

Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Daniil Medvedev

Press Conference



D. MEDVEDEV/A. Popyrin

7-6, 6-7, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You have a tremendous all-court game, all the shots. It's really a lot of fun to watch. My first question is how did you cultivate and develop that style over time?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I think when I just came on the tour, so was already top 100, you know, I was just coming from juniors, still kind of not really knowing what my game style is, and I was just hitting bumps all over the place, like maybe kind of Alexei style.

I know you can see highlights of some of my matches. I was just crushing and some things that maybe you won't see today so often.

Then working with my coach, Gilles, many hours on practice court, you know, trying always to see what works best, to feel what works best, got a little more mature, more experienced. There were few matches where, for example, I would miss a lot of balls and I would just, you know, start playing more balls in the court. I actually felt that it was disturbing a lot of my opponents.

So I started step by step developing this style, improving, and here we are. Of course we continue to work on practice to make my weak spots stronger, and like this can, at one moment, can have maybe no weak spots.

Q. How much pain were you in, the cramping? Can you just talk us through the end of the match there, how you even were standing at that point? Looked like it was a struggle to even stand up.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: It was. It was really painful. The thing about standing up is that few moments during rallies I felt like my legs were not following me anymore.

The only thing I was thinking about is not to fall down, because if you fall down, I don't think I would be able to get

up. We saw it few times, you know, on the tennis court.

So there were some moments where I just wanted, you know, to lay down and say, Okay, it's over. So I knew that that's the thing I couldn't accept myself to do.

Yeah, I was in big pain. The biggest pain was when I actually got a 4-3 break up, and after the first point I don't know what happened, but I, like, I probably didn't feel it that often in my life, maybe two or three times before, and my serve, which was actually I would say maybe even terrible during the match, saved me then. So thanks a lot to my serve.

Q. How are you feeling now?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Now is okay, because two hours passed, you know, you do the recovery, get some fluids, you rest. I was not running on a treadmill. Now I'm feeling good. Definitely legs are really sore after they were cramping, but day off tomorrow so nothing to worry about.

Q. How scared were you during those cramping situations? Because I think at one stage when you were walking to the baseline I thought it looked like you were mouthing, "ow, ow, ow." At times it did look like you just managed to save yourself from falling. Were you concerned that you might not have finished the match against Alexei?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Definitely. I mean, at the end it was just that I almost couldn't walk. My legs were, again, not following me. I couldn't bend it or make it straight, like I had to keep the same posture. I couldn't make a step more than, I don't know, 10 centimeters.

But the thing is that, funny thing about all this, is that on the serve, for sure, it's better when you can push, you can jump and everything, but shoulder and arm makes also a big part. So I knew I just have to put the serve in, try to hit it strong, and it worked well.

To be honest, usually in these moments, you're not even thinking about winning. You're just thinking, okay, how can I maybe stay in this match or something like this. For sure on the other side for Alexei it's not easy. He sees that I'm



struggling. He tells himself, Okay, I'm going to put some balls in the court, he's going to not be able to play it. The hand gets shaky, gets tight, he makes some errors and the match is mine.

Yeah, I feel that it was a funny match in a way, good match to remember for me, of course, not for him. You know, the funny thing is that I should have won in two sets. We would not be talking about any of these things. But here we are, so yeah, a match to remember, for sure.

Q. The three match points in the second set and then one hour later you get a fourth match point, how relieved were you when that last point was finished? And I understand that when you and Alexei are together, whether with practice before or even at the net, you do converse a lot in Russian.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, he speaks Russian, so we speak in Russian. Me, I feel very Russian. I don't know how he feels. I know that he speaks Russian, so we can.

Yeah, three match points, third one, I mean, tough one to forget because, again, should have won it. Was on top of the point. That's where I actually am not happy with the way I played today, because I feel like there were many small moments where I could have done just one shot better and it would be over.

Same like on the match point with the forehand. But soon, yes, he missed a slice on the match point and the match was over, it was a huge relief. Not for my legs still because needed like good 10 minutes to stop cramping, but for the mind it was just unbelievable.

I think, I mean, winning a Grand Slam final in three sets, straight sets, doesn't feel the way I felt after the match point today (smiling).

Q. Now that you're relieved for having won this difficult match, how do you envision the next one? How do you prepare looking forward to the next round? And you don't still know your opponent.

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: Yeah, I'm definitely going to watch their match. I will probably be in the physio room or eating my dinner. They are going to play late. Going to enjoy the match. Lost a few weeks ago to Dusan, so can be a great chance for revenge.

Frances, great player, especially playing good here in Miami from what I saw, beating Evans in amazing match, amazing comeback. So going to be a huge matchup, I feel like.

Again, today I have recovery sessions in the evening. Tomorrow a day off. So I'm going to be 100% ready for my match, that's no doubt, and looking forward for a great match.

Q. You tell us before about your serve. I think your serve was your best ally today. You won 73% of your serve points and 92% on your first serve. Do you think that that shot was your highlight today in your match against Alexei?

DANIIL MEDVEDEV: To be honest, as I said, until I was cramping like crazy in the third set, my serve was definitely not helping me this match, because I felt like all the important points I couldn't make my first serve.

It was really windy, the toss was going all over the place. Balls here get really heavy so it's like you start with the balls flying and they go down so much.

I couldn't get my rhythm on the serve, but when it was in, was really strong and consistent. So at least this helped me to stay in the match all the time. Was really important.

But usually, yeah, as I said, the further you go in the tournament, the more you take advantage of your serve, the more you get used to the conditions. I'm sure that next match is going to be better.

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