

**August 16, 2011**



**R. FEDERER/J. Del Potro**

6-3, 7-5

An interview with:

## **ROGER FEDERER**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. How do you feel that match went for you? Pretty much as you expected?**

ROGER FEDERER: No, not at all. I mean, I expected a tough match with Juan Martin for obvious reasons, and it went better than I thought.

Look, I thought I played a wonderful first set and a very good second set, too. That was obviously enough tonight. I don't think I really allowed Juan Martin to be able to play the game he usually plays.

It's quick conditions, so you're never going to maybe find the rhythm like you would on a slower court. But I was able to mix it up well, I served well, and did all the right things tonight.

So I'm very happy.

**Q. Only your second hard court match of the season. Is everything working...**

ROGER FEDERER: It's not. I've played many more hard court matches this year.

**Q. I meant in the US Open Series.**

ROGER FEDERER: Okay. Third match.

**Q. Third, right. Are you happy your game at this point? Is there anything you still want to work on hardcourt-wise before the US Open?**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, look, there is always something to work on in tennis.

That's the difficulty and the beauty of our game. It's never quite perfect or right. Even though you're hitting that forehand well, well, you have to prove it time and time again.

So I think that's what's good about this game, that you can never outpractice the game. But you try to. I was very happy with tonight's match. It was a big match for me to stay in this tournament, to give myself another day, to practice tomorrow, and then another match and then you never know what happens and maybe then you get rolling.

So that's what the focus is right now, the next match. Because it was a tough draw; let's not forget that. It was a very difficult draw. I'm very happy to have come through this one.

**Q. Can you point to anything different between the '09 match, the final of the US Open, and the match tonight? Either something he did better that you weren't able to do in '09 or something he did worse?**

ROGER FEDERER: Look, I mean, this was the first round; that was the final. This is a best-of-three sets match; that was a best-of-five sets. I mean, that changes everything.

Yeah, I mean, I thought I played well at the US Open in the finals. I mean, I almost had it all wrapped up. I had a set and 5-4, 30-Love, I think. For that to sneak away from me, I mean, it was tough, maybe one of the tougher losses of my career really. That one hurt.

Look, he's gone through a rough patch, and I'm happy to see him playing well again and back on the court. He is hitting the ball well. Maybe he was just was not able to quite do what he wanted to do, but he's going to be a threat at the US Open again.

I'm happy to see him playing so well, but you can't prepare the two matches. It's just not fair to the occasion, really.

**Q. If you have on opponent who's just going for broke on his first serve, do you look**

**at that like, Wow, he knows that my return is so strong he has to go for it? Does that give you more confidence? Do you even care?**

ROGER FEDERER: I didn't feel like he was going for broke. I mean, he is very tall and strong and he can hit hard, and he can do that for hours. He's proven that in the past, otherwise he wouldn't have won big tournaments. That's credit to him.

So you don't get the sense of, well, he's doing that because he's panicking. That's just his game today. Really, I feel everybody today almost has a very good second serve so you do have the opportunity to go for more on your first serve. You don't have to go too much on safety.

I mean, Rafa could hit it harder if he wanted to, but he chooses not to because it plays into his tactics of how he wants to play the baseline points. That's what he cares about.

Juan Martin used to do that as well, but he changed it around. It made him win the US Open, so that was a good decision.

But I was feeling like I was reading his first serve actually well tonight. That was definitely key to getting into rallies from the baseline, especially on his serve. Then I was able to play well and mix it up.

**Q. What goes into reading someone's serve well? What are you reading exactly?**

ROGER FEDERER: Movement of the serve; the way he's pulling the racquet back; maybe the way he tosses the ball; the percentages of where he usually goes on which points. You try to break it down in your little things.

Sometimes obviously you get caught because you're just not quite right and you thought, Oh, this one looked like a backhand, but then you actually think, no, no, it didn't. Then obviously the serve has already passed. Its go quickly.

Look, I didn't read it for instance at the US Open, especially towards the end. As the match goes on, that also can have an affect on you, how do you read serves and play.

But tonight I had none of that. It was just straightforward and positive and confident.

**Q. With all the talk about Novak's year that he's having, do you feel somewhat forgotten? You're still playing great tennis, but all the talk is on Novak and Rafa.**

ROGER FEDERER: I don't know. I don't read every newspaper. I'm still doing press, you know, so for me nothing has really changed. I like

great stories. I would rather have that than some stupid stuff flying around the press room and we have to be sitting here saving the sport.

That's not what I'm having to do here. I'm talking about something that's very good for the game right now: Novak being on an incredible streak, playing fantastic; Rafa still being around; I'm still right there as well; Murray is playing still very well.

We have great characters right behind that, so it's good times right now for the men's game. There is always going to be focus on the world No. 1 and 2 and, world No. 3 and 4.

For that matter, I still have the same things to do. I still can't say yes to many things because I'm a busy man. That will never change, I guess, after all my success.

**Q. Last year most of the field was saying how quick these courts were are they the fastest hardcourts out here in your opinion?**

ROGER FEDERER: Probably Bercy indoors was actually really quick last year - faster than here. It was like lightning really. Or like back in the day really.

I thought last year was faster than this year. I don't know if they've resurfaced or changed the surface. It is still quick, but it's not as fast, I think, as last year.

This was, again a, night session match. Feels a bits slower always. You feel you have more time. So let me see if I play a day session and I maybe speak differently.

**Q. Is there anyone catching your eye outside of the top 4 you think could be a dark horse that comes through at the US Open and makes a challenge?**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, I think there is always guys around. You never count out Soderling and Ferrer and Monfils. Basically all the guys in the top 10.

Obviously Tsonga I thought has been impressive against me in Wimbledon and Montréal. He didn't go on to win the tournament, so he's still got some work to do.

Behind that, if the draw opens up, they'll be right in it. Still feel like it's probably going to be decided at the top, but it's a knock-out sport. It's tough. There is only one winner at the end.

Day form is crucial. See how it goes.

**Q. Talk about your special guest Gavin Rossdale. What's it mean to have him at all your matches?**

ROGER FEDERER: He's only here for tonight. He's playing in Austin, Texas tomorrow night, so he's out again tomorrow morning. He's flying through. He was in Omaha, Nebraska the other night.

So we kind of tried to plan it around so if I'm here that he could be here, too. It worked out great. He's a good friend of mine and it was nice spending some good time with him and hang out and go for dinner and lunches and so forth.

He was here with his son as well, which is good. He loves his tennis as we know. Now it's up to me again to go see him perform now that Bush is doing is well, and I'm really happy for him.

**Q. What do you think about playing James Blake next?**

ROGER FEDERER: Fun. I'm really looking forward to it. He's a good friend of mine, and it's been hard seeing him go through challenges and surgeries and injuries and so forth. He's back on the big stage where he belongs, especially here in the States. It's going to be a tricky, tough match.

I don't know if the last match we played against each other was the Olympic match, but that was obviously a pretty big match for me to lose as well. May be getting a chance for some revenge. I'm looking forward to it.

Seems like he's playing well. Definitely going to be ready for it. Had a great finals here years ago, and hope we can make something similar happen.

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