

# Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Saturday, 19 September 2020

Roma, Italia

## Casper Ruud

Press Conference

C. RUUD/M. Berrettini

4-6, 6-3, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. My question is not about the match but potentially about your next match, because you might face Novak. It's not clear if he's going to win yet. I'm just curious, that would be your third match against a top-5 player, and I'm wondering what you felt you had learned from the experience of, say, facing Roger Federer last year at Roland Garros. Are those big experiences for you in terms of learning about yourself and developing your game?**

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, definitely. You know, when you play a top-5 player and even, you know, one of the big three, you play the toughest opponent I think tennis players can ever meet. It's the toughest challenge for any player to play against any of those three.

And of course a top-5 player, I have played against Federer and I played against Medvedev in ATP Cup, and maybe tomorrow I will play against Novak. We'll see. They have to finish the match. I think they are in the third set now.

If I play him, it will be another great opportunity for me to play against one of the big three, and if not, there will be a tough opponent anyway if Koeper wins.

I'm ready for anything. You know, I have to see. We have to see after the match who is gonna win, and then I will have to prepare specifically for my opponent tomorrow.

**Q. You weren't born when somebody called Bjorn Borg was playing. A lot of topspin. Long, long balls, pushing his opponent towards the end of the court. Today against Berrettini, you were doing more or less the same on his backhand. Had you ever seen Borg? Did your father tell you something about him? You're not Borg, but you played really well, and congratulations for your first semifinal.**



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CASPER RUUD: I didn't hear, but you're talking about Bjorn Borg, right?

**Q. Yes, I was talking about Bjorn Borg who invented, created the topspin, the long, long balls close to the baseline, pushing the opponent. Nobody had done it before.**

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, I mean, I tried my best. Of course with Matteo's serve, it's not easy always to return. You really have to focus in your own service games.

That's kind of the way I think the way clay lets you play a little bit, slower courts, higher bounce, and I think it's what of course Rafa has done so well in all these years, pushing, playing the heavy balls, the high balls on clay. It causes many problems for the opponents, I think.

It's a part of the game with clay with some wrong bounces here and there. The clay court doesn't let you step in too much and play on the rise those risky shots as much as maybe on hard court.

I think that's a little bit of charm of the clay court, and I enjoy playing on it. You know, you have to be ready. The way I played today, I think it was tactically great. I tried to play many points the same, trying to, you know, move him not only to the sides but also a little bit back in the court, because inside the court he's one of the best players in the world.

**Q. How does it feel to make a Masters 1000 semifinal, and what is it about Rome?**

CASPER RUUD: It feels great, obviously. These things that all players work hard for every day in practice and try to make it far in the big tournaments and big events.

This is my first time in the semifinals, and today was even my first time in the quarterfinals. I'm just enjoying the moment, I guess. I'm in a good flow. I have gained good confidence in my game this week.

You know, Rome, I feel well here. It's great clay courts. It's the way I think the clay court should be.

You know, I have just been motivated and pumped up for the clay to start again, and it's a different time than what it

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usually is, but it's still the same beautiful place, same beautiful venue and beautiful city, of course. We don't see too much of the city, but we're staying in a great hotel so it's a nice feeling, anyway. I enjoy it here and also enjoy the Italian food, I guess (smiling).

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