

# Miami Open presented by Itaú

Sunday, March 24, 2019

## Novak Djokovic

Press Conference



N. DJOKOVIC/F. Delbonis

7-5, 4-6, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Looked like you were in total command 5-2 then... Did he elevate? Did you go down?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: To be honest, I lost my focus. I should have done better I think mentally than I have done end of first set and also end of second set. I managed to really play well last couple games of first set, go up a break, put myself in front, then I played a couple of really bad service games. Credit to Federico, he stepped in. He was the one controlling the pace. I backed up. I didn't have that much depth and power in my shots, and he used it.

He stepped in, didn't have anything to lose. I think first two, three games of the third set were crucial, really fighting, trying to be present, regain the positioning on the court more than anything.

I think last four games have been terrific, so I ended up in a positive way.

**Q. How different are the conditions here to when it was at Key Biscayne? Do you feel a bit more comfortable here than over there? We always remember it being very windy over there.**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, yes, I mean, obviously the wind was always a factor in Key Biscayne. It was very strong. It was very humid and warm. Here, because of the big football stadium, it feels like you're playing kind of an indoor match. You don't really feel much wind on the court.

Today it was there slightly from one end, but it's completely different in terms of wind and sun. There is no sun after 1 p.m. on the center court. It's great for tennis. I think also the absence of sun and wind make the conditions slightly slower, as well. It's not as easy to hit through the court. You got to work a bit more for your points.

**Q. Nadal said in Doha few years ago you played the best tennis that anybody ever played against him. Can you think who played the best tennis against you?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I return the favor. Nadal and

Roger. I mean, these two guys. And Stan I think also couple matches that we had in Grand Slam finals, he played some amazing tennis.

Yeah, because of those rivalries that I had with them, I was forced to dig deeper and understand what it takes, what I need to do to improve my game even more. When you get smashed on the court, obviously it doesn't feel great, but it does make you really address your game more than I guess any other moment.

It's not like I'm inviting to get smashed on the court, but when I have been, then I really had to rethink the game and it made me improve.

**Q. You play against Bautista Agut that defeated you this year in Dubai. Do you think you need to play better than today to beat him?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I think I'm hitting the ball well. I just need a little bit more consistency I think to hold that level of play throughout the entire match. I think that's what it's going to take to win against Bautista. He is one of those players that make you work very hard for every single point. He doesn't make mistakes. Just runs around the court.

He's very, very consistent and very solid. He improved his backhand, he improved his serve, and his forehand was always very, very solid and powerful.

He won against me in Doha this year. I was a set and a break up. I remember that match. He managed to turn the match around. I'll definitely do my homework and hopefully get the win in that match.

**Q. We know you're a very determined person. You've just been touching about Rafa, Roger, Stan, I guess Andy as well. Do you think you would be as good a player as you are now if those guys were not around?**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I understand you'd like to get an answer on that question. I understand your question. I don't like to usually talk about what ifs.

I am obviously part of this group of players. I'm grateful for that. At the beginning of my career, I was probably frustrated to have Nadal and Federer in the same era because they were winning so much, they were so dominant. They kept being dominant. I just managed

to up my level and start winning against them on the biggest tournaments, start getting some major titles.

Yes, I do feel like these guys have helped my game tremendously. I did say that many times before. I really don't know what would happen if I was in a different era. It's difficult to say really. I am grateful that I am part of this group.