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**Western & Southern
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MASTERS & WOMEN'S OPEN

R. FEDERER/J. Acasuso

6-3, 7-5

An interview with:

ROGER FEDERER

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Key point of the match at 4-All, second set. You had three breakpoints against him, and he came back and won that game. What did you do differently when it was 5-All and you had two breakpoints and you converted that one?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, if there was a secret to that, you know, we would all be kind of better players. Look, sometimes those breakpoints, they are over in a hurry. You just try to first get the ball back. That's what I couldn't do. I couldn't get the ball back on all three occasions.

I think he hit three first serves, and that's kind of -- then it's a tough task, especially here. I mean, we both served I think over ten aces, and the conditions are really quick.

But I think I -- you know, he didn't serve the perfect serve at 15-40 at 5-All, so that's what gave me an opportunity to hit a good return and then be on the offensive. Once on the offensive, it's kind of hard afterwards to come out of it.

Q. What do you like about your game, and what do look at and say, I really want to work on this?

ROGER FEDERER: I think once the tournament starts there's not a whole a lot you're working on. It's just about playing trying to win matches playing the matches the right way and playing the opponent the right way.

You know, I was happy today just because I know the transition to Cincy is always a difficult one. I've had very up-and-down results here. I mean, very great, you know. Not very bad, but maybe just not to the standard I would like it sometimes.

But it just showed sort of how hard it is to get used to kind of courts. We don't usually play on these fast courts, you know. That's what I'm very happy with today's match.

Q. How much does a match like this reinforce that on many days, the difference between being No. 1 and 51 isn't all that much, a few points played here and there?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, I guess we have the advantage, the ones at the top, that we have always a very high standard of play, no matter who we play. Maybe in practice we push it a little bit harder, I don't know. But it's really marginal.

You know, people might think guys ranked outside of the top 50 for us it's not a challenge. But I almost lost to Acasuso in Paris, which today probably nobody even remembers anymore. But I was down 5-1 in the third, and looked like I was out of it almost, you know, at one set all.

That's why you cannot underestimate any opponents. That's why we already had some upsets yesterday and today. It's not easy in a sort of a knock-out system.

Q. What do you do specifically to adjust to a faster court?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, you sort of shorten your backswing. You know, you don't go back too much. Like on clay we have much more time, so you can also return from further back. You're just reacting more on a quicker court.

And when you're on the offensive, you don't want to give it away anymore, so you got to keep on playing offensive. That's why it ends up

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that the points are actually played quite shorter, usually.

Q. I don't know how much you pay attention to the other matches, but how unique is it to be part of a lineup where the 5 top players of the world are playing back-to-back-to-back-to-back-to back on the same court?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, that's the sort of thing I would love if I were a tennis fan. You know, coming out and seeing the best play. Just keep the same seat, you know. They come rolling in.

It's like going to the movie theatres and seeing, five, six great movies, you know. So it something it's great it's like the quarterfinals last week. Friday we had those four great matches on center court with the top 8 involved.

I think that can only help the game.

Q. A big year for you. Obviously you got the Grand Slam record at Wimbledon. You had twins. Two questions: How is fatherhood changed you? You mentioned you weren't losing any sleep yet. And secondly, what goals do you have for the rest of the year?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, it's definitely a very positive change in my life, you know, having twin girls. I mean, I didn't expect that, but it's a pleasant surprise. We're enjoying ever second we can spend with them. Mirka spends 24 hours with them, and I spend a little bit less because I'm at the tennis sometimes, you know, which I still have to do.

But, no, it's very exciting. We love our role, and we try to be the best parents we can. So far, they've been super cute and it's been great.

And the results, obviously this is just sort of just right before the US Open, so this is where my focus is on. I'd love to finish No. 1 in the world at the end of this year.

But, you know, I think after the US Open and then until the end of the year, I'll definitely just sit down and see where I want to go next year, you know, what my goals are.

So far I just wanted to see how it feels to be a dad and get through the US Open and hopefully play very well over and there, and then sort of makeup my mind how it goes.

Q. You've got very good vision on the court. They changed from green to blue a few

years ago. As a player, do you find that has improved the game and being able to see, or would you prefer the green?

ROGER FEDERER: I think I do improve sort of that purple blue. I think it's -- I mean, for TV it's better. Doesn't have any impact on me. I think you still do you see the ball is bit better when it's blue.

I think the Australian Open went from green to blue if you remember. That was a good change as well. I just think it's good for the TV. You see the ball better, because our ball is already pretty small. For that reason, I think it's good.

As long as it doesn't sort of, how did you say, sort of really get bright from the sun on the court into our eye, then it's fine. That's why a matte color is much better for us instead of being too slick.

Q. Looking at the lineup today and in Montreal, do you think there's a greater number of players ready to win majors now than in the past few years?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I mean, possibly. I think it's due to the fact that Rafa was injured now. That obviously gives more guys a chance, or they think they have a better chance. We'll see what happens at the Open.

But I think it's mostly to the fact of the Rafa situation.

Q. Don't you see a sort of a new era moving in now?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, but they have been around for a while now. It's not like it's the first year they ever started to know how to play tennis. They announced themselves since a few years. I mean, Del Potro, I played him the first time three, four years ago. Tsonga has been injured a lot, but he's also not a teenagers anymore. These guys are all in their 20s now, too.

It's nice to see them all breakthrough, like Murray and Djokovic and Rafa. But they're not 19 anymore, so we're sort of already waiting for the next generation.

But I think we have a great group of guys at the top with a lot of charisma, and that's great for the game. I'm the excited playing against them.

Q. You seem to have a asymmetry

going with Tiger. He fell short of getting his 15th major this year. Since that happened, there's been some suggestion that it's been a bad year for him, even though he has five titles because he didn't win a major. Is it a bad year if you don't win a major, even if you collect a lot of other titles?

ROGER FEDERER: Depends on how you feel on how you played, you know. I think in his situation he came back from injury. It wasn't just like a one-week layoff where he had to heal something. It was a major surgery and taking out something and putting it in a different place. I mean, that's major stuff. That's why I think he's reasonably happy with the way he played.

I mean, sure you wish he would have one at least one so he can say, Look, guys I did win one. Leave me alone. Like this it's maybe too much talk.

But I always say, Every year you win a major is a great year. And then if you don't, well then you have to see how the year played out. Sometimes you maybe got unlucky or missed one due to injury. So you can't analyze it the same way you could if you've been a 100% for all majors.

If then you fail, then it's a different story. But he wasn't a 100% for all the majors. I think that then sort of gives him more credit for what he did this year.

Q. This match lasted an hour and ten minutes. Would you prefer having longer matches in terms of to enhance your preparation for this tournament and the US Open, or a much shorter match? What's better for you personally?

ROGER FEDERER: No, I mean, look, this is a good first match for me, you know, because I'm looking at the big picture. The big picture is hopefully winning another four here. For that, I don't want to start with a three-and-a-half-hour match in hundred degrees heat, you know.

Sure, I been practicing hard as I could prior to Montreal. This is where I imitate maybe the best-of-five set match over and over again. So when I come to these tournaments, I don't need to play another three-hour match. I'm know I'm fit enough and ready to go for when the US Open rolls around. So I feel like I'm in great shape, which is most important.