

# BNP Paribas Open

Monday, March 11, 2024

## Luca Nardi

Press Conference



L. NARDI/N. Djokovic

6-4, 3-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Luca, well done. It's been one hour since you beat Novak Djokovic on Stadium here in Indian Wells. How can you put it in your own words?

LUCA NARDI: Amazing feeling. I couldn't even imagine to play a match against him, and now I also beat him. So it's such a dream come true for me.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Luca, do you still have a poster of Novak on your bedroom door?**

LUCA NARDI: Yeah, I do, yes. Every night I go to bed I see Novak. I think starting from now, I will keep going, now, for sure (smiling).

No, I'm kidding, but yes, I have it and I think that I will keep it.

**Q. If someone came up to you after losing to Goffin and said, Hey, dude, don't worry, you'll get a bye and you'll beat Novak, what would you say to that?**

LUCA NARDI: Yeah, for sure, I would say, You are crazy. No one could imagine it. I was, like, third Lucky Loser. Even that, it was something surprise me when I get in. Even for me, I never, like, beat top 50. I also beat Zhang in the first round. Now, Djokovic, I don't know what to say about it. For sure I would say to him that he's crazy, yeah.

**Q. At what point tonight did you start to think, okay, I can actually win this match, this is no joke?**

LUCA NARDI: Honestly, in the first two or three games, I thought that -- before the match I spoke to my coach and I said, you know, I don't want to lose 6-1, 6-1. After three or four games, because there was so much windy today, so it wasn't easy to play for both of us, and I think I started good. I realize that during the rally I was feeling good. So, I don't know, yeah, maybe in the first games.

**Q. The crowd obviously got behind you, as well, even chanting your name. What did that mean to you? Did you hear it?**

LUCA NARDI: Honestly, I tried to don't listen too much to the crowd. I was trying just to be focused on what I had to do.

But after the match, my coaches told me, Luca, everyone was cheering for you. Such, I mean, incredible. Against Djokovic, he's the best player ever. So I think that I will keep it, this moment for me, yeah, for the rest of my life, yeah, for sure.

**Q. When you were in Japan last year, you played challengers three weeks in a row. At some point, what was your, like, goal? At that time, were you able to picturing yourself to play this kind of match?**

LUCA NARDI: When I was in Japan, my goal was for sure to end the year in the top 100, which I didn't do, because I won the first one and I lost in semis and in the quarter on the third one.

I mean, I couldn't imagine, like, to be in March here now top 100 and beating Djokovic. I think no one could imagine it.

Now I'm just trying to enjoy it and let's keep it.

**Q. When you were playing the match, was it as you expected for it to be, or what did you expect it was going to be like in the match? You know, afterwards, did you realize it was what you wanted or expected rather?**

LUCA NARDI: Yeah, for sure. Before the match, you know, I'm 20 years old, and we are out watching him play, so I watch his matches, ten years, for sure. The only one advantage that I had, it was that he didn't see me never play.

So for sure, it was, like, surprise for me that I could be able to play the rally. And yeah, maybe in the three or four



games I realize that I could play, like, 50/50, no, but like 60 and 40 game, and going to in the match, I felt I was playing good.

Yeah, it happen (smiling).

**Q. I know you were trying to stay focused throughout the match, but what were the nerves like when you're sitting down at the changeover for 5-2 and you're getting ready to serve for the match, what were you doing to keep your head clear?**

LUCA NARDI: When I was 5-3, I was serving, the balls were almost new, and I know today I had some problems with the serve with some double faults. My coaches know it, that if I miss the first serve, I would be, like, so nervous to put the second serve. So on the last game I tried always to be on the first serve. Yeah, it feels amazing, yeah.

**Q. Before this, what was your biggest win, and any thoughts about Tommy Paul?**

LUCA NARDI: Tommy Paul for what? I play against him? Oh, really? (Laughter.)

I didn't know. I mean... I didn't check the draw. Okay. So thanks for letting me know.

I mean, I don't know what to say. I didn't know it, so for sure I will prepare the match with my coaches. And it's going to be a very tough one, because he's playing very good. I like his game, his style. Let's see what happen.

**Q. And the best win that...**

LUCA NARDI: Yeah, sorry, sorry. The best one, for sure, as I said before...

**Q. The best win you have ever had in your career before Novak.**

LUCA NARDI: Yeah, I said it. I said it already. Zhang.

**Q. You might have been asked this question quite often, but now, there are many successful Italian players in ATP, so is it any secret or did you get inspired by these players, especially Jannik?**

LUCA NARDI: I don't know. I don't know if there is some secrets. But for sure, like me, as all the Italian players, I look up to Jannik to what he's doing. I had the chances to practice with him many times. I always try to learn from him, because he's a very nice guy, hard worker, and it's very nice what he's doing for Italy, for our country, for tennis in Italy, because now tennis is getting also more

popular.

So it's a very nice thing. I hope that I can join him. Not with his results, but, you know, we never know.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports