

Miami Open presented by Itaú

Saturday, April 3, 2021

Miami, Florida, USA

Nikola Mektic

Mate Pavic

Press Conference

MEKTIC-PAVIC/Evans-Skupski

6-4, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Congrats. The way this year has started for you two, it's been sort of a dream, I guess. Nikola, did you imagine how much success you'd have so early?

NIKOLA MEKTIC: I have to be humble and say, no, this is a dream come true, but I really did expect a great partnership and great results from the start. Yes, it's been a great year so far, but this is, like I said, we are just two very great players that I felt from the beginning that it's gonna work pretty fast and pretty well.

Q. Obviously last year you both were on very good teams and were playing very well. Did you take that sort of leap of faith like knowing you had something good going and sort of risking it to do something better, as you're doing now?

MATE PAVIC: Yeah, I mean, obviously it was a good call, worth taking that risk, I guess. I mean, like Nikola said, we were both even with our ex-partners, you know, last years we were always on the top of the ranking, you know, winning tournaments.

We are both great players, so there was no reason to think that we wouldn't play good, you know, together. Were we expecting maybe this good to start off? You know, maybe not. Maybe we were expecting, you know, to take it a little bit, to get to know each other. We never played an official match before this year. Maybe we were not expecting that good of a results, but obviously it's going good for us and I hope we can keep it going like this.

Q. Congratulations. Great week. If I could ask you both the same question, maybe Nikola, you could start, you have played with so many different partners, but what do you love most about playing with Mate?



NIKOLA MEKTIC: I mean, everything. There is not one thing that I can point out that I don't like, to be honest. I mean, on the court we totally think the same. He has some great weapons, no flaws.

Off the court we get along pretty well and we have fun. The energy and the atmosphere is pretty good. Really enjoying it.

Q. Mate, how would you add to that one? What do you like most about your partner on court? How does he help you guys have success?

MATE PAVIC: Yeah, I mean, the answer is pretty much -- I think it's good for a change, you know. We played for years already with -- actually, Nikola played with Croatian. I never did full-time playing with Croatian.

So I think that helps a bit more, you know. We are both Croatians. We speak the same language, same culture, you know, same things, you know, so we are good friends off the court also.

So it's kind of on the court and off the court, you know, everything coming together, you know. Like he said, good energy, good vibe all over it. I think it's going pretty well, yeah.

Q. How much does it mean to you guys to be the first Croatian team to win in Miami? And just the second Croatian team, besides you in 2019, Nikola. It's extra special that you're from Croatia together, right?

NIKOLA MEKTIC: Yeah. As long as I'm a part of those teams, I'm good (laughter). No, I mean, it's incredible. Like I said on the court, it means a lot to win with a friend, with a fellow Croatian, to win such a big tournament.

But like we said, we just started, so I hope we are gonna have much more to celebrate.

Q. About the match, I don't think either of us asked about the match, did you feel you guys sort of overwhelmed them a bit with the returning and like sort of the aggression a little bit?



MATE PAVIC: Yeah, I think we did, definitely. I think they played a very good match, very solid. They started off very well. They were also returning great from the beginning of the match. Later on they did return a bit, you know, the level went down a little bit.

But they had this break, you know, in the first. They played some great games. So I think they are not a bad team. They are a tough team, and they proved that also with few big wins, you know, this week to get to the final.

I think we were just very solid, very confident, you know, with all these matches that we won from before and we played a great match.

Q. Nikola, we have been talking about it, your guys' success, but when you go through a tournament, don't lose a set, and it wasn't like you were playing bad teams at all, the semis you played one of the best teams in the world, how much confidence does that give you?

NIKOLA MEKTIC: To be honest, I get more confidence from the way we play and from the way we feel on the court. You know, you cannot influence every time if you're gonna win or if you're gonna lose. This tournament we won without losing a set, but it's such a close -- every match is so close.

So you drop the level 5% and you're gonna lose. Instead of 7-6, 6-4, you're losing 7-6, 6-4. The way we play and the way we keep playing, that gives me more confidence than the result itself.

Q. Your postmatch celebration with the pushups, Mate, you didn't join in. How come?

MATE PAVIC: I don't know. That was something new I was not expecting (laughter).

NIKOLA MEKTIC: Who can be ready to join? I wasn't ready...

MATE PAVIC: I guess I have got to be ready for the next time. (Laughter.)

FastScripts by ASAP Sports