

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Roma, Italia

Casper Ruud

Press Conference

J. SINNER/C. Ruud

6-4, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Casper, not the result you wanted today, but how do you look back on the two weeks in Rome?

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, all in all of course very good tournament. I won some good matches against good players, playing some of the best tennis I've done this year. Really happy about those feelings leaving Rome with these memories.

Hopefully I can build on it for next week and Roland Garros. Push myself to get even better and play my best tennis for Roland Garros is the goal.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. In terms of the tactics, did you watch Jannik's semifinal against Medvedev? Did you try and adapt some of the things that Daniil did? I saw you did a lot of dropshots at the start of the match. Was there a blueprint to follow there, also considering Jannik had some physical issues in that match?

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, of course I watched Jannik and Daniil's match that went over the last few days. Especially then on Friday night, it looked like quite physically tough for both players, but particularly Jannik, it looked like he was struggling quite a bit with a few different things.

I tried thinking the longer the match gets, maybe the more positive for myself. You can't just choose to make the match long against Jannik. Typically he goes out and kills everyone 2-1 in an hour. Today was at least a little bit longer.

At times there were some great, tough rallies. But he didn't seem to be bothered with the longer rallies today. What can you do? You can only focus so much about your opponent. You'd rather focus on yourself to know it and kto play your best.



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I had it in the back of my mind. I went out thinking this would be a tough match and Jannik will be in good shape. I didn't make my tactics based on what I saw on Friday, no.

Q. Obviously went a bit better than last time you played him. What do you think went right this time? What did you get right and what can you take him from this match should you meet him again at Roland Garros?

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, definitely was a better match for me this year comparing to last year where I really had no chance.

I got off to a great start, just kind of what I was hoping for, broke him right away, which is not very typical for Jannik these days. A little bit of a different situation than what probably he's used to. But he stepped up and broke me right back. It was game on.

Unfortunately I kind of dabbed off a little bit towards the end of the first set and beginning of second. That's kind of where the match kind of was not decided but where he got off to a lead obviously. Winning the first set and break up early in the second, it's not easy to come back from that. I had one break point in the second set that I didn't get. He stepped up.

I think the main difference was that in the second set he really stepped up his serving. I really couldn't do much in my returning games. I was a bit too short. When you are a bit too short or not precise enough against Jannik, he just rips you off the court.

I know that if I want to have more chance, I need to be more precise with the baseline shots, the rallies that we get into.

Q. I'd like to know, you were up 2-0, what were you thinking at that moment? Were you thinking that maybe since Jannik seemed to be a bit tired in the previous days, maybe today you had a chance? What happened afterwards because in the following seven times he served, you won only seven points, one point for each game? What is the difference between this Sinner and the one you played last year or in the previous times? Was he a little slower or a little more erratic?



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CASPER RUUD: I mean, I got, like I said, the perfect start that I wanted and couldn't follow up with a good service game unfortunately.

But I think in the second or when I was 2-0, I think I made quite a lot of good serves and he made good returning. It was not like I threw away the game.

Of course, you get a good feeling when you get off to a good start. But you realize, look, there's still a lot of tennis to be played.

Like I said, I was not in contention much in his service games. Ever since I broke him that one time, I was struggling to find any more chances in his serve.

But comparing this match to last year, it was of course 6-0, 6-1, but it felt like it could be 6-2, 6-3. I had many game points that I didn't win. Sometimes if it's 6-4 6-4, 6-2 6-2, 6-3 6-1, it can be a bit based on the day, what points you win.

The fact is he's an incredible player. Me having played all of the top players in the world in my career, when he plays his best, there's not many that can reach this level, if anyone at all in the world.

Q. Alcaraz?

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, I think definitely those two. I never played the big three in their prime. I played them in their career, but towards the end of their career. They felt more playable at that time. But I'm sure Roger, Novak, Rafa, 25, 26 years old was also the same feeling for the other players.

I don't see him getting any worse, unfortunately (smiling). You just have to think that you have to be better and better because he's also going to get better and better.

Q. This is your first week outside of the top 20 I think in five years. Even for someone who isn't necessarily focused on rankings, in theory that could be dispiriting. You bounced back and made a final in a Masters immediately. What does that say about you that you've been able to bounce back and perform so well this week?

CASPER RUUD: Ranking goes up and down, as we know. At the end of the day it is very important because it gives you better seeding or ranking based on your performance. Seeding into the tournaments can be important.

Whether you are 13 or 16 or 18 is not the biggest difference in the world. But obviously top 10, top 8 in the world is where everyone is aiming to be because that gives you even better seeding, gives you a chance to maybe play the Finals at the end of the year. Having done that a few times in my career, that's the goal for every year.

Now this result can be very crucial and important for my season, the future of the year. I need to keep focused. It's a good feeling when you end up getting over 600 points in one week, especially after not being able to defend in Madrid.

I still feel like there's more to gain now. I didn't do well in Roland Garros last year, so I have a few chances coming up. If I can stay focused and stay in the right mindset, I think the next months hopefully can be good for me in terms of my ranking that I can continue to climb.

Q. In terms of Jannik's skiing background, you're from Norway, you must know something about skiing, do you think it helps him in the way he seems like he's always in balance, moving back and forth across the baseline like a slalom skier?

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, it's one of the things I see as a player myself, the most impressive is how he moves. He's strong also in balance and flexible to get to certain positions. He has good hip movement and knows how to slide on both corners.

Ultimately I don't think that's because he was skiing as a young kid. Obviously it helps to have good balance. I also did skiing, but I don't move as good as him. I don't necessarily believe because he did skiing when he was young, that's why he moves so well. I mean, look at Alcaraz, he didn't ski and he also moves pretty damn well.

It maybe helps for your balance. I have the belief that doing a lot of things as a young kid is good, no matter what it is, whether it's skiing, running, golf. Doing things that keep you active is great.

Yeah, I mean, I have never seen Jannik ski other than videos. Would be fun to do a skiing competition one day (smiling).

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