

BNP Paribas Open

Saturday, March 8, 2025

Botic van de Zandschulp

Press Conference



B. van de ZANDSCHULP/N. Djokovic

6-2, 3-6, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. What is it about you and your game that knocks off the big guns?

BOTIC van de ZANDSCHULP: That's a good question. You may have to ask those guys.

No, yeah, I don't know. I think beforehand, if I play those guys, I know I have to be there the whole match to be mentally stable, be calm.

Yeah, and I think I played pretty well in the rallies. I can defend. I can also attack. Go to the net.

So, yeah, I think I have a pretty variety in my game, so maybe that's what is bothering them.

Q. What do you think made Novak beatable today? You've played him before, I think, right? Was he not quite as precise? Was there anything different about him today? That's not to say you didn't play a great match.

BOTIC van de ZANDSCHULP: No, I think conditions were pretty tough today. I think the bounces were pretty high. I think he was struggling a little bit with the bounces.

Not timing the ball that well. I think he was a lot of times with the forehand a little bit too high. The ball bounces pretty high if I play the second serve, for example. So, yeah, way different conditions than when I played him, I think I played him two years ago in Astana.

Yeah, very tough conditions. Also, the sun wasn't easy. At some point we had some shade and sun in the stadium.

So, yeah, I think overall maybe I handled the conditions a little bit better today.

Q. Did beating Carlitos last year at the US Open

change the way you approach matches against these top players and give you more self-belief going into them?

BOTIC van de ZANDSCHULP: Yeah, I think so. Even before that I played some pretty good matches against top-10 players. But, yeah, definitely against Carlos, I was believing I could beat the guys like Carlos. Yeah, I also got my ass kicked twice last year by Sinner. I didn't play him after. But also against Novak it's helping that you beat Carlos last year at the US Open.

So I think it's all about self-belief before you go on court and really think you have a chance to win during the day.

But, yeah, it has to go all my way.

Q. Carlos, Rafa, and then today, which of those victories would you consider your most meaningful, most important of those three?

BOTIC van de ZANDSCHULP: Yeah, I think they're all different. I think like playing Rafa last match was mentally quite a tough match, to play it in Spain as well. So, yeah, that's never easy.

But, yeah, I think Carlos was maybe the toughest one. Yeah, because beforehand, you didn't really know you had the possibilities to beat guys who are, yeah, running the game these days.

So, yeah, I think that was a good first step.

Q. How do you translate this level of tennis you can produce against these players week to week on the tour, do you think?

BOTIC van de ZANDSCHULP: Yeah, I think for me it's mostly mentally. If I'm there mentally in the matches, then I can play pretty well, even if I'm not finding my level during those games. That's sometimes what is lacking of in all the weeks during the season, I have to find the right balance of playing tournaments, playing matches, and also recover mentally and physically afterwards.



So, yeah, for me it's still finding the good balance.

Q. Next up, Cerundolo. What are your thoughts going into that one?

BOTIC van de ZANDSCHULP: Yeah, I think also amazing player. I haven't really followed the South America tour. I know he made finals in Buenos Aires. But the rest I didn't really follow. Yeah, an amazing player.

Also amazing firepower. With the forehand he can produce winners from everywhere. But also showed he can play really well on the hard courts. I think he made semifinals in Miami couple years ago. So, yeah, he's a dangerous player on any surface.

Q. Novak's a great player. Perhaps the greatest ever. But when you know he hasn't won a tournament other than the Olympics in a year and a half or so, he hasn't had the same consistent success, does that help you going into the match or during the match in any way knowing he wasn't where he was before somewhat?

BOTIC van de ZANDSCHULP: Yeah, of course you see there are possibilities. I'm not really thinking about that he didn't win a tournament since the Olympics.

Yeah, the last time I won a tournament, I have to go way back. (Laughter.)

Didn't really thought about it. But, yeah, still helps you, like, also you saw him in Doha he lost to Berrettini. Yeah, Australia he retired during the match.

But I still believe he's, yeah, one of the best players there is now on the tour. It's never easy to face him. Yeah, it gives you also a little bit confidence if he lose some matches here and there. So yeah.

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