

Roland Garros 2015

Wednesday, May 27

Damir Dzumhur



ROLAND - GARROS

19 MAI - 7 JUIN 2015

D. DZUMHUR/M. Baghdatis

6-4, 6-3, 4-6, 6-2

An interview with:

DAMIR DZUMHUR

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Congratulations.

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Thank you.

Q. The atmosphere out there looked great. What was it like playing with all the support?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Yeah, the atmosphere was great and I like it. Similar was in Australia when I did the last year third round. So I like the good atmosphere; I like the spectators; I really enjoyed the match here.

Q. How did you feel about your game? What were you pleased with?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: I think I played a good match. Not the best I can play, but definitely it was a tough match for me. I knew that I had chances today and I tried to use it. I think I did good in overall. Since middle of first set I played really good. At 4-All I broke him, then I won six games in a row with three breaks. First two sets I won with 6-4, 6-3. After, I didn't serve really good. He broke me and then he hold his serve until the end of the third set. I had four break points and didn't use it. But I tried to play aggressive in the fourth, and I did it. I broke him on 3-2 second time. I think that was the deciding -- that was the one point that I think because of that I won the match. I'm really happy that I'm in third round.

Q. Damir, your next opponent is someone that you quite admire I think, isn't it?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Yeah, somebody, probably the biggest player ever in tennis, and I'm really glad that I have the chance to play with him. That is probably dream of every player, young player who's coming to play him, and I have this opportunity now in Roland Garros.

Q. Roger said that he was very happy to play against a player coming from a new country, a small country not used to having great tennis champions. Can you tell us what it is to be on the tour representing a country that doesn't have a long tradition in tennis? I don't know if you have a lot of friends from your country on the tour. How is it?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Well, I'm really happy that I'm one of the players coming from this small country and playing tennis and being in top 100. I mean, everything what my country went through I think is

really tough for everybody. I knew it. It was tough for me to go through all this, but I did. I managed somehow. I'm really happy I can represent my country on such big tournaments and the name and the flag of my country is on these big tournaments. I have some friends of course they're playing. I'm sure that we have a lot of talents, but unfortunately the sport in Bosnia, nobody cares about the sport actually. That's why a lot of the big talent's going for other country. As you know Marin Cilic and Ivan Dodig are both from Bosnia Herzegovina but they are playing for Croatia, and that's just two examples of the players I think. There are more of them coming. Unfortunately behind me there is nobody in the next generation who can make these results. I hope there will be somebody to represent this country again.

Q. What are your earliest memories of Roger, whether watching him on TV? Is there any specific match that comes to mind?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: I remember when I played a tournament, was it under-12 or under-10? I watched him playing semis I think Wimbledon with Roddick. That was the first time I was cheering for him. Since then he's my idol. So I remember him since I was ten or eleven, and now I have this opportunity to play against him.

Q. Is it more difficult to reach the top 100 as a player from a small country like Bosnia?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: I think it is. Actually it is definitely. No support from anybody. You have to be everything by your own. You have to go through everything alone. I mean, I can say alone, but with my parents, of course. They did everything for me. But no support from federation, no sponsors. So all the financial things you have to do, nobody to be behind you to follow you and to go through with that. But fortunately I did manage to go through all that.

Q. With the help of your father.

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Yeah, of course. He's my first coach. And of course with Albert Castellani, my second coach. I think we did really good job from where we are coming.

Q. Just back on Federer, have you ever spoken to him?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Yeah, yeah, I did once in Australia last year. Not much. And just before this match I saw him. Wish him a good luck. He did it to me. He congratulate me after this win, and I hope I'll have opportunity to talk more with him. Yeah.

Q. In Australia he congratulated you?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Now. Now just after this match we saw each other, yeah.

Q. You play with a Wilson racquet; is that right?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Yes.

Q. Did you choose that because of Roger?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: No, actually I'll tell you how I choose. I was in Italy, famous tournament for under-10 and 12, Lemon Bowl. I was playing there and I won that one, under-12. The guy from Italy, Italian Federation, which is Wilson one, they offered me contract and I said, Yes. Why not? I don't know if I'll have chance again to have some contract. So I get that one since I am 12 and I am since then playing with well Wilson.

Q. You were sponsored by a pharmaceutical company, but they no longer sponsor you; is that right?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: No, no more. I have one sponsor BH Telecom from Bosnia. That's so far the only sponsor I have. I'm happy with that. They are following me for the last three years. They're the only one in Bosnia who really followed me last few years. I don't expect much even after this result, even after more I think bigger results. But as I said, I went through all this alone and I can do it again.

Q. Playing a top player in the next round is not new to you because you played Berdych in Australia. What did you learn from that and that match on this stage that you're going to take with you to the match against Federer?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Well, I played Berdych in Australia and Ferrer last year in US Open, so I already played two top 5 players. I mean, it's just tough to go on the court and play with them, but I'll just try to be as more as relaxed as I can be, to give my best, to play my best tennis. I really don't think too much about result. I just want to enjoy in that moment day after tomorrow with Federer. I hope that I can show what I can do on tennis court.

Q. Question about tennis in Bosnia. If I would be a - kid in Bosnia, how should I do to play tennis? And would I be able to watch the next game you will have? What's the presence in tennis in the life around?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Well, I think if you are ten years old, I think first of all your father has to be coach. Really, in Bosnia not so many coaches who traveled around the world who know how the things go. So of course for my father also knew all that. He was coaching before me, but he was coaching the players just in Bosnia, not around the world. So we went through all this together. I think if you want to really start playing tennis you have to be -- you really to have work hard. You really have to work hard. Nothing is going to come just to you. You have to ask

for everything. You have to first of all -- you don't have any courts to play. You have to pay for the courts. You have to pay for everything. Don't expect that federation, even if you are the best in the world, is going to help you. You have to be prepared for all that to play tennis.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about the club where you train and practice in Sarajevo?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Well, I'm playing in few clubs in Sarajevo because there is no club that is -- no courts that one club has in Sarajevo. So many clubs playing on the same court, and then the same thing with the other courts. And it's always like that. Every year it's changing. So I'm playing where I actually can play, where the courts are better, you know. For example, in end of the April I had to play clay tournaments and there was still balloons on most of the courts in Sarajevo. So I had to find any court that I could play outdoor. I mean, we're always suffer with the courts in Bosnia. Especially in winter. We have only one hard court that we can really play.

Q. By reaching the third round you're secure of 85,000 Euro, even if you lost in the third round.

How important is this for you?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Well, I didn't know that I got that much. But anyway, I mean, for sure it's going to help. Yeah, even last season was pretty good for me with the prize money. Even this season I started pretty well. Being top 100 it's much, much easier to play, and especially if you have any sponsors. So I don't think too much about that. First of all, I'm trying to play good, to build my ranking up, and then with good ranking, with good games, the money will come definitely.

Q. There is always a discussion in tennis about fathers or mothers who are pushing their children to play tennis. How is that in your case?

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Well, I started really by myself. My father was a coach and I was going with him to the courts when I was already three, four. I just loved it. Then I started with five, six to practice. I mean, everybody saw that I have a talent. Talent is just one small thing that you can start. But I already won a European championship and 16, 18. I was third in the world. So already when I was really young everybody saw that I have this talent, so we all went together to try to make something. I'm happy that I choose this sport. It's a beautiful sport. It's a tough sport. You are just you. Nobody to be with you on the court like in football or basketball. I just love it because it's like that.

Q. You mentioned how players like Cilic and Dodig and Ljubicic are born in Bosnia but left. You haven't. Have you ever thought about it? From what you're saying about the facilities, must be very difficult.

DAMIR DZUMHUR: Yeah, when I was young, when I was 14 and 16 I had an offer from Croatia. I didn't go

there because I was always saying that, yeah, with my parents we hope that the situation in Bosnia is going to be better and better. So we didn't go. I was still young to change the country. And then 18 I started to play professional tournament. I started pretty young to play Davis Cup already from Bosnia Herzegovina, and then it just went away. I like playing for my country. I just don't feel that I can go for any other country.