

**November 27, 2007**



An interview with:

## **THE RUSSIAN DAVIS CUP TEAM**

(All answers are through translation unless otherwise noted.)

TIM CURRY: Thank you, everyone, again for joining us. We do have a translator who will help us for questions or answers. Questions for Shamil and the team.

**Q. All of us are wondering about Marat, whether he's coming, possibly playing, how long you'll keep us in suspense about this.**

CAPTAIN TARPISCHEV: This is our strongest team. I think that these guys play better than Marat, and he is not going to be here.

**Q. Nikolay, you've been the center of a controversy this year with the gambling. Could you talk about your thoughts about that, how your mind frame is this week. Can you concentrate on tennis?**

NIKOLAY DAVYDENKO: I've been getting this question for the last three months. Of course, what I try to do, I try to focus on playing and I try to do my best each time.

**Q. Dmitry, you had one of the more memorable Davis Cup matches against Roddick last year. We know he was extremely exhausted after that match. What are your memories of that match? Is it the most memorable match you've played in this environment?**

DMITRY TURSUNOV: (In English.) Well, obviously it was a long one, so I was a little bit tired, as well. I think it was a very memorable match because it's Davis Cup, which, you know, I don't think of it as a battle of two countries, but I treat it as a battle of two teams. And winning it for somebody other than yourself is special.

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I think it's different than an individual competition. You know, unfortunately it's a sport that's an individual sport. But because of the team effect, I think it's more special to me.

Do you need me to elaborate more?

**Q. Because this is one of the few settings where you don't play a tiebreak in the fifth set, it went on so long. If you could talk a bit about the battle of wills and how strong a Davis Cup player Roddick is.**

DMITRY TURSUNOV: (In English.) I think he's a great competitor, regardless of Davis Cup or individual competition. He's a very difficult player to play because he never gives up.

But by the same talking, nobody wants to give up in the fifth set. If you've gone that far you're gonna try to do your best. You know, I don't really think that because he lost he has less will to win than I did. I just happened to win that match.

But a lot has to do with fitness for that particular day. You know, a lot of luck is involved in that match, as well. I wouldn't say that I'm a stronger person or more willful person than he is just I won that match.

He's going to be a very difficult opponent for anybody.

**Q. Shamil, who will you use in singles on Friday?**

CAPTAIN TARPISCHEV: I'm asking the same question of myself (laughter). It's too early.

**Q. When will you decide?**

CAPTAIN TARPISCHEV: Thursday.

**Q. Shamil, you have a reputation for being very crafty and a great strategist. Do you enjoy that reputation? Does it make it easier to be crafty when you have players that are so versatile that can play singles, doubles on any surface?**

CAPTAIN TARPISCHEV: I never think about those things. I just do my job. I don't know

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how the other folks look at what I do.

**Q. Does it make it easier tactically to have these players that are so versatile?**

CAPTAIN TARPISCHEV: I think the more versatile players there are, the easier it is because is always easier to match a versatile player with the particular style of the opposing player.

**Q. You're the defending Davis Cup champions. Do you consider yourself the favorites to win again this time or the underdogs because perhaps you're playing in the United States?**

CAPTAIN TARPISCHEV: There is no question that the American team is the favorite. But if we have, let's say, between 30 and 35 percent chance of winning, why not try and win it?

A similar situation occurred in our first match we played with Chile. We were not the favorites, but we were able to win.

**Q. Nikolay, you've had struggles against both Roddick and Blake. I'm sure you know that already. Can you isolate what is the part of their games, each one, that has given you the most trouble. In this setting, do you think you can overcome that?**

NIKOLAY DAVYDENKO: Yeah, of course I lost to Roddick and to Blake. What always happens is the next time one plays against the same player, one tries his best to win. And that's what I'm going to do on Friday if I'm going to play against Blake.

**Q. Which part of their games gives you the most trouble?**

NIKOLAY DAVYDENKO: It's somewhat easier to play against Roddick than against Blake. Roddick plays a somewhat worse game from the baseline than Blake. Well, in a nutshell, if I lost to both of them, then probably it means that both of them are inconvenient players as far as I'm concerned.

**Q. Why do you think the Americans are so much of a favorite to win?**

CAPTAIN TARPISCHEV: It's not by chance that when we played in Moscow on the clay courts we won, because the clay court diminishes the attacking power of the players.

Here we'll be playing on a faster surface, and, of course, the serve and volley will be very

important factors. This is why it's much harder to use tactical elements here. Obviously the surface makes one team stronger and diminishes the capacities in some way of the other team.

This is why I thought that back in Moscow we had a slight advantage over the American team. Here, however, I think the American team has this advantage.

**Q. Just because of the surface?**

CAPTAIN TARPISCHEV: Mostly. If you look at the statistics of the results of different matches on different types of surfaces, you can arrive at similar conclusions.

TIM CURRY: Thank you.

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