

# Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

## Roger Federer

Press Conference

E. DONSKOY/R. Federer

3-6, 7-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. You kind of had the match in your hands a few times. Can you just walk us through how it slipped away from you?**

ROGER FEDERER: Don't know where to start, really. I guess it was good to save set point in the second set. Gave me a chance to stay in the second set after that.

And then in the breaker, I served well. He clocked one at 6-4, I think. And then again one to get break point in the third. Those are the only two he really hit for winners. It was bad timing that I went into that corner at the time that maybe he was stretching perfectly for it.

Regardless, I had my chances. I should somehow close it out. Don't know how it got away, but he did very well, and yeah, it's a rough one, for sure.

**Q. Do you feel that since there was a few weeks between Australia and now this is the kind of thing that maybe closing out matches is something, pure rust or...**

ROGER FEDERER: Look, it could be anything right now. It's tough to judge this one, you know, because I could have won in two and I'd be already almost hitting the pillow now thinking about Pouille. But now here I'm explaining what didn't go well.

Clearly can become quite negative about it, but I won't. It was a tough loss today. Donskoy did well, like I said. Just gotta move on from here. Clearly would have liked to do much better here this week.

**Q. Did you feel timing was a bit off today, maybe having not played for a few weeks?**

ROGER FEDERER: I thought I returned way better in the first round. Today I really struggled on the return. I didn't quite really time it well.

Maybe it wasn't really committed enough, I think, you know. Commitment in tennis is a big thing. In the first round I was. Today I wasn't, really. That sort of is a



feeling you get and it trickles in an entire game, you know.

Yeah, timing I thought was off for me today. Legs also felt slower out here tonight. I didn't feel tired all day. I tried to get myself in shape, and, you know, like warm up properly, do all the things I always do, regardless if it's a first round or a final.

There's no excuses there. I just think it's still the beginning of the comeback and gotta take the positives out of, you know, playing again a tournament where I feel I'm quite healthy and I'm happy I got over the injury I sustained at the Australian Open. Maybe didn't allow me to practice as much as I was hoping to in Switzerland, but at the same time also needed the rest.

There was also no problem there, really. I came early. I was perfectly prepared. It's just a tough loss tonight. So many chances. It was crazy.

**Q. Will you now go to Indian Wells quickly or stay here for a couple of days?**

ROGER FEDERER: Didn't have time to speak to my coach yet (smiling). I'm more just trying to digest why I'm speaking to you about what just happened.

But, yeah, we'll look at the options and we'll see what's the plan.

**Q. I know you have just come off the court, but this is the last time we'll see you. There has been a lot of discussion and deliberations today over wildcards for players coming back from doping bans.**

ROGER FEDERER: Okay.

**Q. I know it's...**

ROGER FEDERER: No problem. Go ahead.

**Q. Looking for your thoughts on whether you think a player has served the time once the ban ends or should it be part of the punishment they have to walk their way up from the bottom?**

ROGER FEDERER: Could see it either way, depending on who you are, and don't know if it matters what the cause was for being banned, because at the end, it's all sort of the same. Banned is banned, you know.

It's a tough one. I really don't know what to answer on that one, to be quite honest.

**Q. I take it there's no physical problems? This is your biggest test since the Australian finals. Do you feel...**

ROGER FEDERER: Yes. I've moved better around the court, and I felt more explosive and all that stuff. I just never really got going tonight and sort of felt heavy. But, look, those matches happen frequently, you know, where you just got to somehow find a way to come through.

Tonight I just didn't. I was convinced that if I came through tonight I was going to feel better tomorrow.

It's okay. Plus, you know, I really -- I think what also sort of carried through the whole match is like I just didn't know Donskoy. So many times I just didn't know what his patterns were. I didn't know what his preferences are, you know, and if he does hit a big forehand down the line, is that normal or is that just right now? Is he going to do that on big shots, big points or not?

All that stuff got me a little bit tense, and I could never quite play freely, which is quite surprising, considering how I played in Australia.

But tennis is this way. Margins are small. Fast court like here, you can't find much rhythm. Next thing you know, you're struggling, and that's okay.

**Q. When the lights went out at 4-All in the second, was that a distraction? Did you guys see well?**

ROGER FEDERER: Not really. I mean, look, I was just hoping that the lights were going to come back on tonight and that just -- I wanted to see what he thought, because he was on the side that there was less light. But the same time, you know, I also struggled to maybe see it at the very beginning of his serves and stuff.

But, look, we have played in much darker conditions in different places, so I felt, look, if he wants to keep playing, I'm happy to keep playing. I didn't want to wait. It wasn't just, like, dark. It was just darker. That's why I'm happy they got it back on and I'm happy he was willing to play on.