

BNP Paribas Open

Sunday, March 8, 2026

Alexander Zverev

Press Conference



A. ZVEREV/B. Nakashima

7-6, 5-7, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Sascha, congrats. You're now 6-0 against Brandon. Why have you had so much success in that matchup?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I think today was a completely different match than the last couple of times we played. I have never seen him serve the way he served, so credit to him. I think he's improved a lot, and definitely happy with the win.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. A question about a term that gets thrown around a lot, "tennis IQ," which I'm sure you're familiar with. There is not a clear definition of what it means. In your opinion, what would you say are one of the top components or top two components of what makes a tennis IQ? And who would you say is a player or a couple players that have the highest tennis IQ?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Yeah, I have different opinions about it. I think the players that win the most are the ones that have the best shots. I think the players that win the most now, especially now, because tennis is just a powerful sport now, have the best forehand, have the best backhand, have the best serve, have the best return. I think those are the players that win the most in the last couple of years.

I think Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner are winning "the" most, not because they play tennis by a lot of tactics, their shots are just better than everyone else's.

So, yeah, I think ten years ago, tactics and, you know, tennis IQ, as you said, was more important than it is now. I think it has lost a bit of value. I think just, yeah, whoever hits the ball the best wins the most matches.

Q. Carlos and I think yourself talked about the shot clock and how it's implemented. I just wonder about your views on that now and what changes you'd like to

see to the way it's implemented?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I think I'm a bad person to ask that, because I never really have issues with the shot clock, to be honest. I don't go for my towel except if it's, like, humid like in Acapulco and just really tough conditions. I'm not someone who has issues with time, I would say. Outside the court, I do, but not on the court (smiling).

Q. Does it frustrate you when people...

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: No, I don't mind. I don't care.

Q. For the last ten years or so, Penn has provided the balls. This year it's Dunlop. Can you tell the difference?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Yeah.

Q. How so?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I think Dunlop, generally, is a faster ball. Penn probably fluffs up a bit more. I think both are good balls. I think the Penn balls that you buy in the store and the Penn balls that we play with are really, really different, so I think it's tough to judge for a nonprofessional.

But I think the biggest difference this year is the court. The court is quicker and it's not as rough. I think the balls just generally stay a bit better for longer.

Q. After the Berrettini match you said you were feeling really confident.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Yeah.

Q. Are you still feeling that confidence? Do you think this is a year that you'll...

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Yeah, I still think I can do well here. I know, you know, sometimes we like to disrespect people, but the fact of the matter is, yeah, Brandon Nakashima is 28 in the world or something like that, but he played a fantastic match today. He served like I have

never seen before. He was hitting his spots well. Every ace was more or less on the line for him, so I've got to give credit to him. He played a great match.

Q. Are you fully adjusted to your new aggressive style in tennis?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: No, fully adjusted, no. I think it will take time, for sure. As I said after the first round, I will have losses like I did in Acapulco, but it's a price I'm willing to take. It's definitely something I'm trying to do. I will continue trying to do that.

Q. I was going to ask you about your fatherhood. Is Mayla watching and recognizing you on the screen?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: She's in the stadium, but higher. I don't show her to you guys (smiling).

Q. When you play, often there is crowd noise. Yesterday there was an incident, I don't know if you saw Darderi and Hijikata. He stopped because he heard something. He thought it was the player. Have you had that where you've had someone call out? How difficult is that to stay focused in your shot?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I think, again, like anywhere in the world, if the stadium is 10,000 or 15,000 people, what are the chances that there is one idiot sitting there? Like anywhere. It doesn't have to be a tennis match. It can be anything else.

For me, yeah, it can be frustrating, but I think it's something that I'm used to. I have been on tour for quite a while now. I think you handle with different situations.

I think today in the match, also quite important moment, in the middle of the rally, somebody screamed, which can be frustrating, but it is what it is.

Q. Is it fun for you to pursue this new aggressive style, something different? When will you know that it's fully realized that you're fully where you want to be with it?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I mean, it's exciting. Again, it will take time, as I said before. I'm still trying to win matches here, so sometimes I will go back to my old self.

But I think in important moments like today in the tiebreak, I won the tiebreak myself. I won the tiebreak by playing aggressive tennis, and that's something to look forward to and to be excited about.

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