

Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

Monday, February 27, 2017

Roger Federer

Press Conference

R. FEDERER/B. Paire

6-1, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. He obviously was struggling with something. How tough is it to stay focused especially with him going up and down?

ROGER FEDERER: I mean, it's never easy, because you never know how severe it is. It's a fast court. He's a big shot maker, so that always lends itself to, you know, being dangerous as it is, even more so maybe if he can freeze mine and just say, Okay, I have no choice now but to keep going for it.

But I think over the years I have played many opponents this way, and you just do your thing, try to make it difficult for him, try to stay aggressive yourself so you don't get lured into just making shots, because that's when then he can tee off.

I think I did well, and by the time maybe he got more comfortable, he was already down a set and a break. From then always it's a long way back, but if, you know, maybe if he does get a break, the pain sort of goes away at least mentally for a second, you never know.

I'm very happy with this first round. Of course I hope for him it's nothing serious.

Q. Were you comfortable with your performance?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, good. There were some break points to be saved, and, you know, I think I returned very well for a first round. I was able to get my second serves in deep, was able to go into the offensive quickly. The serve in the beginning was a bit off maybe, but I think also playing at night here for the first time it's always just a different ball when you toss it up with the lights and everything, so that's going to get better as I progress in the tournament.

Didn't have to move that much. You know, it was very quick rallies. So we'll see how that's going to turn out. But obviously couldn't be a better first round for me here in Dubai.



Q. Obviously the crowd was thrilled to have you back.

ROGER FEDERER: So was I (smiling).

Q. What does that mean when you hear them?

ROGER FEDERER: It's nice as you're warming up you hear the crowd already somewhat as they're getting pumped up by someone. You hear music and hear the roars. Then when you walk out, I don't know, it's a nice feeling to have. You know, it's mutual, because I missed playing here last year.

I have played here for so many years, seen the tournament grow. And especially after Australia, fans and myself know how special it is for me to be back on the court. It was a nice welcome. Very thankful always.

Q. We have seen him throw the racquet against the board and it rebound. I don't know if you saw that.

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, it was funny, actually. He got lucky.

Q. Do you think people should start getting more careful, or punishment should be harsher for stuff like that?

ROGER FEDERER: No, I think it's fine. You know, players know what the consequences are. I don't know how it can be harsher than to be disqualified. Getting a zero point or no prize money? I don't know how -- what, get thrown in jail? I don't know. (Smiling.) I mean, that's the next step, I guess.

So the players know what the drill is, what the rules are. He knew that if he smashed one more racquet it would be a point penalty and then it goes into game quickly, and things get really serious and expensive and all that.

I don't think the ATP has to revisit that part of the thing, but sure, you have to be careful. When you whack a ball out of the stadiums, you want to be 100% sure you clear everything in the path, even birds and stuff. If you throw the racquet, you want to know how it bounces. And if it's the unknown, you shouldn't do it.

Q. Can I follow up on something you suggested with the clay court season, you said you'd have to ask yourself how much you were going to put into

it at the French. I know you said before that you won't skip the French, but do you think it's possible that you might, let's say, only play one event before the French on the clay or take some time out?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I said it already in Australia that I will only decide on the clay court swing after Miami. So as of now, you know, if I lost every match from here on till Miami, you know, that changes things around, or if you won a lot of matches until the clay court season comes around. So all that plays into how many tournaments I want or can play and have to play.

So, for me, I will really take it from there. What I meant with it, you know, in my best years I think I played three, sometimes four tournaments. That's always going to be a hard ask right now, because also the body needs some always some healing again.

And I would also like to put in some buildup. And because of the week being gone after Wimbledon and now being put in between Paris and Wimbledon, I have less time also after Wimbledon going into the American summer.

I hope it makes sense. I know you know what I'm saying. That's why I need to just see how the American swing goes now, and then I will take it from there.

Q. Do you spend less time here in Dubai than you used to?

ROGER FEDERER: I was here more because of my injury. I was here six weeks straight from November and December last year. So that's the longest I have almost stayed in one place for the last 20 years.

I spent six weeks at home in Switzerland, and then I started moving again, and then I was also six weeks here. No, I have actually -- overall I spent a little bit less time here, more in Switzerland, just because I'm not here so much anymore in the heat because of the kids.

Q. What do you most like about being here?

ROGER FEDERER: I like it that it's safe. The weather is always nice. Well, this was not so bad the last few days for you where you're from (smiling).

So, no, I think it's nice restaurants, nice beach. There is stuff to do, you know, that I enjoy. Plus it's in a good location for all of Asia and Australia. It's on the way there.

So, yeah, we like it here. It's also quite peaceful for us, because we don't have a million friends over here, which makes it also -- you know, it's very much family

time for us over here, which we enjoy.

Q. Do you home-school your daughters?

ROGER FEDERER: We do. Yeah.