

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Alexander Zverev

Press Conference



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THE MODERATOR: We'll start with questions.

Q. Many injuries are affecting tennis players on the ATP Tour. Do you think there is a connection with the calendar or is it just a case? What are your thoughts on this topic?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Look, I mean, I've been on tour now for 10 years. The conversation has always been how can we make the season shorter.

By making the season shorter is not only because we want to play tennis. No, we love to play tennis. It's about how can we have time to prepare our bodies for the physicality that tennis is and how do we have time to heal our body.

If we have an 11-month season, like we have now, for example, the Davis Cup Final, I talked to Alex de Minaur about it. He played the Davis Cup Final the 29th of November, and his first ATP Cup match was the 29th of December, which is exactly one month. It's just simply not enough time.

It's not enough time to rest your body. It's also not enough time to physically prepare your body. Physical preparation is not how much you practice on a tennis court, how much you play tennis, no. It's how much work you put in the gym, how much work you put in on the track, how much work you put in outside the tennis court. That you cannot do during the season.

It only gives us a period of time of resting and preparing our body of four weeks, which no other sport has.

Q. Specifically about this portion of the season, with Madrid and Rome being two weeks each, this is the second year, what is your analysis of this portion of the schedule?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Yeah, I mean, look, I think the two-week Masters 1000 events is great for players that are ranked between 50 and 100 in the world because they get a chance to play a main-draw event at a Masters 1000 event. I think it's not great for top-10 players. It's as simple as that.

Yes, you do get told you have a day in between, you don't have to play every day. At the end of the day that's not resting. Resting is when you're spending time at home, when you're sleeping in your own bed, maybe with your family, maybe with your dogs, maybe with your kids if you have kids, right? That's what resting is. A day between matches, if you're at a different place, that's not resting.

If you're going deep in events, if you're trying to, like Jannik and Carlos, I guess that's who we're talking about here, if you're trying to make semifinals or finals of every event, you're just away a lot longer, and you have to work a lot more.

It's as simple as that.

Q. I wanted to confirm if you're hearing is still at the end of the of this month and if you're planning to attend any of those?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: No, I'm not. No.

Q. Looks like it's Rafa's last year. I just wondered what it's like playing him at Roland Garros, something you've done.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I have mixed feelings and mixed emotions obviously about that match, about playing him there just simply because it was one of the best tennis matches I've ever played in my career, but it was the worst ending I've ever had to a tennis match in my career.

Yeah, I mean, he becomes different. His ball becomes all of a sudden a few kilometers an hour faster. All of a sudden his footwork and foot speed becomes a lot faster.

It's more difficult to hit a winner, especially on Philippe Chatrier, which is a massive court, so he has a lot more space. It is very difficult. It's probably the biggest challenge in tennis. It's the biggest challenge that you can have in our sport, playing Nadal on that court.

I would love to do it one more time just simply to kind of have a different ending to those memories, right? That's just something in my mind. I would love to play him one more time. I would love to play him in a final or semifinal, in a big match again. I think that would be great for both of

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us.

We'll see how it will be for him.

Q. Leaving aside the injury at the end of the match, was it the physical or mental thing that makes playing him there so tough?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: You have a feeling that you just can't put him away. I think the first set that I played against him basically describes it to perfection. I mean, I won that set I don't know how many times against any other player, and I still somehow manage lose it in the tiebreak.

I was up 6-2 in the tiebreak. He aced me I think for the first time in the entire match. Then he hit one of the most ridiculous passing shots I've ever seen in my entire life. Then at 6-5, there was also a very un-unique point that he's won and I was in control.

Somehow you feel like you're winning, but then somehow you end up not. It's just something that you only feel against him on that specific court.

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