

Nitto ATP Finals

Sunday, 19 November 2023

Turin, Italy

Pala Alpitour, Torino

Novak Djokovic

Press Conference



N. DJOKOVIC/C. Alcaraz

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: We'll go straight to questions.

Q. You still have another match to play tomorrow, but when we sat here a year ago, a much different place. Can you reflect at all on where you've been since then? There was so much uncertainty a year ago about where you'd be able to play. Here you are 12 months later in the same spot, three or Grand Slams...

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I guess last year's circumstances I used as a fuel for this year. Had an almost perfect season, Grand Slam season. That mattered the most to me. Ended up the year as No. 1 in the world, reached really all the objectives that I had, broke many records, made history of the sport. Of course, I'm thrilled with the season.

But one more match to go. Hopefully I can crown the season with another win.

Q. It was an amazing season so far for you. How do you rate the performance of tonight? How do you put it? In my opinion, you put it super peak from the defensive side.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: One of the best matches of the year in these circumstances playing probably the biggest rival I had this year, Carlos. We had some epic matches. Actually all three matches we played this year were marathon matches that went the distance.

I think everyone expected, including probably both of us, that we're going to have a long night, a big fight, a long match. I just managed to I guess step it up. When I broke his serve at 4-3 in the first set, played a really flawless match until the end of the match.

Played a great tennis, high level, put a lot of pressure on his service games, made him play. I served really well when I needed to. Best match of the week, one of the best

matches of the year. Couldn't be coming at a better time for me, considering that I maybe wasn't playing my best tennis in the first three group stages, matches of the group stages.

But tonight I played close to my very, very best.

Q. Some rallies in this match were similar to your matches against Rafa. Do you see Rafa in Carlos maybe?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: No, I don't. They are different players. In terms of the maybe great occasion and the feeling of the intensity on the court that he brings, yeah, there is some similarity. But he's a completely different player from Rafa.

He's one of the most complete players that I ever faced in my career. It's quite impressive for his age that he's able to play consistently well for now several years already, and he's the youngest-ever No. 1 in the world that we had. A brilliant career already, and I think it's quite obvious that he's going to have a brilliant career full of success in the years to come. He's still very, very young.

But, yeah, he does bring the best out of me. He makes me prepare for the match as best that I possibly can. That's where I probably would compare it to the preparations that I had in the matches against Nadal or Federer, where I had to come out every single time at the peak of my abilities in order to win against them.

Q. You gave 16 years in age to Carlos, and tomorrow you'll give 14 years in age to Jannik.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Thanks for reminding. Appreciate it (smiling).

Q. What are your thoughts going into that final? From what happened a couple of days ago, does that add to the incentive and motivation?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: It does add. I think it also serves as a great preparation tool, I guess, analyzing that match that we played few nights ago, understanding what needs to be



done better in order to win from my side.

He has been the best player of the tournament so far. Won four out of four matches and played some great tennis. Obviously riding on the big wave of support of his Italian crowd here.

Tomorrow is the finals. He's going for his first trophy. I'm going for my seventh in the year-end World Tour Finals.

I've been in these situations before. Hopefully experience can help a bit. But I don't think it's going to prevail because he's been playing well, he's going to have crowd on his side.

I know what I expect. I think having already a match against him in this kind of atmosphere helps me prepare better. The performance of tonight really gives me good feelings ahead of tomorrow's final because I played my best match of the tournament so far.

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