

ROGER FEDERER:

Q: Roger, perfect preparation for you?

A: Yeah. Even with a loss it would have been a good preparation as well, but now it's a great preparation so confidence is high. I surprised myself by winning this tournament, honestly, because exhibitions sometimes I'm not the best at doing that but I really had the feeling I played two good matches now and already after yesterday I felt that my game is ready to go and today I proved it again.

Q: Roger, comparing to the Grand Slams you won last year, do you feel in a more confident frame of mind going into this one than you did then because you are on such a winning run?

A: It's different this year because last year I got here with no coach and the people were wondering how this will be, put a lot of pressure on myself, and also myself it was a different situation and everybody wanted to help in a way and I have to sort out how I'm going to actually manage the situation myself so I feel much, much better coming in this year's Australian Open than last year, even though the pressure is here to defend it.

Q: How is the situation with Tony this week because he only seemed to arrived here today. Have you been talking on the telephone?

A: Well, I called him, I think yesterday, to see when he's coming in because I wasn't quite sure whether he was coming today and he said he would be happy to come and see the match.

Q: Has he watched your other matches on TV?

A: The ones at Kooyong down here this week?

Q: Yes.

A: I don't know. You have to ask him, I haven't caught up with him.

Q: If he watched them would it make you uncomfortable that he was - - -

A: To what?

Q: I'm joking, but you sound like you don't know whether he watched or not and whether he sat at home watching and making diagrams and taking notes, do you think he was being too serious?

A: No, the thing is it's just basically started so I think we are going at it very easily and we will see how everything is going to work out. I didn't even know he was going to come today but then he said last night: look, I'm arriving at 12.00 and I think I can make it, so I said: okay, if you want to come it's nice but I don't expect you to and we will see next week how it's going to work, I can't tell you.

Q: Have you worked out where these 10 weeks are going to be in the calendar? Would eight of them be the slams?

A: I never said 10 so we will see how many weeks it will be because again it depends on how I play. It's going to be more the weeks where I'm not going to be playing a tournament he will be next to me.

Q: So it is preparation work?

A: The slams I wouldn't really count them. If he's there, he's there maybe playing seniors but it's more the weeks where I'm practicing where it's for me and him interesting.

Q: If you are going to be practicing with him, does that mean you are going to have to come to Australia a lot or he is going to - - -

A: He is ready to come almost wherever I am at, which is good to know for me because he knows I can't do the trip down to Australia every time and if we get together most likely we have to spend at least a week together because otherwise it's not worth it maybe for him flying 24 hours or for me, so we will see how it works out really.

Q: What do you see as your greatest threat to defending your title starting next week?

A: Player?

Q: Player, condition, what do you see?

A: It's the whole thing together because there is enough good players around there, pressure is there.

Q: Is there any one thing?

A: The heat is there, the five setters are there, so there's many things you have to overcome to win a Grand Slam.

Q: In terms of physical demands, do you view this as the toughest of the four with the heat factor?

A: Well, every Grand Slam has its difficult parts - Wimbledon has the rain; French Open has the long rallies; Australia has got the heat and America the humidity really and the crazy city and crazy conditions, very windy at times, so I have experienced them all and I think it will be unfair to say this will be the most difficult one. I suppose they say it's the US Open so I got to feel that also last year.

Q: Apart from you wanting a coach to look at small areas of your game, where you think they might need to be improved? Do you think having a coach, even if it's on paper, will stop people offering their advice to you, you won't have a case of having too many eyes on your game?

A: Yes. You mean the offers will stop coming in now?

Q: Yes.

A: Yes, that will happen.

Q: And will that be a relief?

A: I think that will happen because that happened when they heard that there was talk about Tony and then when they heard Tony said no the letters - how do you say - the box was full of letters, so now I guess it will stop again.

Q: Is it a big distraction for you?

A: No, because I have my mind set, I had it on Tony and it is true he said no in the first place but he considered and I'm very happy; I think it's up to me who I want to work with and who is available and not actually this is really offering their services.

Q: When did you make the first approach?

A: Last year. It was in the beginning of the year and then, I don't know when we caught up the first time, at Wimbledon briefly, and we started to talk after Wimbledon quite seriously because I knew he told me at beginning of the year: look, until end of the year nothing is possible for me.

Q: Could you quantify what he actually brings to Team Federer?

A: Quantify?

Q: Quantify.

A: I don't understand quantify.

Q: Well, just say what qualities.

A: Is that the same word?

Q: Just say what qualities and what knowledge he brings to you?

A: Well, I think we all know he's got unbelievable experience as a player, as a coach, and those factors already bring an incredible amount of knowledge to the game and to a player like me so how important is how I can use it or how we are going to go at it. Also if it's just a few weeks it's going to work with me, I get the time to talk to him, that is in itself very interesting for me.

Q: Years ago when you were with Peter, did you know him then?

A: Tony?

Q: Yes.

A: "Hello", that's all because he was with Rafter and Tony didn't do that many weeks I think with Rafter either so didn't see him that much and we would just see each other and you are in your team and don't really talk.

Q: Roger, there was a lot of speculation in here in the papers about your secret visit to Sydney. Can you tell us more about that?

A: It was not that secret; I was open about it. I was there for two weeks practicing with him, played tennis for two weeks and he was my condition trainer. I did the buildup here instead of doing it in Switzerland so I haven't been back home since mid-December.

Q: Was that conditioning work better here because you are in the middle of the Summer rather than in the winter?

A: Makes it easier and just because there is the two of us, you don't have the distraction of maybe other players being there. In Switzerland the tension is so big so when I go to another country it's much more quiet, I can really focus on the work itself even though we try everything also back in Switzerland but I think we get together very slowly, me and Piere Paganini, my condition trainer, and we did great work even though he was just here for five days. It was a hell of a trip for him but I'm happy he did it because I only had two weeks, don't forget it was not like a month so I have to catch up with some more condition work later on in the year.

Q: We hear a lot about Andre's preparations and running up and down sand dunes in the desert, how much of your work is actually done in the gym, how much is done on the running track and how much is done on the tennis court?

A: I think tennis players - I can speak in general - we have to do everything: we have to be explosive, we have to have the endurance, we have to be strong so we have to also do the weights, so I see myself doing 50 per cent in the gym than outside so outside I can either go for a run or on the court, exercises.

Q: And then how much with an actual racquet in the hand and a ball going across the net?

A: During those two weeks, for instance?

Q: Yes.

A: Probably like nine or 10 days or so because the first few days I really want to get ready to actually be able to practice because I had taken a three week vacation after Houston.

Q: Do you expect to make this tournament a regular part of your preparation when you play in Australia?

A: I really got the feeling during today's match that this is actually a good place to come back to also next year and also in the future so I would definitely consider this tournament very strongly. I hope Colin Stubbs invites me again.