

# Nitto ATP Finals

Wednesday, 17 November 2021

Turin, Italy

Pala Alpitour, Torino

## Andrey Rublev

Press Conference



N. DJOKOVIC/A. Rublev

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

**Q. As you know, that was your first meeting with Novak. Obviously not the result that you wanted, but what did it feel like going out to play him? How nervous were you?**

ANDREY RUBLEV: I don't know how nervous I was, because I was not thinking about it. For sure could be much worse about the emotions and for sure could be much better, because today still was a lot of emotions.

I could feel it during the rallies, because looks like everything is fine, looks like I'm playing some good rallies, but then suddenly so many unusual mistakes, easy from the positions that normally I'm playing well, I'm hitting hard from these positions, and today I was missing a lot. I missed today maybe already, I missed like couple maybe completely easy to hit a winner and I missed them. So means I was a bit rushing today too much.

But this is normal. I have to pass this experience. I have been through this when I was playing my first meeting against Andy, against Rafa, and it always takes time. Need to play couple of matches like this to feel, I don't know, your opponent to feel that you can compete with the best players. It takes time.

This, I think it's good that it's happen now before some more important matches that I still have chance to be in the tournament. So now is time to take a lesson from this match and to give my best for the next match.

**Q. What do you mean by "emotions"? Was it a case of you were feeling a bit overwhelmed?**

ANDREY RUBLEV: No, it's maybe a bit like rushing, you know, like you're playing one of the best players and you feel, Okay, now I have chance to finish the point or to take

a lead during the rally and play there aggressive. You know, you think too much sometimes, you know.

In the end, Okay, this is chance I have to go. You go. And in the end, instead of to make it, like usually you do in other matches, you are missing them. Or maybe you're hitting not that good or not that smart that he catch you, and in the end he make you passing shots and stuff like that. You know, like I think always overthinking, like stress, rushing.

**Q. We spoke before the competition, you said that you have to grow with the mind. Do you think maybe today the problem was mostly mentally? Because we saw in the first match you were really in shape, really in confidence. So maybe you have to build this up also for the next matches it will be very, very important?**

ANDREY RUBLEV: Yeah, of course. Of course on this level I think it's all about mental, at least in my opinion. Because everybody know how to hit backhands, forehands, serves, returns. So it's only about mental.

Today of course it was in my first meeting, and like I said before, I was a bit rushing, a bit overthinking, because every time I was thinking, okay, now I have chance to attack, now I have chance to lead the point, and you start to think for the next two, three shots, and in the end you don't even make this one. Normally you just shoot and you don't think.

**Q. Maybe the first break was like usually is a good thing, but maybe he rushed you too much?**

ANDREY RUBLEV: No, I think it's good that I won the first game, because then you saw my second game. I did one double, I did mistake, and then completely easy mistake. So if I would not win the first game, maybe it will be 2-0 in two seconds. You never know. So, like, this at least was 1-All.

**Q. What kind of match do you expect on Friday?**

ANDREY RUBLEV: I expect it's going to be physical match, mental match, because Casper, he's really strong physically. He play really aggressive. He's really great



from the baseline, so I need to play long rallies with him. Need to run a lot. So it's going to be this kind of matches.

**Q. You still have a chance to qualify. So that is important. Is it back in your mind as soon as you lose you immediately say, Oh, tennis gives you a chance and the ATP Finals give you even more than one chance? Normally the chance is the next tournament. How does it feel about it? Because you're not used to staying at the place after you have lost, having still a chance to win.**

ANDREY RUBLEV: Yeah, I mean, but we know the rules since before. So we knew that two players are going to go through. So I still have chances, and Casper still have chances. So we'll see.

I have to win next matches, yes, and Casper needs to win all the matches, yes. So we'll see. Now I'm focused on my match on Friday against Casper and we'll see what's going to happen.

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