

JOHN ISNER'S BLOG May 31st, 2010



Talking about tournaments and champions, the gladiators of tennis have descended on the red clay of Paris to duel for the Roland Garros crown. Will Federer be able to defend his new kingdom or will Nadal be able to regain his 'Paradise Lost'? What new surprises would the women's draw throw up this time? Why is the French Open's surface considered the most gruelling to win a major on? We'll have to wait till the second Sunday of the 2nd Grand Slam for the answers.

Ever wondered what the top pros' are thinking about while on-tour? What kind of preparation they need to do before getting on-court? And, what discussions they have with their coaches about match strategy. We think that this blog by the 6 feet 9 inch tall, John Isner, written while at the French Open this year provides some insight in these areas, particularly those parts highlighted by us.

Hi everyone,

This is going to be a pretty short blog today because I don't have a lot of time to sit and write. I'm playing for the third straight day. The last couple of days have been a bit hectic because of the rain. It's all part of the job, but we've done a lot of starting and stopping. I'm very happy with how I finished up against Marco Chiudinelli. It was a tough match that started late in the day on Wednesday. I felt as though I was playing pretty well and moving well. He's a tough player and we hung tight with one another through those first two sets before we had to leave the court because it was just too dark to play. It's always tough to come back the next day to resume a match, but it's how you rise and respond that can make the difference. I was serving well and think I was able to and convert some big break points when I needed to. That felt good.

After the post-match interview, I came back to the hotel and got a massage. I also started drinking a lot of fluids almost immediately, knowing that I had to come back today to play. Really the past 24 hours have been spent preparing for my match today against Tomas Berdych. Some of you have asked what that means. I really rely on my coach, Craig Boynton, to break down my opponents' past few rounds and our head-to-head matchups. He also takes into account how I'm playing—what I'm doing well—and what I need to execute to come up with an overall attack plan. Typically there are two to three things I want to execute. We pretty much stick to that plan and if there are changes that need to be made, we always have backup plans. I think I'm learning how to better adapt on the court and make adjustments when I have to. I just played Berdych a few days ago in Düsseldorf. I didn't get the win, but I felt good out there.

The weather is perfect today. It's sunny, but maybe on the cooler side, so I'll get a really light sweat going soon to warm up the muscles before I head out there to battle. I'm on Court 6 after the Juan Carlos Ferrero match. My body feels good and I think that's due to the work put in by my trainer, **Mark Kovacs**. The guy is amazing. We've been working hard the past few months, and he has definitely helped me stay prepped physically and respond to the grind. I feel better than ever, so it's definitely paying off. Anyway, thanks for all of the messages from all over the world. I love getting them. To answer some of the questions, I haven't really gotten to do much sightseeing, but that's fine. I'm here to work and there will be lots of time to see the city when the tournament is over. Right now I'm heading over to the grounds a bit early to pick up a couple of new sticks that we dropped off yesterday after my match. I typically carry about four to five frames in my bag. One is strung a little bit tighter and one a little looser in case I need to adjust and at least three are completely identical. I've had the same racquets since UGA and have played with Prince since I was a junior. I actually heard that they still have the letter I wrote when I was around 10 years old asking to be sponsored. Hilarious. All right, off to work. I have a lot to get done today!

Thanks guys, John.
