

BNP Paribas Open

Sunday, March 12, 2017

Juan Martin Del

Potro

Press Conference

J. DEL POTRO/F. Delbonis

7-6, 6-3

An interview with:

JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Last year you were sitting here, just coming back, first time back after playing quite a while with injuries. Can you imagine being where you are today?

JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO: No, of course not. Has been a great year for me. Last season I had played even better than what I expected, my injuries. I'm looking forward to keep going up in the rankings this year, trying to get closer to the top guys.

If I stay healthy and I can play the same level as last year, I think I will be close to that goal.

Q. How does the heat affect the way you play?

JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO: Too much (smiling). Yeah, it was really hot out there. But I mean, the weather conditions are the same for all the players, and you have to live with that. If you manage good that conditions, you can take a little difference. I did well today in the second set. We play with almost shadow of the court and was even better.

Q. Can you talk about the decision to skip the Australian Open? The way you were playing towards the end of the season, you would clearly have been one of the favorites. Was it necessary? Did you think about maybe skipping the clay court season instead? What was the reason behind your decision?

JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO: It wasn't easy decisions to me, but I got exhausted after Davis Cup finals. When I say I didn't expect to play too much last year, I didn't expect to win the Davis Cup and finish the year end of November, which that was really hard to me and to myself for my body, for my wrist.

Of course, I wanted to play in Australia, but I think I



made a good decision looking forward to play more tournaments this year, and then I will have another big break after these tournaments for do a good preparation for the clay court seasons.

Hopefully I can do a smart schedule to be healthy all year.

Q. You're not playing Monte-Carlo?

JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO: I don't think so.

Q. Do you think South America deserve ATP 1000?

JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO: I mean, for me, could be great because I was close to my hometown, but it's not easy for South American conditions, you know.

But I just played in Acapulco tournament, which is great atmosphere there. They have everything good for the players. They made a good draw this year.

Maybe one day can be a big event in South America, but I don't know who are the persons to close that deal for South America.

Q. Davis Cup has been a big inspiration for a lot of players. Did you take a lot out of that experience? Do you feel like that's helping to drive you now?

JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO: It was great for me, for my partners, for my country, for everyone, I think. We are the only four players who won Davis Cup in our history, which means something very big to us.

But I also had a good memories winning the US Open, winning the medals in the Olympics game. But Davis Cup always is different feelings, and I know how big is for my country. But now is another year. I think I did well playing for my country, but now is time to look myself a little bit and trying to come back in the top positions one day.

Q. When you were a kid, would you have ever dreamt about Diego Maradona supporting you the way he did during the Davis Cup final?

JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO: No, it was another dream for us. He was there every match, supporting us all the time, watching tennis matches for five hours. He was there all the time, and he's a very friend of mine, too. We are very thankful to him, because he flew to Zagreb and he was cheering for us.

