

Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. There's been a lot of players on the men's side of the draw that pulled out, the top three. I know John Isner made a comment in regards to prize money due to the pandemic. Your thoughts on those, please?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: To be honest, first of all, about people retiring, I think everybody would have different reasons. Somebody would love to prepare more on clay. It's true this year without Indian Wells, you just come to USA for one tournament. You need to come one week in advance for the jet lag and everything. It's not easy. I know hard court is my preference, it's a Masters 1000. I didn't have any doubt coming here.

But prize money, tough to say. Tough to say. There are so many things inside of it, like tournaments are for sure, some of them, losing money, some of them maybe not, we don't know. They started percentage-wise to distribute more prize money in the first rounds, so the winner gets less. That's also the choice.

It's more council and player board who makes the choice. I'm not there, so I'm not that much into it. If I would have more information, I could tell you more about it. For sure as tennis players, more prize money the better. Again, there are too many details into it.

Q. I don't know how well you've known him, but Aslan Karatsev, spent a lot of time outside the top 200. Now all of a sudden is playing top 10 level tennis. Do you understand what's made him be able to change the results in his career so dramatically?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: I think nobody can understand. I'm honest. I think only he can try to explain at least what's going on. For sure I haven't seen him for long time. We knew each other in juniors. I saw him in futures when I just started playing. Actually lost one time against him on challenger, my first challenger semifinal.

Yeah, he was a great player. Never in the top 100, though. Got some injuries. This time this year I saw him few moments in ATP Cup. Felt like he had this good quality of

the ball, so we thought he could do well in Australian Open. He had quite a good draw.

But then coming to the semis, we didn't expect this maybe, but he's playing unbelievable tennis. I'm really happy for him. Four Russians almost in the top 20 is unbelievable. Really happy for all of the guys.

In Dubai I watched his matches. He was playing definitely I would say top 10, top five level. He beat some amazing guys in amazing way there. Hopefully he can keep the momentum going throughout his career.

But it's really tough to say what changed because there are so many guys in the top 100 that can hit good the ball. He's really strong mentally. He knows where he has to play, in which moment. Makes him a very good player at the moment.

Q. Were there expectations earlier in his career in Russia that he was going to be a great player?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: He was always a talented player with a good quality of the ball. Then it's always tough to say if you're going to be top 100, top 10, top 200 for all of your life. It's very small details that counts.

I guess because he started doing damage already in challengers, I guess during the pandemic he managed to I think change something in his work with his coach. They're probably doing a good work. Again, he's playing top 10 level. Hopefully he can continue playing like this.

Q. What does it say about kind of players ranked outside of the top 200 and 300, if a player like Aslan is able to reach such a high level so late in his career? Must say something about the quality of players there.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, definitely. I think he's a great inspiration for all the guys who are thinking either to stop tennis or think that they're not going to achieve the heights they were dreaming of when they were young. Again, first main draw semifinals at 27 years old. So many good players that didn't manage to get in the semis throughout all their career.



When I was a junior, my coach at the time, Russian coach, told me that the professionals, they don't hit the ball stronger than you. When you're young, you think, I need to hit the ball as strong as I can because people out there, they're going to hit stronger, faster. It's not the case.

As soon as I started playing with the real pros, I was like, Damn, maybe I'm hitting stronger than them. But it's all about the other small details: tactics, strategy, which shot to play at which moment, not cracking under pressure.

Again, a lot of guys outside of 300, they will not hit the ball better than me or Aslan, but it's something that needs to click in order to start doing the big results.

Q. Do you feel any different being the No. 2 player in the world, being the top seed at a Masters 1000 event? How do you sort of channel some of the pressure that comes with that? Or because of the relative lack of points you have to defend through Wimbledon, do you feel like it's an opportunity for you?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, to be honest, first of all, I don't really think about points too much because I always said that I feel like ranking reflects on your results that you had. So the more big titles you win, the further you go in Grand Slam, the better your ranking will be.

Well, the more Masters 1000 you lose, the worse you're playing Grand Slams, you're going to start dropping points. You cannot really defend points, you can only win them, I would say.

Definitely being the top seed first time in a Masters event, especially one like this in Miami, being No. 2 in the world, I'm enjoying the moment. I don't feel the pressure except for the pressure that I like to win matches and I want to win every tournament I play. This I had since I was young. This pressure always stays with me. But I feel like it's a good, competitive pressure.

Not really feel pressure from the outside because I know what I have to do. I know if I play good, I have my chances to win the tournament. That's the most important.

Q. I want to ask you about your first match here in Miami against Sam Querrey or Yen-Hsun Lu. You played against both of them four years ago in 2017. How do you imagine your first-round match, after four years without playing against each of them?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, was long time since I played against them. I actually remember I beat both of them. Especially match against Sam was on grass. He made the semis this year in Wimbledon after the tournament. Was

amazing win for me at the time.

To be honest, I don't really think about it too early because they are playing tomorrow, so I'm going to see who wins and then prepare a little bit for the winner. Yen-Hsun Lu is somebody really somebody solid from baseline, solid baseline player. Sam is different. Big serve, big forehand. For sure, two different plans depending who I play. So I'm just going to look for the winner and then prepare my plan.

Q. You're ranked as the best. Does that give you some kind of advantage?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, as I say, I enjoy the moment. For sure it's my highest ranking in my career. It's been already one week precisely (smiling). I'm enjoying the moment.

As I say, I could feel maybe pressure. No, I feel like it just gives me some energy boost. I just want to try to play better and better, to prove even just for myself that I deserve this. Hopefully I can show some great tennis here in Miami.

Q. With all the pullouts from Miami, people talking about less prize money will make them less likely to play the tournament. Do you think this can be a trend we'll see more big players skipping tournaments as there's more prize money reductions, we're just not going to see everyone showing up in the future, the start of a trend?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Tough to say. I think it's possible at the same time, again, as I said in the beginning, no matter the prize money, I don't think Rafa is going to miss Monte-Carlo or Rome or Madrid. You know what I'm talking about? Same about me here in Miami.

Everybody has their reasons, of course. Bubble life is not that easy, especially for those who have kids. I understand. I don't have kids yet, so it's a bit different. Have just tennis in my head, all of this. From what I understand, Novak retired to be with his family more, because they won't go here in the bubble in Miami. He just wants to prepare clay and be there.

I think every time, was for different reasons. Of course, the less prize money, the more chances somebody will think in his head, Okay, maybe I'm going to come here. If I take a physio and a coach, I'm going to lose money. Is there sense coming for one week? Maybe I prepare clay or I stay with the family.

Can it be a trend? Maybe. At the same time there is always going to be people who no matter what are going to

play this tournament. Good example is me here, Rafa Monte-Carlo, clay tournaments.

Q. The Miami Open is the site of back in 2018 your epic argument with Stefanos. You were ranked about 50 in the world. In your opinion, what are the main things that's changed in your personality, emotions, performance on court and off court?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: To be honest, was so long time ago. Everything changed. I became older. It's the truth even if I am still very young, I became older than I was in 2018. More mature definitely in terms of tennis. I think in terms of life, also. Worked a lot on the practice court. Improved big-time my tennis. My physical, for sure. My mental strength.

All of these small details, they count. I feel like there's not one thing I can tell you, Okay, this was the key. I have been working hard to improve in general, to be more mature. I feel like I achieved a lot of progress.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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