

Davis Cup Finals

Friday, 25 November 2022

Team Australia

Captain Lleyton Hewitt

Jordan Thompson

Max Purcell

Press Conference

PURCELL-THOMPSON/Mektic-Pavic

6-7, 7-5, 6-4

Team Australia - 2

Team Croatia - 1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Lleyton, are you able to put into words and describe what you feel right at the moment?

CAPTAIN HEWITT: Just proud. Yeah, and the whole team, the support staff, the hitting partners, Kubes, who is the sixth guy on the team, these guys make a lot of sacrifices to come here, and they have done it all year for me, for me and the coaching staff, and they do absolutely everything that we ask of them and they deserve to get results like that.

It's just nice when it all comes off and all the hard work pays off. Yeah, they deserve to play in a big match on Sunday.

Q. Jordan and Max, Jordan, you have had the experience of playing a few Davis Cup matches. Max, still very new to you. For both of you, can you just describe what it was like being on court with that atmosphere and the way the match went for both of you?

JORDAN THOMPSON: Yeah, it was unbelievable. To pair up with Maxey, we are from the same place in Sydney, we've trained together, I'm a few years older, always used to practice with Max and now we're playing together. We have played each other a couple of times, so it's good to be on the same side of the net playing for our country.

The atmosphere, it can be matched if it was the old format,



but this was pretty good too.

MAX PURCELL: Yeah, it was good playing with anyone. I will stick my hand up and play with anyone on the team. Thommo was a great partner today.

We're in the final. I don't know what else to say (smiling).

Q. Lleyton, congrats. It's been 19 years since the last time you were in the final of the Davis Cup. Back then, as a No. 1 player of the team, now as a captain. How has been for you all this process, always representing your country, but in different ways?

CAPTAIN HEWITT: It's great. Obviously Australia has a really rich history in this competition, and we have been fortunate enough to win it on a lot of occasions, back a long time ago, and then I know how much it meant for me as a player to get the opportunity to play in finals.

So I'm thrilled that these boys get that opportunity on Sunday. I'd love it to be in Australia, though. I'm disappointed the boys don't get to play in front of 15,000 at Rod Laver Arena. But it's what they have worked so hard for, and, yeah, we are fortunate that we come from a country that has played in this competition for so many years.

Last week we went to Lew Hoad's academy in Malaga where he sort of set up base. We have Tony Roche in our team as well. We are fortunate to have people like that that are around. I just couldn't be prouder of these guys and the heart and the passion and the pride that they are playing with out there.

Q. Could you guys just run us through what happened in terms of the selection? Everybody assumed it would be Eb&M in action. Was this all planned from the start of the day, or...

CAPTAIN HEWITT: No, Mattie had a slight ankle issue, so we had that coming in for the last couple of days. We have had to go back to the drawing board and work out a plan that we could get the win today.

I couldn't be prouder of the whole team. We knew we were the underdogs coming into this today and we like being in that position. It's a place I really enjoyed as a player and

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also as a captain.

For Thommo to step up, though, and take up that responsibility tonight in a do-or-die doubles match, he's played some doubles in Davis Cup before, which gave me a lot of confidence, but he played his role perfectly tonight. And then Max, though, to take the lead role as well, playing with a new partner out there, I couldn't be prouder.

There is a big thing in Davis Cup doubles which is about chemistry, and these two certainly had it, which helped.

Q. Also, you were talking earlier in the week about the versatility of this squad. This kind of proved it today, didn't it?

CAPTAIN HEWITT: I have said pretty much the whole year to these boys but especially this week that this is going to be a team effort. So far the first two matches have been. And, yeah, we will have to go back to the drawing board and work out a plan for Sunday.

Q. Jordan, were you disappointed you weren't playing in the singles? You had a big win the other day. It's all part of the team, but did you feel as though you would have liked to have a crack at that first match?

JORDAN THOMPSON: Whatever role the team needs me in, I'll do that role. I still got to wear the green and gold and alongside Maxey in a do-or-die doubles match. To put us in the final, that feeling, I can't describe it. Anything the team needs me for, I'll stick my hand up.

Q. Lleyton, you have been quite emotional when you were a player yourself and on the bench, role of the captain, you look very calm. Does it mean you change a lot in the past years or is it just a role model that helps your guys to be calm and they showed the best game in the court?

CAPTAIN HEWITT: I lost a little bit of that, but yeah, well, I try to be fired up on the side of the court when I need to be. That's my personality as it is, but also there is times to be calm and be a calming figure out there and think your way through certain situations.

Each of the players, it's about knowing the players' personalities on the court and what they respond best to. Yeah, that's part of this role.

Q. Congratulations for this great team effort. In your opinion, which team, between Italy and Canada...

CAPTAIN HEWITT: I haven't seen enough of their matches, to be honest. Obviously I will watch tomorrow

and see who comes through and how they are playing. But, yeah, I think all of them are going to, yeah, be pretty fired up to get an opportunity to play in the final on Sunday. It should be a great match, yeah, but up until now I have only really focused on our half of the draw.

Q. I won't get a chance to speak to you before the final, so if you could look first at playing Italy and then if you could also just turn attention to, in case it's Canada?

CAPTAIN HEWITT: Yeah, well, obviously Italy, yeah, they are undermanned, and it was a hell of an effort the other day. Yeah, they play with a lot of passion and fight out there, as well. They are quite even across the board. They have an experienced doubles pair that can get the job done under pressure.

Canada, as well, they have just got firepower. They've got two very quality singles players, obviously. Doubles-wise, you know, we lost to them a couple years ago in the quarterfinals, the two guys that got them through last night. We know exactly what we'd expect in both matchups. They will both be extremely tough.

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