

Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

Saturday, March 4, 2017

Andy Murray

Press Conference

A. MURRAY/F. Verdasco

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Congratulations. How did you feel you played out there? How does it feel to win a title?

ANDY MURRAY: Yeah, it's obviously nice to win. You know, I played much better as the match went on. Obviously started a little bit slow.

Yeah, I mean, I was solid. You know, I wasn't afraid to sort of attack his forehand side. He's got one of the best forehands, but, you know, I tried to, you know, I tried to move him around the court as much as I could.

I defended pretty well. Moved well. Served a lot better as the match went on. It was obviously good to win the first tournament here.

Q. You have had close battles with him before. What was he not doing today that maybe made it easier for you?

ANDY MURRAY: He didn't hit his forehand particularly well, you know, so I just kept going there, really. He made a lot of mistakes off that side. Then, yeah, I mean, wasn't maybe serving as well as he has in some of the matches. He wasn't serving that big. All week he was going for more high percentage serving, and, you know, I was able to put a lot of returns back in play. Didn't get many free points on his own service games. Once we were in the rallies, like I say, he wasn't hitting his forehand as well as he can. You know, I was able to dictate a lot of the points and was a bit more solid.

Q. You had spoken before the tournament how last year maybe you would have wanted to have done well in the first half, and can you just say how much this title sets you up for a good stretch in the next few weeks?

ANDY MURRAY: Yeah, I hope it does. The thing is conditions, again, are totally different. Indian Wells, it's very slow court with fast balls and the other way around here, fast court with quite slow balls here.

So, you know, obviously I have to get there and adjust



to that. You know, and because winning this week is fantastic, obviously winning matches builds confidence. After the break that I have had to get five matches in, six if you include the doubles, in six days is a really positive thing physically. You know, I feel good. I was a bit tired yesterday after the match with Kohlschreiber. But, yeah, I felt a lot better today.

Yeah, obviously was a good start to this stretch, and like I said, trying to obviously get to Indian Wells much earlier than I did last year. Will arrive tomorrow, which is a good thing. Even though it's a long trip, gives me five, six days to get ready before my first match.

Q. You have reached a final in seven of your last eight tournaments and 14 of your last 16 dating back to, I think, Madrid last year. Can you talk about that consistency?

ANDY MURRAY: Yeah, it's obviously been good. I was saying it's unfortunate that one of the ones where I didn't do it happened to be obviously a slam. You know, I think before...

Q. US?

ANDY MURRAY: Yeah, sorry, the US and also, you know, Monte-Carlo semis before that. But, you know, it's been a good run. Obviously want to try and peak and play your best tennis at the slams, but, you know, giving yourself a lot of matches gives you confidence to go into those big events. Certainly helped me at Wimbledon last year.

You know, maybe US went in maybe a bit fatigued after Rio and Cincy and a tough training block before then.

But it's been a great run. Can't complain about much.

Q. Going back to the conditions you talked about just now, do you feel that the faster pace here like in Australia suits your ambition to play a bit more aggressively, which you also talked about?

ANDY MURRAY: I mean, obviously on the quicker courts, if you do that well, you know, you get the benefit. Sometimes it depends on what you think playing aggressively means. You know, you can play aggressively and hit the ball much harder but make loads of mistakes.

It's sort of getting the balance right. Everyone's game

is different, you know. For some people playing aggressively might be coming to the net more. Some it might be just playing up closer to the baseline. It might be going for bigger first serves.

It really depends how you define it. If you're able to dictate more of the points on a quicker, faster court, you definitely get the benefits. It's not as easy to defend, you know, and make, you know, passing shots when you're way back in the court.

So I think in some of the matches this week I played fairly aggressive, but I have also played against guys like Kohlschreiber and Verdasco who were hitting the ball unbelievably hard, and it's not always your decision whether you play aggressive or not, or offensive.

You know, your opponents can dictate that, as well. Like when I played Zverev at the Aussie Open, if he serves and volleys on every ball and comes in on every ball, some could say I'm not aggressive enough. But that's not my game. I don't play serve and volley, so of course he's going to be play more offensively. It just depends how you define it, really.

Q. The support you get here, how does it compare to other places? I know there is a lot of Brits here and they come out to support you. But for you, did you feel a difference here compared to other places outside your home country?

ANDY MURRAY: It's always good here, for sure. Yeah, I mean, it depends sometimes on some of the events. Also depends who you're playing. Like in Spain, for example, I have spent a lot of time there when I was growing up, and I have always had good support there. But then if I play a Spaniard, it's like they hate me (smiling).

You know, you play Roger pretty much anywhere, play Roger here, you know, support is most likely going to be behind him.

But this week, you know, has been nice and, you know, some of the years, when I came a few years ago, like, you know, the crowd certainly weren't as good as they were this week in terms of size. It was pretty busy the whole week from the first round, so that was good.

Q. Again, you started a little bit slow and the serve wasn't working. What do you put that down to?

ANDY MURRAY: I don't know exactly. Maybe today it could have been a bit of nerves. Yesterday didn't feel particularly nervous yesterday, but today, sometimes obviously finals and stuff, you know, there is a bit more pressure. You're playing for something, and sometimes you want to start a bit, a little bit quicker.

Sometimes on the faster courts, as well, the first few games can be a little bit tricky, because if you're not moving your feet as well and not getting a position for the shots perfectly, you know, the ball comes onto you fast, as well.

So obviously didn't start off serving great today, but yesterday I served okay but was missing a lot of easy shots. Don't know exactly why that was, but try and do that, try and get myself more ready for the beginning of the matches in Indian Wells, hopefully.