

August 21, 2010



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MASTERS

R. FEDERER/M. Baghdatis

6-4, 6-3

An interview with:

ROGER FEDERER

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. I guess that's pretty much how you would expect or want to win a semifinal, isn't it, business as usual?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I didn't get broken today, so that was a first in this Northern American tour for me. It came at the right time. I thought I played a good match. I was able to mix up my serve well and always kept him off balance. So it kind of worked for me.

Q. Seemed like a lot aspects of your game were working today. Was there anything you want to improve on?

ROGER FEDERER: Look, as long you're moving on you get a chance at the title, and that's what counts. And playing in a way that I like to play, you know, that's what it's about. Having enough fun out there and playing your style and moving on in the tournament.

There's always things you could have done a bit better, but I thought I kept him guessing, was able to play offensive, and the match was over quickly, you know, best-of-three-set matches. It was barely probably an hour match, so there's not much tennis in those kinds of matches.

Q. Did you see anything in his service games that enabled you to win so many service games? You won almost half of 'em.

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, I thought I read his first serve well, and that kind of put pressure on him. I used the chip and charge here a bit because I know he's struggled with that

in the past. It's quick conditions here, you know. I thought it was tough to control the ball today.

So I kind of felt comfortable doing that. It worked on a couple of key moments, and that's what I was trying to do. So I'm happy it all worked out.

And yesterday I think he served something around almost 20 aces, and today he was only able to maybe get 3 or so. It's funny how it goes. You know, that's what tennis is. You never know what to expect the next day against the next opponent. I'm happy I was able to beat such a good player like Marcos today.

Q. Do you feel like you're hitting as well as you were in Australia, or maybe even better?

ROGER FEDERER: Like I said, the match was one hour. You know, yesterday was also a bit over an hour, and that's all the tennis I've played here so far. It feels already a bit funny to be in the finals already.

But I wouldn't want it any other way, because this is a quick turnaround. It's 9:30, and I've got to play tomorrow at noon for the finals, so it's kind of similar to Toronto. I'm happy that this time around I'm fresh and I'm ready to go.

Obviously the change from the night to the day session will be tricky. It's gonna hopefully be a good final against Mardy.

Q. You're 5 and 1 against him. He beat you the last time you played two years ago. What do you remember from that match? And also, what do you have to do tomorrow to win?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, we haven't played that much lately. I mean, five times you said we've played, or six?

Q. Six times, and you've beat him five.

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, six in a 10-, 11-year career for me is not that much. I've played against other guys 20, 25 times. He's been injured sometimes, and obviously he likes to play the American hardcourts where maybe we stay more in Europe, so we kind of miss each other at times.

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But the time we played in Indian Wells I thought he came out and played the perfect match really. Yeah, it was a good match from his side. I never really got into the match. It was something similar to today, only I was on the loser's side. Those matches go quickly.

He seems like he's playing well. Must be confident. I'm ready for that. We'll see how it goes tomorrow.

Q. Andy Roddick was saying that aside from the elite group who are always among the favorites in the second tier of people that have a chance at Grand Slams, the last month with his performances, Mardy has put himself into that group. Do you agree with that? Do you see him as potential outsider threat?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, he can definitely cause the upset. Now, if he can go all the way, that's a completely different story, because that's seven matches over five sets and that's not something he's used to doing, you know. I don't think he's ever been past a quarterfinal or into a quarterfinal of any slam.

But he's definitely got the game, especially on the American hardcourts. I think the Americans, this is where they pick up most of their points. So I'm not surprised to see Andy playing Mardy in the semis of Cincinnati, let's say.

Yeah, I mean, I hope Mardy is not in my section of the draw at the US Open. It's like John Isner or Querrey or all those guys. You don't want to see them around too early, because, yeah, they're hardcourt players, tough to beat, and got big games, all of them, with big serves. Sometimes it's out of your control. You don't what that, so...

Q. How disappointed are you that you're not gonna play Andy tomorrow?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, I played him 20 times, so 21 or 20 doesn't make a huge difference. Would have been nice. I think I've played him in the finals here in the past. We've had some huge matches against each other, even at the Open, Wimbledon as well and the Australian. So we go way back.

It was tough to watch for me, because Andy usually doesn't throw away those kind of matches. Obviously Mardy stayed in the match, but kind of just didn't -- just couldn't cross the finish line. It was a pity for him. Then it was just tough to watch at the end.

It was a good turnaround for Andy this week. He played a lot of tennis, and I think he's also going into the Open feeling much better than two weeks ago.

Q. Cincinnati is such a different city than the other places that you play. Is there something about the small city and the relaxing atmosphere that brings out the best in you?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, I like the idea of coming from bigger cities to smaller cities, back to bigger cities. Doesn't always need to be Paris, London, New York and all that stuff. I mean, I love being there. I wish we were there more often.

Then again, I also like to get away from it all. That's why I like to return to Switzerland, I like to return to tournaments like here, or other tournaments between huge events. That kind of relaxes you; it's less stressful; I drive my own car here; go to coffee shops; go hang out, read some books; spend time with friends; go to the movies.

You know, it's just a bit of a different, how do you say, feeling here. I have no friends here really, so the friends who are here are with me. But I don't have anybody living in the area who are my friends like in New York or Paris or London I have tons of friends. So then it becomes -- it's nice, but it becomes very busy.

Q. You drive yourself to this tournament?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah. I mean, I drive back and forth from the hotel to the courts.

Q. You only lost three points on your first serve today. Why do you think you were so dominant in this area?

ROGER FEDERER: I think he struggled to pick up my serve. I had a good serving day, and was able to back it up with some good playing and ept him guessing. It's pretty simple.

Q. You've spent over half your life traveling the world playing tennis, and now you're a father of two young girls. How does that change your outlook in tennis and in general?

ROGER FEDERER: In terms of?

Q. Of tennis. Losses, maybe getting back home and seeing the girls, losses aren't

as difficult?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, look, I've had an incredible career, so when I lose, I'm sad for five minutes, regardless if I have kids or not. So that's something for me that's always been easy to digest since the last seven, eight years since I won my first Wimbledon and became No. 1 in the world.

For me, that completed my career really. That's all I've ever wanted was to hold the Wimbledon trophy, and I was able to do that already in 2003. So I could have walked away then feeling a very happy man, because I did something all my idols did.

Obviously today it's nice to win so much. Then when you lose, you have to take the positive out of those matches, because usually you learn a bit more when you lose. I'm happy sometimes for that information as well, you know.

Kids definitely help on a daily basis. They keep me very grounded. I love the family life. I love spending time with them and I love spending time with Mirka, too. So it's just nice that they're healthy and they're happy babies.

Q. What do you learn from your losses? Obviously they don't happen that often.

ROGER FEDERER: Well, you go back to the drawing board much quicker and you analyze those kind of matches much more than I would analyze this Baghdatis match. This one is here today, gone tomorrow.

If you lose, you sit on a loss for, you know, a long period of time. So you have also more time to analyze those and go through what didn't go so well. Sometimes also you can walk away from a loss thinking it wasn't all that bad.

It's more bad what people write than what it was actually. Then you get sometimes brainwashed by it. That's why it's good to analyze it for yourself and remember your feelings, remember what happened, why did you lose, and hopefully next time against that player you'll be able to adjust it and make it better.

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