



TENNIS/ Nishikori eyeing Grand Slam success after exit from ATP Finals

- 1) LONDON--Kei Nishikori is confident he will build on a breakthrough season that saw him reach his first Grand Slam final.
 - 2) The 24-year-old Nishikori reached his first major final earlier this year at the U.S. Open and qualified for the ATP Finals for the first time, losing in the semifinals to top-ranked Novak Djokovic on Nov. 15.
 - 3) "Hopefully I can have a good preparation in December and arrive with good confidence," Nishikori said when asked if he would travel to the Australian Open next year as one of the favorites. "For sure I will go to try (and win)."
 - 4) At the semifinals on Nov. 15, two-time defending champion Djokovic overcame a lapse of concentration to beat Nishikori 6-1, 3-6, 6-0 and advance to a third straight final.
 - 5) The Serb, who sealed the year-end No. 1 spot after finishing unbeaten in the round robin phase, dropped his first set since the start of the tournament after losing his focus early in the second set, visibly angered by a partisan crowd.
 - 6) But the fourth-seeded Nishikori, who upset Djokovic in the U.S. Open semifinals, failed to build on the momentum at the start of the decider when he missed two break points before Djokovic recovered and won the last six games.
 - 7) Nishikori, whose early career was hampered by injuries, improved dramatically this season under the helm of coach Michael Chang, who is credited for boosting Nishikori's self-belief.
 - 8) Nishikori claimed four titles in 2014 and climbed to fifth place in the rankings, becoming the first Asian player to finish a season in the Top 10.
 - 9) He posted wins over the two best players in the world: Djokovic en route to the final at Flushing Meadows and Federer at the Miami Masters.
 - 10) "I think I need a bit more experience to get there," Nishikori said, reflecting on Federer and Djokovic's achievements. "But I think you also get more motivation when you get a higher ranking. Hopefully I can keep going like this next year."
 - 11) The 5-foot-10 Nishikori, who lives in the United States, posted 11 wins over members of the Top 10 this year. Against Djokovic on Nov. 15, he managed to take one set off the Serb, who had lost just nine games in his three previous matches.
 - 12) "It has been one of the best years for me, I did really well," Nishikori said. "Now I have to train well during the offseason and stay injury-free again. I think I will have chances in big tournaments, especially Grand Slams. 【November 16, 2014／THE ASSOCIATED PRESS 後半省略】
- exit:敗退、退場 confident:確信している breakthrough:大成功、躍進の突破口 overcome:打ち勝つ lapse:期間 seal:動かぬものに unbeaten:無敵の round robin:総当たり戦 phase:段階 partisan:熱心な支持者 upset:番狂わせで負かす en route to:～の途中で Flushing Meadows:全米オープン (が開かれる公園) Miami Masters:国際競技テニス大会の名前 (Sony Open) injury-free:怪我のない
- ☆Ice breaker for active discussion☆
1. Are you familiar with tennis?
 2. Can you explain what ATP and Grand Slam are?
 3. Why do you think competitions are important for athletes, viewers, spectators and sponsors?
 4. Why do many people get moved by the achievement of the sports players?
 5. Can you share any stories related to sports which you are moved?
 6. What kind of qualities do top athletes need to have aside from playing skills?
 7. Make sentences using the following words: exit, confident, breakthrough, overcome, lapse, phase, partisan, upset and -free.