

BNP Paribas Open

Friday, March 8, 2024

Carlos Alcaraz

Press Conference



C. ALCARAZ/M. Arnaldi

6-7, 6-0, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Carlos, the first set was a little bit of a seesaw. You got broken and then broke back. In the tiebreak you were first behind and then you leveled it at 5-All. Then you narrowly lost the tiebreak. The next two sets you really convincingly went through them. What was going through your head afterwards in the first tight set?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, I didn't realize the way that I had to play, you know, first set. I was surprised a little bit with the conditions. It's totally different playing during the day than the night session.

I was practicing every day, you know, during the day. So with the sun out and the heat, totally different bounces, the ball goes different, and it cost me like entire first set. I had to charge up my game.

But after the first set I understood, you know, everything. I played better, you know, long rallies, and hitting the ball better. I'm feeling better. Yeah, that's what I was thinking in my head, and I really, really happy to do it at the end.

Q. You seemed to be energized by the first-set loss. Your energy was incredibly high the first and second set. Can you just tell us about how that may have really jump-started your effort there.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, I was nervous in the first set. That makes me, you know, in some points moving, let's say, different or with less energy. But, yeah, in the second and the third set it was totally different.

I stayed or I pulled away the match, and I tried to be myself with a lot of energy, hitting good shots, moving well. And, yeah, I think my game, my good game, came out when my energy is so high.

Yeah, I tried to do it at the beginning of the second set, and

I think I did it pretty well. It helped me to stay at the good level, at the high intensity during the whole match.

Q. Obviously last year was great for you here. What would you say the biggest differences are in your game between last year and now?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, I'm coming here with not too much matches. I think last year, well, I came here with more matches in my bag with more rhythm. Now I'm recovering from injury on the ankle. I was thinking about it all the time, and I couldn't practice as much as I wanted, the high intensity.

But right now I'm getting better and feeling really, really well, but I think I have to get the good rhythm step by step. I think that's the big different between last year and this one.

Q. You just said you were nervous. Why were you nervous? Is it because it was the first match? When you get nervous, what happens?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Yeah, probably it is the first match. Obviously this really special tournament for me. I want to do it well.

You know, obviously this is the first match playing high intensity, and I didn't know how it's gonna respond, the ankle. It was a lot of things coming to my mind. I couldn't be focused 100% in the match, and, yeah, it made me getting a little bit nervous.

But, you know, I have to deal with it, but I didn't deal with the nerves very well in the first set, moving, let's say, different, hitting the ball different. You know, my game is playing aggressive all the time. And try to, you know, stay calm and waiting for my chances. When you get nervous, you don't think about it. You don't hit the ball as good as you want. You don't move as good as you want. I think that's the big different.

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