

Davis Cup Finals

Thursday, 2 December 2021

Russian Tennis Federation

Andrey Rublev

Press Conference

A. RUBLEV/E. Ymer

6-2, 5-7, 7-6

Russian Tennis Federation - 1

Sweden - 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Another dramatic match for you. What was the difference from your point of view between the first set and the rest of the match?

ANDREY RUBLEV: Basically everything was simple. Everything was under control. Quite confident match, 6-2 up with a break. Serving for the match, I relax a bit already in the second set when I shouldn't do this. Yeah, when I was up with the break, I missed some easy forehands that is normally if you're focused and you're doing everything right, you're not going to miss them. So I missed them. In the end I give him break. I bring him back to the game. Then he start to believe in his-self, he start to play much, much better.

I showed emotions that I shouldn't do. It's always takes time to recover these emotions. So basically, yeah, my level was here, his here. After the second set, we were equal. Plus he was believing in his-self, he was going for the shots. I was playing with a fear. Like I said, I was showing emotions in beginning the third set.

I said to myself, if I want to win, I need to change my attitude, I need to start to believe as well. If I want, I can win this match. It depends on me, it's not depending on him.

I started to play a bit better. Every game I had a lot of chances, breakpoints, but I couldn't make them. In the end I make it on the tiebreak. This is the most important thing.

Q. Usually you train with Fernando Vicente in Barcelona. Is a covered court a covered court in any city of the world? Is that an advantage for you to feel



like home here?

ANDREY RUBLEV: I feel great in Madrid. Yeah, I mean, of course after couple of years this place is closer to me than some other places, especially after two years ago when we played here we did amazing result. Of course, we have great and special memories from 2019 Davis Cup. Of course, these moments, they always help and motivate to play better.

Q. Everybody is good at this level. Do you think there's been a situation for yourself in recent months where you've been in a position of winning a match relatively straightforward but things have been extended? Is there a reason for that? Is it a matter of towards the end of the year you're starting to feel tired? Are you getting anxious or nervous at certain times?

ANDREY RUBLEV: You mean this match or...

Q. Not just this match.

ANDREY RUBLEV: Or this week?

Q. Over the last two, three months maybe.

ANDREY RUBLEV: Two, three months? I mean, the last part of the year, the second half of the year, I was not doing the things right. I was not doing the same things like I usually do and I was doing in the first part of the year. That's why there was some different things. I was managing some situations, and that's why.

The last weeks, now when I'm starting to do everything right again, I mean, basically maybe Turin it disappoint me still there that I was set and break up in the second, as well in the third. These kind of matches now here, I start to feel that I'm winning quite easy. I start to lose focus so fast, then I'm not playing the same way.

The players, they have nothing to lose, and they start to go for the shots. In the end they're finishing matches playing really, really well tennis.

Even if match, Elias, if he play like this consistently throughout the year, he would be much high ranking. That's the difference why he's not top hundred.

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Q. What is strange about this Davis Cup? We see every day a player is No. 5 in the world who is almost losing to No. 171. We saw Gojo 279 beating Sonogo, Elias beating Kukushkin. How do you explain? You are a clever guy. What kind of explanation do you give? Is it because we are at the end of the year? Is it because it's Davis Cup which changes completely the levels of the games? Psychological? What kind of analysis to you give to all these strange results?

ANDREY RUBLEV: In my opinion it's because of Davis Cup in a way that is completely different feeling when you play for your country or when you're playing for your -- when you play your singles tournaments, it's completely different things.

When you play your singles tournaments, you know you cannot miss, you cannot have second chances in case you lose singles. If you lose singles, you're done, the tournament is over.

Here you're playing as a team. So even if you are losing, you still have chance to win matches. Basically when normally one team much stronger and should win, they have a lot of pressure because they have to win yes or yes.

Then the players, especially here in Madrid where is altitude, I don't know, hundred in the world, something like that, because they know how to play tennis. They're playing really well. The problem with them is they're not playing consistently this level. That's why they are not, I don't know, better ranking.

But to show great match, all the players, no matter 100, 200, they can show great match. That's the thing, when you go on court, you have the pressure you have to win yes or yes, your team, for the country, all these things. Then you play on opposite side the guy that have nothing to lose, the team they have nothing to lose, zero pressure.

In the end they start to play without fear, they start to hit the ball hard, they start to feel confident. In the end that's why I think these strange results are happening here.

Q. Today was Captain Tarpishev's 100th tie as captain of the Russian team. When we see him on the bench, he usually doesn't show much emotion. What is he like off court, around the team? Will you be doing anything to celebrate?

ANDREY RUBLEV: I mean, for me it's not easy to say because I don't know him that close or that much to say something. Of course, he already - how you say - in

respect age. Let's put it this way (smiling).

Of course, now I think he have completely different life compare 10 years ago. It's not easy. Now he's taking care of his health much more, sleeping more I think. I don't know (laughter).

It's different. I think you cannot compare. I want to see him, like, when he was 40 years ago. Now it's tough because is different type of life now. That's all I can say. I don't know.

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