

Nitto ATP Finals

Friday, 15 November 2024

Turin, Italy

Inalpi Arena, Torino

Casper Ruud

Press Conference



C. RUUD/A. Rublev

6-4, 5-7, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Big congratulations, Casper. You're through to the semifinal. Can you walk us through today's match.

CASPER RUUD: Thank you, yeah.

It was a tough match. Always a tough match against Andrey. For me, I knew that winning one set was enough. When I won the first set, it was a relieving feeling. I could relax in a way and play calm and freely.

I'm happy with the way I finished the match. The third set was good quality from my side. I hit some nice winners, played aggressive, finished the match on a high note.

I was serving well today. That obviously helped. I'm going to need to do that also tomorrow if I want to have any chance.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Does your success this week make you look differently on what you can accomplish on the faster surfaces or maybe even grass?

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, not really thinking too much about grass right now (smiling). Let's see for next year.

I've spoken openly about that I don't play that much grass typically. I don't really play too many lead-up tournaments before Wimbledon. The decision is purely based that I play a lot of tournaments during the clay. Typically if I do well, I play a lot of matches.

The only real time for me to relax a bit is the weeks leading up to Wimbledon because after Wimbledon there's tournaments I like to play in Europe. Obviously next year as well we're going to have to start one week earlier in Canada and the U.S. swing.

Nevertheless, this will build confidence obviously for tomorrow but also for the next year. I've beaten two really good players here this week. Let's see what I can do tomorrow.

But I'm not going to say I'm some kind of fast-court specialist or anything. If you look at the last weeks, hasn't been really good. This week, things have worked. I've had some margins on my side. That's tennis for you right there, yeah.

Q. Considering what you just said, are you going to do something different concerning your next opponent, which is Jannik? Are you going to prepare doing something different or it's always the same procedure before facing a tough player?

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, it's pretty much the same honestly. I mean, every match has its own life in a way. You know you're going to have to be on top of your game, especially against these really great players.

Jannik this year has been the best player in the world throughout the whole year. Deservedly year-end world No. 1. This week also has been playing flawless tennis. Hasn't dropped a set.

If I want to have any chance against him tomorrow, I know I need to play my best tennis, probably some of my best tennis in the last weeks, months, even the year. It's going to be probably the toughest match I will play this year.

But it's a fun challenge. It's not every day you get to play against world No. 1. Last final I played against a world No. 1 was against Novak in Monte-Carlo and I was able to win it. At least I have some experience and some good feelings about it from earlier this year. I'm going to know that anything can happen. But I'm going to be the underdog and I'll just do my best.

Q. Your serve is becoming very good. We didn't almost expect to see it that well. 11 tournaments won on clay. One outdoor. Here at the ATP Finals, semifinal 2021, finals in 2022, semifinals in 2024. Is



this enough to beat Sinner, in your opinion?

CASPER RUUD: Well, of course I would love to do better. Like I said, tomorrow is a new day. Whatever happened in the past doesn't mean you're going to do well tomorrow or in the future. It just keeps on going and going.

Tomorrow I'm going to play Jannik. He had a day off today. He probably prepared the best that he can. Of course, in a way I know that he maybe has a little bit of an advantage because today I played and it was late, all this stuff.

Every match is open. I'm going to go out there as an underdog. He is the favorite. He has more pressure on him, on his shoulders. He's playing at home. I know the feeling of sometimes playing a big match at home.

It doesn't seem to bother him too much. Honestly, it seemed that he forgot how to lose. Let's see if I can bring something to the table tomorrow that can make a difference.

Yeah, he's the best player in the world currently. Like I said, the whole year he's been it in terms of level and all the results that he has. I'm just going to do my best and hope that I will have some small chances.

Q. You said you didn't have quite the results since the US Open. Can you explain why you respond here? Maybe it's because you are 100% of your physical possibilities after some viruses.

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, I mean, the summer was a bit challenging with a few illnesses. Honestly, it's not like I feel much better physically this week than two weeks ago. Of course, maybe a bit, but who knows.

Not sure exactly how or why I'm able to win matches here and the last weeks not. Maybe I was thinking too much about the Finals, trying to qualify. This was in a way pressure also. I was a good position, but in the last weeks it didn't go any better for me.

When I came here, I can play free. I can play with not too much pressure. The main goal is to be here at the beginning of the year. I was able to do it. When you are able to achieve your goals, it is easier to play kind of freely. This is one of the main goals for me in my season.

Let's say that after June it looked really well. I think I was No. 3 or 4 in the race. Then I dropped down, dropped down in the second part of the year. In a way it's a bit stressful. When you're thinking about this in the back of your mind when you're playing matches is not the best.

When I'm playing now, I don't need to think about it because we're here. I guess I'm playing better and more freely.

Yeah, it's not like I'm a new Casper this week compared to last week or two weeks. Tennis is small margins. The last weeks they were not in my favor, but here they are.

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