

BNP Paribas Open

Thursday, March 16, 2017

Stan Wawrinka

Press Conference

S. WAWRINKA/D. Thiem

6-4, 4-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How did you feel getting through that? It was a tough one obviously at the end, but you did manage to get through.

STAN WAWRINKA: Yeah, of course. I'm really happy. Again, tiebreak. The level was really high tonight. I'm really happy the way I was playing, the way I find a way to win it. He's a strong player, really tough to play. I think in general we play both really high level, and the match was only one, two points.

I think in the third set tiebreak I served really well. I was really focused to not give him anything. And, again, it's a great win for me.

Q. How does your experience help you in those moments when you've really got to...

STAN WAWRINKA: I think it's a little bit experience, a little bit the confidence, a little bit thinking about what you want to do and just do it without thinking if you're gonna miss or no.

I think in those moments you need to trust your game and that's what I did well. I was playing well. I could have lose the match, for sure. But, in general, I try to stay focused with my game, with my game plan, and don't give in anything.

I know also that's when I play good tennis. I can beat anybody. So that's give me a lot of confidence.

Q. I wanted to just ask a question you have been asked many times. If your name was Roger or Rafa, this room would be packed, a lot of press, a lot of media. Talk about -- you have had this fantastic career, all these slams recently or year after year. Just talk about the process over the years, how you have worked with being the other Swiss in terms of Roger and....

STAN WAWRINKA: For me, as I say many times, I always try to look at the positive for a situation. I think growing up, always Roger, behind him, doesn't matter how you want to call it, it was great to me. Best player ever, No. 1 player. I shared some amazing moments at



Davis Cup, Olympics, a lot of practice experience. So it helped me a lot to make me the player I am now.

Then, for right now, you know, I don't -- it doesn't really matter if this room is packed or not. If I'm playing on Stadium 1, Stadium 2, at the end of the day, I enjoy what I'm doing. I'm really happy with my career. I won three Grand Slams last three years. I think it's more than what I could expect. I mean, semifinal here.

I also know that all I want is to win tournaments and I'm trying to do that, I think, part of that. If I want to play on center court, I have to win matches. If I want to play in front of a lot of people, I have to win matches. If I want this room packed, I have to win the tournament.

For me, again, it's not the most important. The most important is to enjoy what I do, and I enjoy a lot.

Q. Well said, but allow me just to follow up. Roger would talk about the process of interacting with you, and I believe he said that he would advise you and talk with you, and then there came a point where he just would stop, where he stopped, and you were essentially on your own. Can you confirm that? Can you talk about that process?

STAN WAWRINKA: No, I think was just a great relation we have. When I was younger, for sure, I could ask him a lot of advice or a lot of question about player, about a lot of things. When I start to have those years on the tour, to know all the player, then for sure I need less -- I need to ask him less question. I know all those players. I know what to do.

So that's when we stop a little bit talking about tennis in general or about players, or there is a moment when he was asking me question, also.

So, you know, we just talk when we feel like talking. It's good for us. It's that simple. It's not like he helped me or I help him or we stop. We have great relation. He's great friends. We always enjoy to be on the tour in the same tournament.

Q. You talk about confidence and experience before. I was so surprised to read your comments about your nerves prior to the US Open final. Was it just because of that huge moment, or have you had those kind of nerves before going into other

matches?

STAN WAWRINKA: I had that many times, you know. As an athlete, I think we all nervous. We all deal differently with the nerves, with the pressure, but those -- I don't know how you want to call it, but those stress moments when you really don't feel good with your body. We all have that, I think.

Then you have to accept it. You have to deal with it. You need to -- most important is to accept it. The time you accept it, you can deal with it and find a way how to feel better.

That's what I did in US Open. I start to focus on the tennis, to focus on what I was doing. I was in the final of US Open, Grand Slam. That mean I was playing good.

So if I play good, focus on what you're doing today or tonight against this player, how you want to beat him, and then all those little tough you have in your head, all those little bad thinking, stress, it disappear little by little.

Q. Just a question on that point about focus and the mind aspect of the game. Is that something that can be learned or is it just natural? It has to be there with a player? And if it can be learned, how do you do it?

STAN WAWRINKA: Well, I think I'm the example that it can be done, because I wasn't that good younger. When I was younger, before starting to win those big match, I was losing a lot of important match, 7-6 in the third or big-five set match against top player because I was nervous. I didn't know how to deal with my nerves.

I think there is many way how to learn it. So most important is to know yourself, to accept it, to try to see what you can do and change.

To have a great team around you. I have the chance to have Pierre Paganini, who knows everything about me, my tennis life, my private life, my fitness life. And he helped me so much going through all those year to try to became a better tennis player.

I had Magnus who came also in a great moment for me. He show me the way how to win a Grand Slam. All those little things, that's the way I did to learn.

Q. Is it a matter of sitting down and having long conversations? Is it a matter of maybe sitting down and playing a number of games of chess to concentrate or what?

STAN WAWRINKA: No, I think we all different. I think we all need to find how to do it. For me was a mix

between some conversation, some trust from my team, and also a lot of practice on the court, on the tennis court. Simple, because, at the end of the day, you play tennis. You're on the court, you have balls, and you have a player in front of you who you want to beat. So if you play better than him, you have better chance to beat him.

So all those little things make you understand better what you have to do to win those important moments.

Q. You have such a fabulous backhand. Many say it's the best one-hander in the game. How did you develop such a great backhand? If you could start all over, would you prefer your one-handed, or, say, the two-handed of Djokovic or Murray?

STAN WAWRINKA: I think I'm happy with my backhand, you know. For sure, they have unbelievable two-handed backhand. Nothing to say about that. It's a joke the way they play two-handed backhand.

I enjoy my backhand. It's one of my favorite shots. I really enjoy to play it. I was lucky that my first coach Dimitri Zavialoff for more than ten years, from young to 25 years old, top 10, first tournaments win, he told me to change two hand from one hand when I was 11 years old, because it was more natural for me to play that shot.

At that age, it's tough to change, because at 11, 12, 13, when you play one-hand backhand and you just changing, you don't win many points because you're not strong enough and it's tough. You need to accept it take long time.