

BNP Paribas Open

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Carlos Alcaraz

Press Conference



C. ALCARAZ/F. Auger-Aliassime

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THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, Carlitos. It's your first win against Felix. That got you through to the semifinal of Indian Wells two years in a row. How do you feel now?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Yeah, I feel great. It's an amazing feeling to come back this year and made semifinal again, you know. Yeah, beating such a great player as Felix for the first time, so I'm really happy with my level, the way that I'm playing. Yeah, keep going.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. You talked on court about the fact that you're happy with the way you returned tonight. Last match against Felix, no break at all, only one breakpoint. Tonight, 12 breakpoints. My question is: Did you think about it a lot before the match? Was it one of the most important things you were focusing on, maybe watching videos, these types of things?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Yeah, well, I watch video, of course, from the last matches that I play against him. Yeah, it's something that I was really focused before the match, you know, trying to return every serve, trying to, yeah, play aggressive and taking opportunity when he's serving the second serve as well. It's something, yeah, that I was thinking about since the beginning of the match.

I'm trying to play from the baseline, you know, and after the point has begun, you know, trying to play my game. That's was a goal from the beginning of the match.

Q. I know this isn't a new topic but I want to ask you about the dropshot. You've been widely credited with its renaissance, and we're seeing it from so many more players and much more frequently. In a match like tonight when your opponents use the shot against you, what do you learn about the shot when you have to defend it?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, I think it's a great weapon for everyone, you know, playing a dropshot. Some players hit better the dropshot than other ones.

But yeah, when they hit a dropshot against me, I trying to, you know, hit a better shot than that, another dropshot or hitting to the baseline, you know, and going to the net. I just try to make the best decision on that, yeah, on that point, yeah.

Q. The two matches you played against Felix last year, right after the US Open and everything else, is the biggest difference this year that you are fresh physically and mentally, or are you also a better player than you were last fall?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, I would say to my opportunities here, I would say Felix played better on indoor court. Yeah, all I can say, that I took the opportunities in this time, you know.

Yeah, as I said, I was really focused on the return today, that it was really, really important for me, you know. I never broke his serves until today, so it's a good stats for me. I would say that the return was the key of everything.

Q. Two things. How much do you enjoy playing Jannik? If you had to make a choice between being No. 1 or winning a major, what would you pick?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, first question, I enjoy a lot. As I say couple of times, I love playing really tough matches, you know, close matches, matches with high quality. I love playing that kind of matches.

Jannik is a great player. Great ball striker, as well. So I love every match that I played against him, and of course I'm gonna watch this one.

The second questions, it's tough to pick one, but I would say right now to win a major.

Q. We all know what we like about your matches with Jannik, why we like them, but I wonder if you could tell us why you think they are special, why you enjoy



them.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, I enjoyed that match, because I have to be really, really focused in every shot. I have to play my best. That's why Jannik is such a great player, as well. Not only with great serve, great movements, it is because he pushed to the opponent to the limit, you know. Trying to play aggressive with great shots. And to the opponent is really tough to be focused, you know, mentally and physically during the whole match.

Yeah, and that's what I love playing against him, as well, you know, that it push me to the limit. I have to be really, really focused. I love to feel that.

Q. Going back to the dropshot, specifically the forehand dropshot, you have such a high-percentage success with it. What is maybe one or two keys to technique, the key to that shot, the forehand dropshot?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, I would say the most important thing is to have a good forehand. You know, because you hit a great forehand, you know, the opponent is going back, you know, every time that you play a great forehand.

In that time that the opponent doing the step going a little bit back, that's the thing that you have to think about doing a dropshot. You know, you have to see that the opponent going, going back, you know, going -- well, making defense, you know, and after that, you make a good dropshot, you know.

I would say that's the key to doing that when you are in attack mode.

Q. Remembering your US Open match against Sinner, it looked like Ping-Pong. It was so fast. Who do you think is faster running around the court, you or Sinner?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, running around the court, I would say me. I would say me. Well, the shots going faster from him. You know, I would say he hits great shots and really strong ones.

But running? I'm gonna pick myself (smiling).

Q. You don't have too much experience in coming back on the tour after injury. It hasn't been that long that you're back. Is it in a way surprising that so soon after your return, you have won a title, you're in the semis of a Masters on hard court? Or did you expect it?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, I don't surprise so much,

because I am a player and I'm a guy who learn really fast. I look to the big players, you know, Djokovic or Rafa, when they are coming from an injury and probably he has a great percentage to win the tournament after an injury.

So I look from them a little bit when I was injured, you know, training. They motivate me to, you know, play the good game, you know, after an injury in the first tournaments.

I was surprised when I won Buenos Aires, but right now, I'm not surprised at it.

Q. About Buenos Aires, your level there and your ability to execute the game you wanted to execute obviously was high, you won the title. But now a month later and in better health, do you feel you're a much better player even than you were a month ago?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, probably. Well, I consider myself a player who play better on hard court. I feel more comfortable play on hard court, you know, my movement, my style of game is more from hard court. But yeah, the results seems that I am good on clay, as well.

But, well, I'm gonna say that I'm not a better player since one month ago than now. Just trying to, you know, play my game in every tournament.

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