

Davis Cup Finals

Friday, 26 November 2021

Team USA

Jack Sock

Rajeev Ram

Mardy Fish

Press Conference

RAM-SOCK/Fognini-Musetti

7-6, 6-2

Italy - 2

USA - 1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Give us your reflections on the tie as a whole. What does it mean to pick up the last point?

MARDY FISH: Yeah, every match is big. Every set seems to come down at some point. We felt like if we lost one of the ties to get into the quarterfinals we would need to do something good in the other one. So we have that to look forward to.

That was the start. You can't lose 3-0 and advance and be one of those wild card teams. It was nice to have them. We sort of went out there thinking we need to try to win four in a row, and that was the first one of four.

Q. Looking at the Italian guys in the start, they barely seemed to miss.

MARDY FISH: They were awesome. That's my first time seeing Sinner up close. Certainly seen him play quite a bit. I've probably seen 600 to 700 matches of John play, whether it's on TV or live, most of his career. I've never seen that.

I've seen some guys handle the serve well or better than most, the del Potros, Medvedevs, long, lanky, back-pretty-far. Jannik didn't seem to be incredibly far back. He seemed to have a nice read on it. Again, I've never seen that, so that was impressive.

Sonego, that was again the first time up close seeing him.



He played incredibly well.

We felt like if we threw a couple uncomfortable matchups at them, they would be pretty uncomfortable. It was quite the opposite.

Q. Rajeev, on a personal note, they joked about you being the oldest rookie in U.S. history. Now to get the win, how does today feel?

RAJEEV RAM: It's incredible. It's something I wanted to do my whole career, my whole life really. Being a tennis player, fan, all that.

Yeah, just to be on the team, to be able to go out there and play and get a point for us, when, as Mardy said, it's still vital. Just because we didn't win the tie doesn't mean we can't advance. It was awesome.

I really look forward to the next one as well.

Q. Jack, you played many Davis Cup doubles. Your thoughts on today and teaming up with Rajeev who is on the rookie side?

JACK SOCK: Yeah, I have not played too many Davis Cup doubles, I don't think, only a couple. Obviously this is Raj and I's first time playing together. This format is obviously a little bit different than before, it's over the whole weekend.

Obviously the first two matches happened pretty quick and we had to get ready and get going. It was basically win or go home. Our whole goal was to go out, try to put a point on for us, give ourselves the best chance to advance for next week. We were able to do that.

A pleasure playing with Raj. He's seeing the ball huge now. Been here for a couple weeks. Had an incredible year. It was an honor to share the court with him.

Q. I'd like to know if you were expecting the Italians to do so well, and if you were expecting the Americans not doing so well as captain today? Were you surprised about the performance of both Opelka and Isner?

MARDY FISH: No, the Italians played incredibly well



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today. They would have beaten probably every country in the world today the way they played singles. We knew that losing Taylor was going to be big for us. Frances came over as quickly as he could, which was getting here Wednesday afternoon. So not a whole lot of options in a country that we've got quite a lot of options, we feel like.

Sort of losing him the morning of coming over here was difficult, one, because he's our No. 1 player, and two, because that puts John at No. 2 singles, which we thought was going to be pretty important.

I don't think it would have mattered today, to be honest. The way Jannik has played in the last few months, it's been incredible. Lorenzo played phenomenally today. So hats off to them.

The goal was to sort of get to these guys. Obviously 2-0 would be great, but 1-All even would be phenomenal. We didn't do it. So we move on.

Q. Isner before said that he sees Sinner becoming a top-three player in the world. I'd like to know if you agree on that? Also do you remember Seville 2005 when you played Mallorca. There were two guys from Mallorca, Rafael Nadal playing his first match in Davis Cup.

MARDY FISH: 2004, I think. 2004 final we played Rafa, yes.

Q. And Spanish won. They had a similar situation. Sinner, Nadal, Moya and Sonego?

MARDY FISH: Charlie Moya was playing pretty well then, too. He was in top 10 in the world. Yeah, they had that Nadal guy. He turned out to be pretty good.

Look, he's got a huge future. There's no doubt about it. He was very impressive today. He's been impressive. I love the way he goes about his business on the court, as well.

You can get some youngsters that are pretty cocky and pretty arrogant out there, and he's the opposite of that. He came into a big spot today and did something to John Isner that's never been done before, which is beat him 2-0. I've never seen that before. Neither had John. Pretty impressive.

Q. Rajeev, I was talking to Feli Lopez who is 40 years old, won a singles match in Davis Cup. He said throughout his career with Spain always having a loaded roster, it was a lot of pressure for him to always want to be on that team. For you coming from a big

nation like USA, how much was Davis Cup on your mind throughout the years?

RAJEEV RAM: A lot. I'm a little closer in age to Mardy and Andy and these guys who were some of the best players in the world for a while in singles. I was never quite that level. I was pretty good at doubles my whole career. We had two guys named the Bryans that were the best of all time. A bit tough to get a sniff.

Sometimes that's how it goes. I waited and kept going and kept playing. Very appreciative that I got the call to do it even now, even though it's a bit later than perhaps most people would have done it.

It's not too late at all for me.

Q. Jack and Rajeev, I know this was your first time playing as a pair. What did you do during the week to prepare to be a team and also how you felt you meshed out there on the day?

JACK SOCK: Obviously we just practiced together. We got our time in on court, did certain drills where I have my style of doubles, Raj has his style of doubles. We're very polar opposite in doubles. I think it actually goes very well together.

If we're at the baseline, they see a ball from Raj, an inch over the net coming a hundred miles an hour, they see my forehand and RPMs and dipping at them, I think it's pretty tough on the guys. You have such good hands, your standard doubles, serve and volley, and then I'm staying back. We worked on basically how to throw that together and throw the kitchen sink at them. We were able to do that.

I think we meshed together well. Excited for the next one.

Q. Mardy, looking ahead to the next one, your thoughts there.

MARDY FISH: Big opportunity for us. They got a great doubles team. They got some young players that will play. We're going to throw everything we got at it. We need to win 3-0 and we need to maybe get some luck.

I don't know how the other groups look. We certainly need to win three matches to feel like we need to advance. I think we have the team to do it.

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