

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Roma, Italia

Alexander Zverev

Press Conference

A. ZVEREV/A. De Minaur

6-3, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Sascha, did you feel better out there today than the first match?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Are you asking questions now? (Laughter). Awesome.

Yeah, felt good. Obviously it's not easy coming from Madrid to here with high altitude in Madrid, the ball's flying. Here it's quite slow. The first match you need sometimes to get used to it.

I think today was quite a good level from me.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Welcome to this tournament that you won five years ago, and it was your first Masters 1000, first time in the top 10 afterwards. After experiencing the nights in Madrid, how do you like the mornings in Rome? Also, what is now your relationship after five years, in general, with the press?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: With the press?

Q. Yes.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: (Smiling).

Q. Is it something bothering you? Something that you would like to avoid?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: First of all, I prefer to play at 11 a.m. rather than 1 a.m. I think every player would say that. Something in between would also be nice I think.

My relation with the press? I don't know. I think you guys can answer that better than me, no?

Q. From your point of view...

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: With some of you guys I think I



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have a very good relationship. With some not so much. But I think every player is going to say the same thing.

As long as everybody always stays fair, as long as there's more truth told than just stories, it's okay to me.

Q. You won this tournament five years ago. How far or near is your tennis of today from that state?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Are you saying I'm worse than five years ago? I don't think so, to be honest (smiling). I mean, I hope I improved in the last five years. Also tennis improved, tennis evolved. I'm not far away. I'm further than five years ago. I think that's for sure.

But we'll see. We'll see how this week goes. I'm happy with how I'm playing. Hopefully I can give myself a chance to compete for this event.

Q. You didn't win a tournament this year, but gave some good signs in Madrid reaching the final. Do you think Rome could be the tournament that turn the season around for you?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I think Madrid did that for me, to be honest. Even though I didn't win the title, it was a very positive week. I made it to the finals of a Masters event, yeah. I mean, got beaten there, but there was also other factors, as I said before.

I feel better on the court now than I did the previous weeks. Hopefully it can keep going this way. Hopefully I can play well here.

The main focus is still going to be Roland Garros I think, trying to be at your best there.

Q. You had your father back with you on the court. How important is he for you? What does he give you when you're playing, maybe even what was missing when he was not there?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: First of all, I was missing a coach for six months. That's what was missing. That's why I took Sergi Bruguera on because we didn't quite know how long it would take my father to be back.

I'm very happy about it. I'm very happy for him to be back



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here. It gives me a certain calmness, a certain confidence as well, because he's been there from the beginning of my career. I think nobody knows me better on the court than he does.

It does give me something that I think no other person can give me: some sort of calmness, some sort of confidence that is just there when he's around.

Q. I think you have beaten seven times out of eight Cilic, you lost to Garin the only time you played him in Munich. When the player says, Whoever wins is the same, shouldn't be.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: What is the question (smiling)?

Q. What do you think? Would you rather play Cilic instead of Garin?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I would rather play Cristian. I'd much rather play Cristian Garin. I only won seven times in a row against Cilic. I don't feel very confident (laughter).

In the end, I just played him in Madrid, and it was a very difficult match. He played amazing tennis. If he would have beaten me, he would have gone very deep in that tournament as well because he played very high level.

I think he's showing that this week. He's beaten great players. He's beaten Cameron Norrie. Today, obviously, in the third round against Garin on clay is a very difficult match.

For me it does not matter who I'm playing. Yes, I've beaten Cilic seven times in a row. But if you look at the results, how the matches were, they were never 6-2, 6-1 or something like that. They were always very close sets.

Cilic is not necessarily somebody I always want to play because he's playing very good tennis.

Q. Having won Madrid and Rome, there is of course a big difference in terms of clay, which kind of clay do you like better? I know Madrid, you won it twice, so on. Is there a difference for you when you approach these kind of surfaces or is almost nothing?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I think Madrid suits me better because it's high altitude. Everything is faster. My serve does more damage. Just by game style, I think Madrid just suits me a little bit better.

But I've done well in Rome. I've won the tournament, made finals in 2018, played well last year. I'm in the quarterfinals this year. We'll see how it goes.

But just out of condition-wise, Madrid just suits me better I think.

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