

August 21, 2011



A. MURRAY/N. Djokovic

6-4, 3-0 (ret.)

An interview with:

ANDY MURRAY

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. I don't know if your superstitious or not, but last time you won the final here you were runner-up at the US Open. Talk about how this tournament helped you do well at the Open.

ANDY MURRAY: I think the conditions are similar. It's normally pretty humid in New York and the courts are very similar to the ones here. So if you can get a few matches here and play well, it gives you good confidence going into the US Open.

It's not a huge change in surface or speed of court, so that definitely helps.

Q. It's your second title here in Cincinnati. Talk about winning here again.

ANDY MURRAY: Yeah, well, it was really a good week after I struggled last week. Well, didn't drop a set and beat some very good players from pretty much the first round onwards. Against Nalbandian who I started off against it was tough, and then Mardy was playing really good tennis going into the semis.

Obviously Novak today, it was unfortunate the way it ended, but I thought the first set, after the first couple of games, good standard. I thought a lot of long rallies, good points. It's been good preparation for New York.

Q. How big an issue are injuries and the schedule in tennis now?

ANDY MURRAY: Well, yeah, I mean, I think with the amount that Novak's been winning,

you know, things are going to build up throughout the course of the year. He's played a lot of matches. I've had a few niggles throughout the year and had a few niggles this week as well. It just kind of happens.

I think it gets -- what's the word? I don't know. Like an individual sport looks like guys are getting injured more than they are; whereas in a sport like football, I think guys get injured every single week playing.

In tennis it's an 11-month year and that'll probably be the only match that Novak pulls out of in the whole year. But you play most of the year not feeling perfect.

The plan is to be feeling perfect going into the Grand Slams. That's really been my goal this year, and done a good job at it so far.

Q. When you come out first off and break the the No. 1 player in the world, does that change the tone or do you consider yourself that was a lucky break?

ANDY MURRAY: No, I think you need to go out into every match being 100% ready from the first point. Because the start of the match, especially against the top players, is so important. If you can get up an early break, it gives you confidence.

It's really important. A good start is key, especially in three-set matches. In five-set matches maybe not so much because there's time to get back into it. But if you can get yourself ahead early, you can close the match out.

Q. Does the fact that you won by default take away from winning this tournament at all?

ANDY MURRAY: Yeah, a little bit. I would have obviously liked to have won by finishing the match. But it happens sometimes. You know, I have to look at the week as a whole. It's been a very good week. Coming in here I had played badly in Montréal, so I needed to have a good week.

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Regardless of the match today, I was happy with the way that it had gone. Glad I managed to win today, but unfortunate the way it happened.

Q. Novak mentioned that he had been struggling with the shoulder for ten days or so. Has there been any talk in the locker room about his injury, or did that give you any additional confidence going into the match?

ANDY MURRAY: No. Well, I didn't know about it. That's what I was saying after the match, that you never know. Sometimes guys get hurt on the court and sometimes they're carrying something going in.

If it's been a problem for ten days, he's done a pretty good job playing through it as well. You just never know. Sometimes injuries, they build up. After ten days, it's starting to get very sore or sometimes it can get better and warm up as the match goes on.

So I knew nothing about it. Just had to try and play my own game when I realized that he was hurt, because he was still hitting ball pretty good from the back of the court. He just wasn't serving hard.

Q. When did you realize that he was struggling?

ANDY MURRAY: End of the first set. Well, right at the beginning of the second. I thought that was when it became clear he slowed his serve down quite a lot.

I knew it when I broke him in the first game. I thought that was when it became obvious.

Q. A lot of players have said that it's tougher to win a Masters title than a Grand Slam because you play every day back to back and it's really only top players here. You've won 7 Masters titles now. Would you agree that it's in some ways tougher than a Grand Slam?

ANDY MURRAY: No, it's different. I mean, I don't think it's tougher. But I think you can't really have bad days in these tournaments, because like I say, in a three-set match, if you come out flat, the match can get away from you really quickly.

Also, you don't have a day to work on things like you do at the slams. Here you have to play well throughout the five days in a row, so you can't have an off day.

But I mean, physically the slams are more challenging. Mentally, two weeks is a long time to be focused for. So slams are definitely tougher.

But Masters Series aren't easy tournaments to win.

Q. Is there any common theme when you beat Novak of things you do well or things he doesn't do well? You've beaten him a couple times.

ANDY MURRAY: I think conditions play quite a big part in it. When I played him in the heat in the Miami final I played well; here when I played him in the final it was very hot; and then today again it was very hot until the clouds came over at the end of the first set.

So I would say that the conditions have probably played quite a big part in it.

Q. Of the top four, you're the only one really who has come through this week on a nice upward curve. They've all had differing kinds of problems. People will draw conclusions about that for the US Open. Do you feel this is a good moment to be going into the US Open for you, that this is a real chance where other players are perhaps not at their peak?

ANDY MURRAY: The thing is, you never know. Those guys could end up making the semifinals of the US Open, and then you get a chance to see whether it is a chance. If all of them lose early, then, you know, obviously my chances would go up.

But I'm sure come the start of the US Open next Monday, all of them will be fine. I think each one of them will be playing great tennis, much better than they have played here.

Q. What's your schedule now? Will you be driving to New York?

ANDY MURRAY: We're going to leave tonight flying, but I don't know. The weather has been very bad, so have to wait to see if it still goes or if it gets canceled.

If it gets canceled, then I would rather get there, you know, early tomorrow morning by driving than sitting around for a whole day.

Q. You guys traded breaks in the first set early on. Looked like when you got broke on your serve you were really frustrated and

about ready to throw your racquet. How did you get back into the match mentally? You were up a break against the No. 1 player in the world and then you kind of...

ANDY MURRAY: Well, I mean, when you sense that there's an opportunity against the best players, you know, I felt like I started the match a bit better than him. Played a few bad points in the game, and then that I got broken missed the shot on the break point, not by much, but a shot that I probably should've made.

It's a bit frustrating, but I settled down straightaway. Changed my racquets and then played a great point to break him. I think it was probably at least 30 shots, the rally. I think that had a huge bearing on the rest of the match, because his head went down a little bit after that and I started to feel better.

Q. About ten minutes ago your brother, Jamie, Tweeted, Sometimes you just got to stand up and take it like a man. Do you think he was referring to Djokovic's retirement?

ANDY MURRAY: I have no idea. I haven't spoken to Jamie yet. I don't know. I'll ask him when I'm done here.

Q. You tied John Isner for the fastest serve of the tournament at 139 miles per hour. You think you've been holding back on your serve previously? Is that something that you're looking to...

ANDY MURRAY: Well, I've hit 138 like four or five times. I hit it at the US Open a couple of times, I've hit it at Queen's.

But, yeah, 139 was the fastest one. And sometimes you -- you know, I could hit a thousand serves and, you know, try and hit them as hard as I can and none of them would reach 139.

Then it's just one of them that just everything is perfect: the technique is perfect, the timing is perfect, the conditions are perfect. That adds up to one big serve.

But I don't do it that often. Normally around 135 is my biggest.

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