

# Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

Saturday, March 4, 2017

## Jean-Julien Rojer

## Horia Tecau

Press Conference

ROJER-TECAU/Bopanna-Matkowski

4-6, 6-3, 10-3

An interview with:

JEAN-JULIEN ROJER

-and- HORIA TECAU

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

### **Q. One set down. Fight back? What was it like?**

HORIA TECAU: Yeah, difficult. Difficult match. Bopanna won here three times. He's obviously enjoying the conditions here. Serves well at the beginning of the match. He was returning well, too. Made it difficult for us.

They played a really good game in the first set to break my serve. Other than that, I think the games were pretty clean on serve. That's why we do well. We stay calm. We stay together. We look for solutions. We kept holding our serve. That was the main focus of the second set, to hold serve.

We had Love-40 on Matkowski in that first set. We didn't take it, but there was already -- you know, we got a look at his serve. So that gave us confidence for the rest of the match that if we hold serve and we take care of our own serve, then we will get some chances on his serve to break and then get back into the match.

### **Q. And 13 is actually considered an unlucky number.**

HORIA TECAU: So 13 is our thing, yeah. It was tough to get. It was tough to get title. We didn't get one since Madrid last year, and we are always chasing to get better, and by getting better, winning some titles.

It feels good to have a good practice week, get on the track with our game, and now gives us confidence for the rest of the season.

### **Q. It must be special, as well, to win this title on the**



### **25th anniversary of the event?**

JEAN-JULIEN ROJER: Yeah, it's always nice when these things fall in line. It's a nice number. It's a great achievement to have the event and to keep the event for that long.

As we see nowadays, it's not so easy to do so. You have to be committed. You have to have great support all around. And I think they have that here in Dubai, and they do a very good job to keep the tournament coming back.

I know the players enjoy playing here. Yeah, having it for a 25th year in itself is amazing, and then to win, I mean, people always find numbers, and it's our unlucky 13th and all these things.

But all in all, it's nice to win. It's a great achievement for the tournament and for Dubai to have this tournament for that long, for sure. I think that has to be recognized.

Yeah, just happy to win, in general.

### **Q. What would be the goals heading into the season for you as a team?**

JEAN-JULIEN ROJER: I think we're on the right track. I don't know if we set such specific goals this year. I know personally, and I think Horia feels the same, I just want to get better and improve. I feel like last year was not personally one of my best years. I feel like I could have done more.

Yeah, I look forward to doing that this year. I want to improve my tennis, improve my game, improve myself, that I can be a better partner for Horia on the court. I think if I have a better version of myself, then we are also a stronger team.

Yeah, it sounds like a silly answer, but it's really to improve and, you know, find things to improve on, because I, for sure, have plenty.

### **Q. You just beat a player who is celebrating his birthday today, Rohan Bopanna.**

JEAN-JULIEN ROJER: It's his birthday today.

HORIA TECAU: Yeah, I knew that. I congratulated him for breakfast. I got that out of the way at breakfast.

And then, for the final, yeah, it was a tough match. I think he played well. He always plays well here. He's a difficult opponent. We had to play some of our best tennis towards the end to win this match.

**Q. You just removed some small tape from your finger. Was it an obstacle?**

JEAN-JULIEN ROJER: No. It's tape I put every time I play. No, no, no. I have some unorthodox strokes, so I need some tape to cover some of the flaws there.

HORIA TECAU: Actually, he has a blister from playing Pac-Man video games (smiling).

**Q. Both of your home countries are members of the European Union. Is your victory also a symbol of a strong European Union in the wake of the Brexit vote in UK also in contrast to Andy Murray's winning streak so far?**

JEAN-JULIEN ROJER: Yeah, I don't know. I was actually reading -- I hope the world, in general, goes in the right direction. I was reading now that the European Union, they want to make it difficult for Americans to get visas to come to Europe, and that would start a whole 'nother thing.

I hope that doesn't happen. I spend a lot of time in the U.S. I have a European passport myself. I just don't want to see the world going in that direction of -- they make it tough, the Americans make it tough on the rest of the world or on Europe, and then the Europeans retaliate with asking them for visas now to come in. So it's a bit of a mess.

Happy to represent The Netherlands. And, yeah, as far as -- I have strong opinions on Brexit and these things before. Not sure if -- I guess, in the long run, we will see if that's the right move or not. I'm happy with Holland being in the European Union. I think there is a lot of benefits to that. I hope they keep it together.