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Western & Southern Financial Group®

MASTERS & WOMEN'S OPEN

N. DJOKOVIC/G. Simon

6-4, 7-5

An interview with:

NOVAK DJOKOVIC

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Your thoughts on the match today, on your performance.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: It was really strange match. I got that feeling from the start. I was quite nervous because I was aware of the fact that he's gonna make me run a lot and I'm gonna have to make the points by myself.

I knew that there's gonna be a lot of unforced errors and winners as well, so I just tried to remain the focus all the time, and made the crucial breaks in the first and second set in the end.

Q. How much satisfaction do you take from your performances so far this week?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, it's great looking at all three matches. Overall it has been a very solid performance so far for me. I haven't lost a set. All three matches were quite difficult opponents, big servers in the first two rounds, and today a baseline specialist.

So I got a little bit of everything, and I think it's a good way to play matches and get into the good shape before semifinals.

Q. Are you benefitting a bit, do you think, from flying under the radar a bit? People are talking about Murray coming to No. 2 and of course Federer's 15th. Can you come into the Open with a little less pressure?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, you can say that these guys have been -- it's a fact that they've been playing really well lately. You've got to give them credit for that. We cannot forget Andy Roddick, who has been playing fantastic in the last couple of months.

So maybe I'm not in the so-called spotlight in the moment, but I could benefit from that. Just try to keep my concentration on my work and then perform well on the court.

Q. Do you think your runner-up finish last year here and how well you've done so far in this tournament gives you any kind of edge as you head into tomorrow's semifinal?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Last two years I've been very successful on these courts for me. So far I've been feeling quite well this year, so I hope I can repeat the success at least from last year getting to the finals and maybe going a step further. Who knows.

I'm gaining confidence by winning matches, and that's the most important thing for me now. To be more on the court and have more self-belief. I know I'm physically fit. It's just matter of self-belief, if I'm able to do it or not. I've been winning against all those players who are at the top right now, and I know I can do it once again.

Q. If you face Rafa tomorrow, do you expect to face the Rafa of old, or do you think he's gonna be slightly rusty still?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: There is two sides on that. On one side, people are talking about him as a player who hasn't been playing official matches for a while now and struggling to come back into his old shape.

On the other side, looking at his match last night and his motivation at the moment, he's bigger than it to used to be in the beginning of this year. He hasn't made that big of a break since he started playing professional tennis, so for him it's something new.

It's very challenging, and it's not easy to

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fight against injuries. He's been playing really well last night, so I'm sure he's gonna be very much motivated tonight, and eventually tomorrow if we play together.

Q. You've always been an intense player. Also seemed like as you were working your way up to No. 3 you were having a lot fun on the court and you really enjoyed the battle and the competition. Are you still having fun playing?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Of course I have fun. There are moments when I get frustrated on the court, and obviously in the official matches it's something else. It's kind of difficult to just be entertained all the time. You got to keep your focus and get the job done, and then try to enjoy off the court.

So of course the people pay attention more on what I do during the match than off court where I have much more fun.

Q. Well, I haven't been on court. Today I saw some negative body language. Maybe it's always been there. You hit a great winner and kind of yelled at yourself.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, there are some positives and negatives always during the game. I'm an emotional player. Everybody is different in this way.

Q. You've got your own tournament in Belgrade. Have you had any success in trying to recruit the other top players to play in it next year?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I think it's still a little bit early. We've been certainly working on that. We are now talking to the ATP regarding getting a higher category of the event eventually for high level of tournament for next year.

But it's still maybe too early for that. I think for the first year the job was really well done, considering lack of time. Only six months we had to build up a new venue, you know, world standards of ATP and make a professional tennis tournament, which has never been organized in our country ever in the history of this sport.

But the people were great, and they encouraged the event. That's why we are very happy. We look forward to the upcoming years. It's a very difficult week because it's between the two 1000 events, so most of the top players are just saving their energy for those tournaments.

But who knows. Maybe we will try to get some top players.

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