

Nitto ATP Finals

Saturday, 16 November 2024

Turin, Italy

Inalpi Arena, Torino

Alexander Zverev

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/A. Zverev

6-3, 3-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Sascha.

Q. You've played him five times this year. You've only won once. Three times you lost on hard court. What is it about his game this year that's given you trouble?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Well, we can go match by match.

US Open, he played better than me.

Laver Cup, I was in hospital for two days before the match.

Here I thought, to be honest, the second and third set I thought I played better than him. I didn't use my chances in the third set at all. I feel like I had more than enough. Played a below-average tiebreak, I would say. A lot worse than what the level was throughout the third set from my end.

Q. The other day you told us that you're trying to improve to get closer to Carlos and Jannik. You're going to finish the year at No. 2. I don't know if you believe in stats. Your last 52 weeks, you played 11 tiebreaks against top-10 guys and you won just three. This one is the worst percentage between the top-10 guys. The question is, do you plan to work on under-pressure points? Is it possible to work on under-pressure moments?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I didn't know that stat.

Right at this second, I don't particularly care too much, to be honest. Yeah, I don't know what to answer to that.

Q. Two big finals in the space of two months. You've obviously played him a lot. What do you see improving in his game? Is it just the belief, tenacity at the end?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: One thing, his forehand. His forehand used to break down quite a lot. His forehand was always fast, very aggressive, but it was very, very shaky in important moments. He could hit a winner, but he could hit the fence, as well.

I feel like the ratio is a lot more towards winners now than hitting the fence. His forehand doesn't break down as much as it used to.

I think that's the shot that improved the most for him.

Q. What is the experience like of playing an emotional match like you did yesterday against Carlos, then having to come back in 24 hours and play not someone of Carlos' level, because pretty much nobody is, but sort of getting your mind back into it?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Yeah, Taylor maybe is not Carlos' level, but he plays different. He has a lot bigger serve and a lot less rhythm when you play against him.

I felt a bit more empty today. Yesterday I felt really energetic and kind of full of energy. I was like a jumping ball that I could move and I could run no matter how long.

Today I felt more empty, especially in the beginning. The longer the match went on, the better I felt actually. In the beginning of the match I struggled. In the warm-up I struggled as well.

It was one of those days where everything, it takes times to get going. It's like it's not a natural flow to movement patterns, to your shots as well, to just how you wake up in the morning. Everything is a little bit more tiring. I felt that way today.

At the end of the day you're only going to play the best players in the world here, of course. Yesterday against Carlos, it was the highlight of the tournament. Probably the highest-level match that the tournament has seen so far.

Unfortunately, I didn't back it up at the level in the first set. Again, as I said, I thought in the second and third set I did everything to extend maybe better than him, except to win



in the important moments, the break points, the tiebreak, yeah.

That's how you lose a match in the end.

Q. I would like to give you some comfort because no German have ever been No. 1 in the world at the end of the year. Only Boris Becker three times, '86, '89 and '90, and Stich '93, were No. 2. You are No. 2. Is not too bad, I think.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: (Smiling).

Q. Can you tell us what do you think about this year altogether? Can you resume which have been the best moments, why you are maybe happy even if today you're not so happy?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: No, look, I played some fantastic matches. I've won 65 matches, something like that. It's been an interesting year for me, especially after the injury. It was kind of my first year completely back competing at this level and competing for big tournaments. I won two Masters events.

But what stays in mind I think are the tough losses that you had. What will stay in my mind is the Australian Open loss against Daniil, the French Open final against Carlos. Those are the matches that stay in my mind.

You can trust me, I'm going to do everything I can to be back in the same moments, in the same position next year. I'm going to do everything I can to win.

Q. A little while ago you were explaining about some of the losses to Fritz. At the same time when you go out to play him, knowing you've lost the last four, does that still play on your mind mentally? What do you do to get over that hurdle? Does this loss end up sticking a little bit longer?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Yeah, he's an uncomfortable player for me. I think it's no secret. I think there are players that are more comfortable for some opponents and there are players that are less comfortable.

I talked to Carlos about it, which is funny. I mean, I think we have quite a good relationship, quite a good friendship. It's funny, his very, very comfortable opponents are the complete opposite to me. His uncomfortable opponents are the complete opposite to me, as well. It's funny how matchups work in tennis.

For him, I think some of the most comfortable opponents is Daniil Medvedev and Taylor Fritz. For me it's completely

the opposite. He really doesn't like playing some of the big hitters like a Jannik Sinner. He's a great player, No. 1 in the world, for sure, but I still enjoy playing him.

It's funny how matchups in tennis work. Not every match is the same just purely based on ranking and the higher-ranked player is going to win. That's not how it works.

But yeah, I think this one will hurt maybe a bit more because again, as I said, I thought I played at a decent level and I had more chances generally in the third set. I felt like statistically and shot-wise, my level maybe was even higher than his until the important moments. That's where I kind of blew it.

This one will hurt more than the other few.

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