

**March 27, 2009**

**Sony Ericsson Open**

**R. FEDERER/K. Kim**

6-3, 6-2

An interview with:

**ROGER FEDERER**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Towards the end of last year, especially after the Olympics, you seemed to be serving and volleying a lot more than you did in the beginning of the year. I saw you come to net a couple times today. Is that a more concerted effort to not come to net right now, or you really haven't decided how to play out 2009?**

ROGER FEDERER: No, I mean, it depends a lot on how the opponent plays, and also conditions. End of the year, you know, you're taking Beijing, US Open; indoor season is always a quicker period, so you can serve and volley easier.

You know, at Wimbledon I had so much success on serve and volley that, you know, you kind of stick to that, except if you have -- if you're having to against certain opponents to mix it up.

I like still to do it. I feel like I'm volleying well at the moment, so I think it's time to use it a little bit.

**Q. How did you feel out there overall?**

ROGER FEDERER: Felt good, you know. I was moving well. Tried to get many balls back, you know. I've never played him before, so, you know, of course I was always going to get surprised in some points just because I didn't know what his favorite shot was.

But I realized very quickly, you know, what his pattern was, especially on the serve, as well. Even though he had a good serve today, he had a good few games, but I think I did well today. I think it was a good match. It was great start to the tournament.

**Q. With no disrespect to Kevin, were you working on certain things, like chipping and charging out there, serving and volley?**

ROGER FEDERER: Well, you know, serve and volley is something that happens naturally. I tell myself, Let's see if it works. If it works, you know, you keep on doing it.

On the return, sure, I was trying to chip and charge, but that's always something I like to do, especially on the hardcourts. See how he reacts to that as well.

Especially being up 5-1, I could take my foot off a little bit and just try out a few things. But you always have to be careful, you know, by doing these things. You saw what happened, you know, I lose that game and then I'm facing break points.

Of course, then afterwards I would still have a chance to break or serve with the wind, you know. But I was trying out a few things towards the end, that's true.

**Q. Are you as comfortable with your game right now as you were after you beat Andy at the US Open last year?**

ROGER FEDERER: Andy -- oh, Andy Murray? Yeah, I mean, I was playing really well there, but it's a Grand Slam. And I think I played really well as well at the Australian Open. I had been gone from the game for a while, but came back okay at Indian Wells.

I feel like, you know, this is an important week for me to do well, especially now that I have matches again under my belt. I'm into the third round here, so I feel like things are going well for me again.

Last year's season was really tough, you know. Some people forget I had mono and had a bad back. I had to work extremely hard to come back. I've been struggling a little bit against Rafa maybe, even though I got so close at Wimbledon and again at the Australian Open, which were the two major ones to play him against.

Especially Murray, too. I just think I have to make sure I get the wins against them again in the future, and then hopefully can be able to turn it around.

**Q. You've just won the Stefan Edberg award for the fifth consecutive time, which is a wonderful achievement. Does it get any harder with all the stress that life places upon you and**

**everybody to keep up such high standards of deportment as time goes by? Does it get harder to behave so well?**

ROGER FEDERER: Well, sometimes the patience level is not there, or, you know, like it used to be. But I feel it just hanging around the courts. I just don't do it as much anymore. Now I understand why Agassi and Sampras and all those guys came in, did what they had to do at the site, and then go somewhere else.

You know, if it's their hotel or go shopping or go hang out at the beach, you just want to get away from the tennis scene. Because maybe after playing a 1,000 matches you get, you know, sick and tired of seeing another 100,000 matches you've seen already.

You kind of just don't hang around as much anymore, but still I try to give back to the fans by signing autographs, taking pictures while I'm at the site. Especially after practice I like to take my time.

And even though I only hit for an hour, you know, I'll be showering only one hour later after all the people I meet and all the people who want to talk to me and all the pictures and autographs and signings, there's more than just the practice.

I think that's where I have to, not motivate myself, but it's just sometimes there is days where it's harder for me, you know. I almost like to practice off-site, you know, where it's nice and calm and I can really concentrate on the practice and not just come out and put on a show and sign autographs.

Because at the end of the day, I also have to work to get better. This is sometimes where it's a fine line for me.

**Q. On court?**

ROGER FEDERER: On court, no problem. You know, I always think respect towards the opponent is something that's really important to me. Without the other players, you know, I'd been nothing, too, otherwise I'd been No. 1 world playing against nobody.

They make me work hard and they challenge me and I challenge them, and I think that's what you learn I think with age, even more so. If I look back, you know, and I see how my relationship is today with, you know, with Roddick and, you know, Safin and Hewitt, whereas in the beginning it was, you know, we were friendly and we hung out a little bit.

But I think today there is a bit of a deeper connection because we've gone through so many

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things and we can relate. It's actually becoming more fun, because I know more and more players now on tour. I feel more welcome, you know, in the locker rooms, whereas in the beginning I was maybe fighting for acceptance, you know. You know, you don't want to talk to Pete and Andre too much. You don't want to bother them.

And you feel like a little bit, All right, I'll just go in the corner and do my thing, whereas now it's easier. I speak to everyone. It's actually a bit more fun today.

**Q. You reminded us about your health last year, your back and the mono. Do you think in general people have been too quick to count you out, too quick to sigh, Well, that was great while it was lasted. Let's move on to the next guy? Do you feel like you've been counted out too quick?**

ROGER FEDERER: Not necessarily. I mean -- I think the true understanders of the game, they know it doesn't go that quickly, you know. It's just that in tennis, you know, rankings move very quickly, you know.

At the moment where a young guy comes up, there's all the talk about him, and kind of forget about the rest. And then, you know, it goes very quickly. It doesn't matter if you've done it for one year, two years, ten years. As long as you've been at the top, things change pretty quickly in tennis.

We don't have a ranking that goes over two years like they have in golf, so the moment when we don't play for three months we could come go up to No. 5 in world if we're unlucky getting injured through Paris and Wimbledon, let's say.

That's where sometimes also with the media, it's their job to explain to the fan that, you know, he's maybe been injured three months. It doesn't mean you're now the fifth best player in the world. You just haven't had a chance to prove yourself. I think that's sometimes what happens a bit too quickly in tennis.

**Q. How are you getting along with the challenge system lately? What's your batting average last few months?**

ROGER FEDERER: Been okay, you know. I don't know. Don't care, really.

**Q. Have you warmed up to it at all? I know you had reservations early on. What are**

**your thoughts about it at this point?**

ROGER FEDERER: It's helped me and not helped me, you know. Like the good and the bad calls that helped me and not helped me, too. That's why I still believe it's unnecessary. It's only on center court. I don't even know if it's on grandstand. But all the other matches, poor guys, they don't have challenge systems. Yeah, ask them whether they think they could use the challenge system on Court 8.

**Q. How do you feel here in South Florida with Latin people around you? Do you speak a little Spanish?**

ROGER FEDERER: I try to joke around a bit, but no, I don't speak Spanish. But I like it here, you know. I always enjoy to be sort of closer to South America, because I never go and play there. The only time I was there was maybe back in '96 or '97 when I did Mexico, Costa Rica, Venezuela. That's as far south as I've been.

**Q. Colombia?**

ROGER FEDERER: No, I haven't been to Colombia. So, I mean, maybe the future. I hope I can maybe play some exhibitions there or some tournaments towards the end of my career. At the moment it's not planned. That's why I enjoy that -- like this morning I was signing autographs after my practice, and one guy was saying, you know, Brazil loves you. Next guy, Venezuela, too, and Ecuador, as well is the third guy, and then the other guy, Dominican Republic, as well. You know, so it's nice. They love tennis, which is good.

**Q. Could you say hi to Colombia for me?**

ROGER FEDERER: Hello, Colombia. I hope I'll see you there. All right?

**Q. I know you've got to stay in the here and now and this tournament, but I'm just wondering whether you ever have any thoughts towards Wimbledon and the fact that the last time you were there was an incredible day but a tough day for you.**

ROGER FEDERER: Uh-huh.

**Q. I imagine it's something that's a big ambition for you again this year.**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, absolutely. It's the ultimate goal for me every year, you know, to win a Wimbledon.

There is not a proper preparation for Wimbledon, you know, because we have the French Open right before. So it's actually, just go on grass and see what happens, and hopefully, you know, you feel good, sort of Sunday before the tournament starts. That's how you take Wimbledon on, you know.

It's difficult, you know, and it was an incredible match last year. I still look back at it and think that was one of the greatest matches I was ever part of, and, you know, I enjoyed the battle we had.

Of course, still a bit heartbroken. Not today, just looking back how it ended in the darkness. But still, it was a fantastic match, and I'm looking forward to come back.

**Q. I have one question going back to the Australian Open. Probably not a great memory, but in the trophy ceremony, all those emotions that came out, now that you can reflect on it a little bit, what were you feeling? What was all that emotion about? What were you feeling at that moment?**

ROGER FEDERER: Um, well, first of all, I was tired. You know, sitting there, trying to relax a bit, and you're disappointed that you weren't able to play better, you know. Then you realize you just spent three weeks in one place, and just a little bit miffed. You know, I thought I could have won the match maybe in the fourth set, maybe even straight sets, if things would have fallen my way and I would have taken my opportunities.

But I got emotional when sort of Rod Laver and Tony Roche and Ken Rosewall and all these guys walk on court and I realized the people waiting for the trophy ceremony.

Yeah, I love Rod Laver arena, you know. The trophy ceremony is really nice and it's respectful, and that's why I guess I all of a sudden realized, you know, I lost the match. All the legends are back, and I wish I was the winner and, you know, I'm not.

It was more just the feeling for that. I usually always have a tear after I lost a Grand Slam final. At Wimbledon it happened when I just walked off the court; Australian Open when I was on court. That was the unfortunate part for me.

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