

Davis Cup Finals

Tuesday, 30 November 2021

Team Croatia

Vedran Martić

Nikola Pietrangeli

Mate Pavić

Marin Čilić

Press Conference

MEKTIĆ-PAVIĆ/Fognini-Sinner

6-3, 6-4

Croatia - 2

Italy - 1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What are your emotions like? Where does this sit for you to achieve something like this, the quarterfinals again?

VEDRAN MARTIĆ: Semifinals (laughter).

Q. Semifinals again.

VEDRAN MARTIĆ: For me is the first Davis Cup, then semis. I'm very happy and proud of all my team. They played really well, fought for our country. I'm very happy with everything.

Q. Marin, what changed? What were your thoughts on what happened in the singles today?

MARIN ČILIĆ: Well, overall I think fantastic match tennis-wise, also atmosphere-wise. The classic Davis Cup match with, again, some roller coaster scores in the match, momentum shifting up and down.

For me was another very, very solid match. Very short from really closing it out, 6-3, 5-4, serving for it. Jannik played really solid game. Again 5-All, Love-30, some chances to even break over there. Many things happen in the match.

Overall I felt after the match very disappointed, but of



course really encouraged by Mate and Nikola. Obviously they are in good form and they showed incredible spirit on the court to play this kind of difficult match and to get the W for us. It's just a fantastic achievement from them.

Q. Mate and Nik, you guys have had such an incredible year to be ranked where you are. The fact that it was 1-All, knowing what you achieved this year, how important was that going into the match? How much extra confidence did you have?

MATE PAVIĆ: No, I mean, I think we would sign off for 1-All to have a live match in doubles. Obviously we were not expecting to win the first match. We did.

But, yeah, I mean, we felt some pressure, but I think we played also in the group stage two good matches, especially the first one. Even today we played incredibly well. I think we didn't had any breakpoints, anything. I think the level overall, also last week, we played here in Torino, the Masters Final, so we felt the court a little bit, the place.

I think we played a good tournament also there. So we came even to Davis Cup pretty confident. We show it today. We played three good matches, now we're looking forward to semis.

Q. The decision to bring Nino in yesterday, Borna back today, was that a tactical thing?

VEDRAN MARTIĆ: No, they both very good players. Yesterday Nino played. Okay, against Sonego, I thought his better chances maybe, Gojo, that's why Gojo played. Both they played really well. I'm very happy how they played in this Davis Cup.

Nino was first match. Gojo has little experience already, he played few matches already in Madrid. When we qualified against India, he won first really match, and now he played really well both matches.

Q. Now you have five players with experience at this competition heading into Madrid. You feel that must put you in good stead?

VEDRAN MARTIĆ: Yeah, I hope we will perform really well in Madrid, too. I'm very happy. We are looking

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

forward for that match in semis.

Q. You had drums, trumpets. How difficult was it for you to play abroad with the Italian crowd? Sometimes it was a problem for you or you're used because you won Davis Cup? Was it worse than usual? Marin, you were No. 3 in the world. Somebody said that Sinner could become a top three player in the world. What do you think about him and his perspective?

NIKOLA MEKTIC: I'll answer the first question since I didn't talk yet (laughter).

Yeah, I really have to thank our guys who came here to support us. I love the trumpets. I love the crowd, that it's cheerful. Doesn't matter. I would be disappointed in the crowd if I don't hear some whistles between two serves. This is Davis Cup, something that we all have to be used to (smiling). Me personally, I don't get bothered by it. I enjoy it.

Overall I think it was very good atmosphere. Also since not so many our supporters came, I think we had pretty good support considering.

Q. And about Sinner?

MARIN CILIC: Jannik is still extremely young, playing amazing tennis. That's also what he showed today. I mentioned yesterday that he's only going to go up, to improve more and more. I know him already last several years. He's hard worker, very dedicated for improvement. He's also a great guy on the court with good spirit. He was playing great in these last six, 12 months. Great tennis.

I think Italian tennis in general has become incredibly good in these last few years, maybe the most players in top hundred, which is incredible. That's what our guys from Croatia can be envy about, that we get more and more guys into top hundred like Italy has.

Definitely great career in front of him. How far he will go nobody knows.

Q. Sinner lost only three points out of 23 on his serve. Fognini lost 23 and won 23. The difference is only on the serve or the player who stays at the net? How easy was it for you to return the serve of Fognini? Was there a big gap between the two? Don't be diplomatic.

MATE PAVIC: You are asking the wrong guy (laughter).

NIKOLA MEKTIC: I think you noticed well. I definitely think we should have done better on Sinner's serve. I don't

think he served that well where we couldn't return it. Just happened that way that every game he started with a lot of first serves, started 15-Love, 30-Love, somehow the games pass by pretty fast.

But on the other hand we did pretty well on Fognini's serve, which in today's match was enough. We held our serve pretty easy, pretty solid. We saw chances on Fognini's serve. We could have broken him even more I think. In the end it was enough to break him once in each set to win.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports