

# Nitto ATP Finals

Sunday, 19 November 2023

Turin, Italy

Pala Alpitour, Torino

## Goran Ivanisevic

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Goran, thanks for joining us after another Novak success. What impressed you the most over the last few days with Novak?

GORAN IVANISEVIC: Impress me? Okay, Jannik, I have to thank Jannik a little bit that he gave us a little help and push for him to be in the semifinal. But I knew as soon as he got into the semifinal, he's going to win the tournament. The mentality changed. The new Novak Djokovic arrived on the court from Saturday. When real Novak Djokovic arrives on the court, then the moment is nobody that can play with him.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. How is Novak a different player than he was a year ago? What do you think he has improved on and what do you think he'll improve on next?**

GORAN IVANISEVIC: It's very tough to improve with him (smiling). But he wants to improve. That's the good thing and bad thing for me as a coach and the rest of the team.

I think he improved a lot his volleys, his game at the net, and his position at the net. Now when he comes to the net - okay, today he missed some easy volleys - but generally this week and this year he plays some amazing volleys.

His position at the net is a lot better. Is very tough to pass him. Before he was very easy to pass. Now he knows what he's doing at the net. He's comfortable at the net. Final of US Open he played two, three most important volleys in the final against Medvedev. He's not afraid to come to the net. He's hitting the forehands much, much harder. He's going for the shots. Serving, I think second serve, sometimes he's hitting over 200. He's just going for it.

**Q. Can you find me a definition for Jannik Sinner?**

GORAN IVANISEVIC: I'm a big fan of Jannik. I follow Jannik since he was a junior. I have great respect for him. I like his tennis. I think with his team and in last year he

improved a lot. He improved a lot in the sense that he improved his serve, he improved his coming to the net. He's playing much better volleys.

We saw this week and this year actually Jannik Sinner who unfortunately in the semifinals of Wimbledon he played Novak. We saw a Jannik Sinner who can win, and he believes that he can win Grand Slams. You can see Jannik Sinner this week that he played unbelievable tennis till today when we saw different Novak.

I think for me there are two young players two steps in ahead of even else. One is Carlos Alcaraz, who is still little bit... Second one is Jannik Sinner. Jannik Sinner is catching up. These two guys for me, they're going to be future of the tennis.

**Q. You say Saturday morning you saw the new Novak. What is the switch from the old to the new? What made that switch?**

GORAN IVANISEVIC: I can see in his eyes, in his approach when he comes to the small locker room, when he comes to the practice court. Warm-up was different. Warm-up was positive. When he entered the court against Alcaraz the first time this week, he was from the first point pumping himself, pumping fist. He was very positive in a way.

Even Alcaraz didn't play unbelievable tennis, he was missing a lot for his standards, even if Alcaraz plays with the left hand, you couldn't beat him 6-3, 6-2.

You could see in his eyes. It's very tough to beat Novak twice in one week in the same tournament. Today was completely different match, completely different. Tactically Novak played completely different than on Tuesday.

Jannik got kind of little pressure. Big final, a lot of expectation. If you doubt yourself a little bit against Novak, that is not good for you. Then you go (smiling). Like when you face the lion, if you have (indiscernible), going to eat you in two seconds. Thank you for coming and bye-bye (smiling).

**Q. What's it like for you to deal with Novak when he wins and then when he loses? How do you handle those extremes? When and if he loses, do you get angry with him? What are the conversations in those two situations?**

GORAN IVANISEVIC: But who am I to get angry at him? He's the best player in the history of tennis. I can be only angry with him sometimes when he's yelling for no reason at us. When he loses the match, he's always giving his best and he's trying.

But it's not easy to deal with him when he's losing the match. On Tuesday night, he finished late. On Wednesday we didn't see him at all. Till Thursday we didn't know what's happening, to be honest. We were in the room. We didn't know if we are going home, if we are going to the warm-up against Hurkacz. We were sitting, sitting. We finally find out that he's going to play (smiling). As soon as that click...

Like every human being, he has some fighting with himself. I think he made good decision to stay calm. I know is not easy. I know is not easy to motivate himself. He won everything. He finished No. 1. But he always find motivation.

We were patient. Actually I have my family. I went for shopping. Actually, I had a good day on Wednesday. It was beautiful day. I enjoyed it. It was a good year, so how can I be mad on anybody? You see, now I'm sitting here and celebrating his victory.

But is not easy. Is not easy. Is not easy. That's life. He's No. 1. He wants always more. He wants something better all the time.

**Q. Alcaraz and Sinner, you mentioned they are the future of tennis. Nole beat them yesterday and today. What can you say about this message to them and also Rafa in 2024?**

GORAN IVANISEVIC: I mean, he beat them. Like I said before, I think Carlos didn't play his best tennis. Still you need to beat him. Nole lift his game. He came ready. He knew how to play unbelievable matches this year.

Carlos already won two Grand Slams and he's future of tennis. Jannik really step up this year. He showed the world and himself that he's ready next year to win Grand Slams, and he's not afraid of anybody.

I think they going to both of them practice hard. The season is over. Not for Jannik, he has Davis Cup. But for Carlos. I think next year's going to be very, very

competitive and interesting year.

If is true that Rafa is coming, this is for me the best news in tennis. I love Rafa. Is going to be interesting, Rafa not seeded. He can play first round anybody. You don't want to see Rafa first round in the hotel (smiling).

It's great for tennis. Rafa will come only if he's 100% ready. And when Rafa is ready, I think he still has something to say in this left arm.

**Q. How did you spend the time between the match against Hurkacz and the match between Holger and Jannik? What was your reaction after the win of Jannik over Holger? Did you have a call with Novak?**

GORAN IVANISEVIC: We went for pizza in the city. I checked the score, first set 6-2. I said okay. Then I came to the room and the trouble came. Rune started to play well.

We were in the team, and I heard the people, Okay, maybe Jannik is not going to try 100%. He already in the semis. But Jannik, with that match, not because he helped Novak, doesn't matter, he showed what kind of champion he will be. He's competitive and he wanted to win. He wanted to win. You want to win every match when you play in front of your home crowd.

Actually I was very happy. I was kind of scared on that break point in the third set. Wow. But then last two games, Jannik played unbelievable. It was really a relief. From that moment I knew that Novak is going to win the tournament.

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