

**August 15, 2014**



R. FEDERER/G. Monfils

6-4, 4-6, 6-3

An interview with:

## ROGER FEDERER

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Was that a particularly satisfying win, considering some of the noncharacteristic emotion that you showed?**

ROGER FEDERER: Well, I mean, I'm just happy the way I'm playing right now. It was much better than the last couple of matches.

I was hitting good forehands, you know, not making so many mistakes, returning better. So there was a lot of positives out in the match today. Sometimes frustration, but sometimes that's what Gaël does to you.

I felt I lost opportunities in the second to close him out, but he hung tough and stayed in the match. So a big credit to him for a good spell there.

I was able to pick it up a little bit again in the third, so I'm really happy with the match.

**Q. I was wondering, matches that you feel you should be able to close out in two that actually go three, does that impact at all the amount of time you spend hitting the next day?**

ROGER FEDERER: Well, last year I did just because I needed practice. I needed to get the rhythm back. I just needed to be out there, you know, more than now.

Now it's really managing the matches, recovering in between them. So playing two or three set matches doesn't matter at this point. The warmup is always going to be around 20, 25, 30 minutes, and no more than that.

**Q. Monfils especially people have said if he put all the pieces together he could be a top 5, No. 1 player with his athleticism and talent, and there is some untapped potential with him. Do you feel that when you're on court with him and you see him play matches?**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, I see him, if you play him as a top-10 player, you know, no doubt. If he'd be able to stay healthy and play 25 tournaments and all that stuff, yeah.

You know, any day he can play great almost on any surface because he's got that big of a serve and he's that good of a mover. He's also really improved his returns, being more aggressive and staying in actually, because he used to just be a retriever almost, you know.

So I think he's really been able to turn his game around. When I play him, I don't even know what his ranking is right now, to be quite honest. All I know is he's unseeded, and from that standpoint he's a guy you don't really want in your section of the draw.

I'm happy I was able to beat him this time, because I did have some tougher ones against him in the past. I think he's got, you know, really good potential. He's a great player. I just hope he stays injury-free so he can really let it all go out there.

**Q. Now that you've been playing with this racquet for like eight months, do you have a sense of how it's helped refine or, you know, improve your game? Also, is there any area where you feel like you're still trying to find your path with it?**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, it sure takes some time, you know, there's no doubt about that.

I definitely think I'm serving higher first-serve percentage and I'm finding easier power. From that standpoint I think that's a big help, to be honest.

With the slice, in the beginning I did feel the older racquet did feel better on the slice, so I worked on that, as well. But now I feel like I have

control on it. I feel like I'm hitting slices on it, so I feel like that's improved.

The backhand I think overall has been better just every day. You know, I feel like I have easier control on the backhand.

On the topspin also finding easier angle. But then again, you don't want to overdo it now just because the racquet does help you and you start playing the wrong way and now you want to go backhand to backhand on every point. That would be a mistake for me to do as well for me all the time.

And then on the forehand, I think the flat one I think I was doing a bit better with the old one. I think that one still requires a little bit of practice, but that's why I think I was so particularly happy with today's match.

I did hit a lot of flat forehands and also key forehands on crucial moments, which gave me the win at the end and I kept moving forward. So that's why I really do believe every week, every month that goes by I'll get even more comfortable with the racquet.

**Q. Do you think it would be difficult for you to go back to that racquet now after this eight-month period?**

ROGER FEDERER: Not really. It would be a change again. It would feel different. I played so long with it and so well with it that deep down it probably feels maybe most comfortable, because I played those thousand matches with it.

**Q. Coming from Toronto, I think before the tournament started you said that you were a little bit tired. At this point going through the matches, getting through them, making the quarterfinals, is this what you expect from yourself physically now, that you can kind of come into a tournament maybe not feeling 100%, you know, gas in the tank and still can put together this sort of effort and get this sort of results so far?**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I think that's what you've got to be able to do. When you don't feel so well or when you're tired or when you're not so confident, that's how you end up winning tournaments and turn the confidence and your play around.

I'm talking about a high level now, because I did make the finals last week but it wasn't entirely satisfying the way I played in the finals and all of that.

But I'm very happy how I'm winning three-sets now. When it comes to crunch time I'm really able to find a way, you know, to beat Pospisil or now also Monfils today, or then Ferrer, Cilic, and all these matches.

So I'm very happy having won all those three-set matches lately. Clearly it also takes its toll, but I must say I'm feeling quite okay now. I think the body has gotten used to the hard courts.

Now tomorrow I feel like I can play more freely. I know there is always something to lose and all that, but I feel because I have played so much I don't require extra tennis right now. If I do win, it's great.

It's one of those matches I can maybe play with my confidence now because tonight was a good match and I will play in similar conditions tomorrow night against Murray, which I think is always a good challenge for me.

**Q. Over the years you played Rafa and Novak so many times, but you have also played Andy so many times. You have him next. I was wondering if you could talk about your long-term rivalry with him.**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I saw the rise with Andy like I've seen with most guys because I'm older than most these guys. I remember I played him in Bangkok first time in the finals and he was very disappointed after he lost.

I remember that was a bit odd because he wasn't the favorite at all, but he was so disappointed and so angry. In a way I thought that was good because he expected more from himself.

It shows you probably, you know, the mind of a champion really, somebody who really wants to achieve big things. He thought he could, which he definitely could.

Other than world No. 1, he's achieved everything he ever wanted probably at this point, so I think he's had a wonderful career. He's improved a lot as a player, as well. Physically he's in great shape. That's, I think, something that's always in your control as a player. He's made the most out of that, which I think is very impressive. Juniors can look up to him for that.

And then, you know, from being a retriever like Monfils is or was, he's really been able to also be an offensive player. I think we saw again in the match today how he just stands in on the second serve against somebody of Isner's caliber. There is nobody who serves bigger second serves than

he does, and he is able to stand in and not move back.

In the olden days he would have gone back and played from back there and tried to find a way from there. I think he's really made a lot of positive changes in his game, and I think that's why.

Then he also was able to move up the rankings and win all these Masters 1000s and Grand Slams.

**Q. This will be your first time playing him since he started working with Amélie Mauresmo. I don't know how much you have seen of him in the past month, if you've seen differences in his game. She sort of had much more variety compared to like maybe what...**

ROGER FEDERER: Really? I didn't see him play enough, I must say. I wish I could tell you I did. I saw some of it at Wimbledon, but he was crushing everybody until all of a sudden he lost to Dimitrov.

I thought he was going to beat Dimitrov at Wimbledon, so there you go. I don't know much about tennis, as well (laughter).

And then last week, yeah, I didn't see the match at all when he played Tsonga. Here, yeah, like three points in the breaker in the third today, o there you have it.

Really, I haven't seen him play much. From that standpoint I'm probably going to go further back in my mind. Probably Australia, you know, and think of that match, how I played against him, because I actually played really well against him there.

I know he wasn't at his best, but I was really able to put the hammer down and play aggressive tennis and take time away from him.

So I hope on these quicker courts as well I can maybe replicate a bit of that, as well. We'll see.

**Q. With this trend of all the former champions coaching some of the top players today, do you think it's fair to expect the echos of their games to show up in these current players' games? Like for you, people said Edberg came to net so now Federer is going to come to net. Is it that black and white?**

ROGER FEDERER: No, I totally disagree. I think the press gets lured into that too quickly. I worked with Paul Annacone before and people thought the same. I actually didn't come in that much more.

There is so much more to a coaching relationship than just being totally inspired but just how the -- I mean, you're your own player and you already have your own DNA, so you can never duplicate somebody.

Actually, as a junior you should never do that. You can learn things and pick certain things, but the last thing you want to do is like do the exact same thing like somebody else because it usually just doesn't work for you as a player.

So I think when a coach comes in, gives a different angle and different mindset and that makes you feel more comfortable and new input, I think that's what it's about.

Then if it is moving forward or if it is for a special purpose, like when I started working with Tony Roche, it was really my wish that he would improve my volleys. That was why I started working with him. Clearly many more things came with it, but with Tony Roche, yes, there I had a proper idea that I wanted to again play more offensive tennis when I started working with him.

**Q. Coming back to tonight, could you take us through the first set? Seemed like there were a lot of ebbs and flows there. What caused some of the animation late? Was it the line calls or something he was doing particularly well?**

ROGER FEDERER: Well, the first set, yeah, it was a bit of a roller coaster, no doubt. Reminded me a bit of Shanghai. I also got a break right off the bat, and, yeah, I missed a volley to go up 30-Love, and, you know, it was just...

**Q. (Indiscernible.)**

ROGER FEDERER: Oh, really? Okay. So for me, at least what I felt today was that I was doing much better job than in Shanghai reading his serve and returning his serve, second serves and first serves.

So from that standpoint I wasn't as panicky from the baseline. I felt I was going to get opportunities on his serve, which was the case. So I was a bit frustrated I didn't take advantage of the opportunities early on in the second, because I did really sense some frustration in his play. You know, some shot selection was a bit off from him.

That would have been the moment for me to, you know, to grab that and to take the lead and maybe hopefully sail home. I didn't do that, so that was a bit frustrating.

Then there were some line calls. I think I got lucky at Love-30 when he hit that pass which was on the line. The umpire telling him it was out. Okay, maybe Gaël should still challenge, but why is the umpire telling him it's out if it's not out. He should just tell him it's close, which I think is the right thing to do. Don't put yourself on the spot.

And when I hit the one on the line, he didn't even look at me. He kept looking away, so I was like, Just look at me and tell me it was close, you know. Because if he keeps looking away, for me it means like it was this far out, and that's what it was.

That's where I just got a bit, you know, disappointed in him, that two calls like that he wouldn't like help the players a little bit, you know, to challenge or just guide them in the right direction rather than make it even more difficult for us than it already is because we had a very intense match.

But, you know, I mean, like it was more in the moment and nothing bad in any way. I like the umpire. I must say I know Carlos a long time and he has done my match for Africa and my match at the Australian Open this year. We had good times, as well (smiling). Sometimes it just doesn't happen.

I'm not going to carry this one to the next match because I get along with all the umpires.

**Q. At one point you hit the ball over the net as if you were LeBron James.**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, okay (laughter).

**Q. Really aggressive. I loved it.**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, no, I'm happy you liked it. I liked it, too (laughter).

**Q. Here in Ohio, LeBron James is...**

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I got some hang time there. I was like, Wooo. It was good for the pictures. I would have liked to put my knees up more but I didn't want to miss the smash and look like a fool in the end.

I preferred to be in a straight line and keep balance and make the smash. I clocked it well. We had some good shots out there, him as well. I'm happy I got a couple as well. I think it was a really entertaining match for everybody.

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