit our archives at asapsports.com

ANDY RODDICK: It's fine.

Q. Yeah. Do you enjoy the atmosphere?

ANDY RODDICK: That's one of the things that make this tournament real cool, is that there is -- kind of maybe similar to New York sometimes on the outside courts.

Miami is such a melting pot of culture. I mean, it seems like it attracts a lot of foreign residents, you know, from South America. I mean, it's definitely got a little flavor to it. That kind of represents itself in the crowd here.

Q. Do you like that? Do you enjoy playing in that?

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah, it's fine. I think it's cool.

Q. Who tested your patience more, Kuznetsova or Monfils? Must have been tough.

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah, it was. You know, you're ready to play, and then all of a sudden you're not, and then all of a sudden you figure it's going to -- she's gonna be hard press to finish -- I mean, Doug came in and said he saw her in the hallway during the ten-minute break, and it looked like she was having trouble walking.

So I'm sitting there going, Okay, this is gonna be a little bit longer. All of a sudden, 6-1. It was a little bit different, and it was tough to really predict what was going on. But, you know, it is what it is. It's the same for both of us.

Q. He's a tricky player, and as you said he does the rope-a-dope. You seemed really self-possessed today. Did you feel that way today?

ANDY RODDICK: I don't feel possessed.

Q. Self-possessed.

ANDY RODDICK: No, I mean, I was just going to go about my business. Basically, he was going to give you a chance. When you got that chance, make sure you -- I was trying to execute with authority.

If he passed me of the bat, then fine. But I didn't want to come in and give him tons of time to

A Roddick - 03 31 09.doc

set up and give him too many options. If he beat me when he was doing that, then, you know, you could probably live with that.

I was going to try to make him do it for the better part of the afternoon.

Q. You have to be pleased with your consistency. Seems like match in and match out, you're really getting the job done and not letting your level slip too far.

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah, I feel all right. I mean, it's just -- I feel good and I feel confident. I think the big difference is you get to those 30-All points, and I just feel calm and like I'm going to play my point the way I want to.

I feel like I'm able to plan out more what I'm gonna do. I have maybe some more options now. Yeah, I just feel calm on the court.

It's nice, but I think can still be improved. It's only been a couple months that I've been playing a little bit better, so...

Q. Given how raw and emotional you were, especially in the younger years, what kind of a journey has it been to get to this point where you can be out there so contained and so focused? Was that a tough thing to do?

ANDY RODDICK: No, I think it's not something that I think has been über-conscious. I mean, I kind of grew up in front of you guys. You've probably seen the best of me, and unfortunately the worst of me at times. So you know I'm definitely not there yet.

But I think it's improved. You know, I just feel comfortable playing right now at this moment. So you know, who knows. Hopefully it'll continue that way.

Q. What is it like at the moment? The quarterfinal lineup is looking like a Slam. It was the same at Indian Wells. You had a great Australian Open. What's it like to be in the mix currently at such an exciting time? People are saying it's a very exciting time for men's tennis.

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah, I think it is. You know, you've probably had Roger and Rafa there, and then Djokovic kind of had his go where he was playing really well at the beginning of last year. Now you have Murray who's playing well, and kind of a couple of us are trying to get into that mix a little bit.

But it is good. I think there are a lot of guys playing a good level of tennis, which is great. On a day like today, there was just a ton of

intriguing matchups. You look at the schedule for today, and it's a bunch of guys who have been playing real well this year, and who also have a little bit of character and some personality going on out there, also.

So I think it is a really good time for tennis.

Q. How about Taylor Dent out there. They was on the eighth breakpoint when we walked in here. From what he's been through, are you surprised to see him out there?

ANDY RODDICK: Yes. Yeah, I think -- you know, personally, I didn't know if he -- I hadn't really thought that he would play again. A lot of people you hear, Oh, they're going to try to come back. You think, Oh, that's great. But it rarely happens.

For him to do it is great. Taylor has always been one of the real nice guys. He's gone about his business the right way. Always just happy.

So it's nice to see something good happen for him after kind of years of what seems like, you know, unfortunate news. It's nice to see something nice happen for him.

Q. On the other side the of draw: Roger. It's always been a tough matchup. Talk about that a little bit.

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah, I mean, it is what it is. This press conference hasn't changed for years. It's going to be tough. I feel like I'm playing well. Now Larry has seen me play him once in person, also.

The things that Roger seems to do really well against me is serve really well. Hopefully I'll be able to get a couple more looks on his serve. In Australia, the first set was a little bit of a runaway. The second two sets, I think the main difference was he served in the mid 70s, and mine might've slipped a little bit. He was getting more looks. I thought that was the difference in the last two sets.

But, you know, obviously it'll be tough. But I'm going to go out there and just go after it.

Q. How about the fact that you beat him here last year on the same court and everything. Does that factor in at all? Can you remember that and bring that in, or not really?

ANDY RODDICK: I'd love to be able to sit here and center my chi and focus all those good vibes and do all that. At the end of the day, it's about executing. You know, what's done is done.

If I can channel that one match, then he'll be able to channel 15 or 17, whatever the hell it is. He's got more channelling.

Q. Are you doing yoga or something like that?

ANDY RODDICK: No. Are you?

Q. What do you think of Alonzo's ceremony?

ANDY RODDICK: It was great. You know, I knew that I was the afternoon match, so I didn't stay for the second half of the game. I definitely wanted to check out that ceremony, just because when I was in high school I used to come down to ten games a year. I was and still am a big Heat fan.

Then I would always come down and see him and Hardaway and all those guys. Used to sneak into the playoff games with the Knicks and stuff.

I've gotten to know Zo a little bit over the years. Our foundations have done some work together, so to see him recognized and see how emotional he got is cool. He's not exactly viewed as an über softy in a public setting. It was nice, and I feel like it was well-deserved.

Q. So you would have bet against him?

ANDY RODDICK: I don't know. I know there was a big thing, I guess. No, I said I thought he would. I mean, it's tough not to. There's a lot of stuff to look at and a lot going on, and I think with the presence of who all came to support him on that night was pretty cool.

You know, I think you would have to be a cyborg not to get emotional.

Q. This tournament is a place where a lot of famous people come, Shakira, celebrities. Do you think that's fun for fans? I know sometimes they come to see you guys play. Do you like that, too? Have you met anybody that was kind of interesting or fun?

ANDY RODDICK: I have never met an interesting person in my life. No, I'm joking. It is great. I think it just adds to the event. You know, I think here, and definitely at the US Open, it's probably more than just a tennis tournament or a sporting event. It's almost like the thing to do or to go see the tennis.

Even if you, you know, don't really know a forehand from a backhand, there's still enough going on here it's pretty cool. It's a good event. I

think they have done a really good job promoting this event and keeping it relevant in the streams of pop culture, as well as just kind of the sporting world.

Q. Like with Brooklyn, do a lot of people notice her? Is that kind of a pain to her?

ANDY RODDICK: You have to ask her.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports