

# Davis Cup Finals

Sunday, 27 November 2022

**David Haggerty**

**Enric Rojas**

Press Conference

EDDY VIDAL: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to this wrap-up press conference of the Final 8. We are joined by the president of the International Tennis Federation, Mr. David Haggerty, and the CEO of Kosmos, Mr. Enric Rojas.

David, this is the third edition of this new format. Can you talk to us about how you have seen the development and your evaluation?

DAVID HAGGERTY: Sure. Well, 2022 has been a very exciting year, and I think you can see that we, alongside with Kosmos, we have been able to stabilize the format. It works for the fans, it works for the players, and it certainly works for tennis. We think that that's great.

The previous format we found to be a bit confusing for the players, and we listened to them, and that's why we have made the changes that we have.

Davis Cup continues to play a unique role in tennis, and we are very pleased that starting in January we are working with the ATP, as you know, and we will be in the ATP calendar in weeks 5, 37, 47.

It has really been an evolution of 122 years, so we are very excited with where we are. I think you had the excitement here in Malaga here this week, as well. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Enric, go ahead.

ENRIC ROJAS: Good morning, everyone. Well, actually, I think it's good afternoon already.

I must start, to be honest, with a big, big thanks, not by this order, but I think a big thanks to the fans, to the partners, to the institutions, to the players, to the nations, to the ITF, to the media, to the journalists, and I would say that also the 3,500 people that have been working this week here -- well, they started at the beginning of November -- and also to all my colleagues at Kosmos. It's a big thanks. I must say congratulations to everyone.

I think it has been a big success, by all means, subject to



the final of today, and I think that as Dave was saying, you know, since we did this format and a couple of evolutions we did the last three editions, I think that with this final change of splitting the finals in between September and November has meant a lot by many means and by all the elements we are seeing.

I can say just a few points or data that we had during the group stage we had 113,000 people attending the venues in the four different cities. Subject to the attendance of today, we are going to have 63,000 people here in Malaga, which makes a total of 175,000 people attending the finals this year. If you take a comparison to what we had last year, we had 105,000 people, so it's a huge improvement.

Another very important element is that 21% of the people attending Malaga is from outside of Spain, up to 55 are outside from Andalusia, and the rest are from Andalusia.

That is a very, for us, it's a very key example of this split in between September and November of the finals give and allows the fans to travel, to plan the flights and the hotels here with time, and also for the nations that they have done a very good job to help the fans and help, well, the tennis fans to plan the trips accordingly.

You have seen that we have had a lot of Italians, a lot of people from Poland, from the U.S., from Canada, from Croatia.

You know, then we were talking about that during the draw, I mean, the atmosphere. Having, you know, on Thursday morning almost 9,000 people in the arena at 10:30, 11:00 a.m. in the morning means a lot, shows the power of this format, shows what we are doing. So it's all very positive, and that's why I started with a big thanks and congratulations.

And now, look, you read recently that together with the ITF, Kosmos, we did a very strategic partnership with the ATP, which we all think it's going to be even better, being in the calendar of the tour of the ATP, and with the three weeks that we have for the Davis Cup, it's going to mean new improvements, for sure.

You know, I also like, and also because my background, talk about the audience and the media impact. So just we don't know yet what will mean in terms of audience, the



final 18 here in Malaga, it's true that we had only in this year a bit of a challenge clashing with the World Cup of football, but if you take a comparison in between what the audience was between group stage of last year and group stage of this year, the audience is, for the moment, 60 or 70% more than last year.

So all the elements says that we are going in the right direction, and hopefully and we really think so that this format and these weeks are for staying and for remaining for the next years.

Next year, as you saw, there was a wildcard for Italy and Spain, so that means that for sure we are going to be in the group stage in Italy and Spain. Then we have also an agreement with the LTA for going to GB, but they need to classify now against Colombia.

The fourth country is going to be chosen within the next two months. We finish the process for choosing, for receiving the offers and the bids for hosting the group stage next year last Friday, so we have five, six different options. We will work together with the ITF for choosing the final group stage city by mid-January, end of January.

Again, thank you for everything. Thank you, guys, the journalists, have not read too many complaints, so I hope you enjoyed the week. Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE MODERATOR: We will open the floor for some questions. Please raise your hand.

**Q. Are you concerned about what other countries could think, other media, whatever, of Spain hosting for so many years, next year again? And also by receiving next year wildcard.**

ENRIC ROJAS: As Kosmos perspective, we are not worried about that. It's true that we had the three finals in Spain, but Spain was champion the first year, but last year they lost at the quarterfinals. This year they lost again on the quarterfinals.

So, yes, the home environment can help, but with the amount of fans that were coming from the other countries, et cetera, I feel that this is -- well, I feel, I think it's the realities of World Cup. And the home element counts, obviously, but not that much. Here you have the elements of the last two years.

I'm not hearing criticism on that, I take the point, but I think that we can show that it didn't affect too much.

DAVID HAGGERTY: Maybe just to add to that. I think we work together to look in selecting the host. This is a world competition. Today we see both Australia and Canada, non-European countries.

We will continue to evaluate where we go, but we are really pleased to be here in Malaga. We will be back again next year and build on the strong foundation.

**Q. Is it a potential weakness of the format that Australia could win the title today, they won't be playing in a qualifying tie next year until later on in the year, so nobody in Australia is going to see the winning team. The chances of this event going to Australia, I guess, are pretty slim. So is that a worry for you guys that Australia, a great tennis nation, are back in the big time but actually may not, their fans back home, not be able to see them in the flesh?**

DAVID HAGGERTY: Why can't they host? I mean, it's not unforeseen that Australia could host the finals one day. Certainly a group stage as well.

You know, we know how strong Australia is. Has great Davis Cup DNA. So, you know, they are available to host in September if they put in a bid through the process.

**Q. First of all, congratulations, because you did a lot of progress. This new format is much better than before, September and November. I'd like to know if you're thinking about possible other changes in the future? Because in my opinion, but that is only my opinion, doubles right now represent 33% of the points that you need to win. I did like very much the old format, even if now you can play best-of-three, where the doubles doesn't count more than 20%. So that could happen only if you would play four singles, like it was before, and one doubles. To do that, you need three more days. Do you think you can, now that you have this agreement with the ATP, find a way to get those three more days and have, you know, a more important competition where the singles players are more important and those sell tickets much more than doubles?**

ENRIC ROJAS: I go for it, Dave (smiling)? I'm saying that because all the rules and everything is up to the ITF, not to Kosmos.

But, look, to be honest with you, I think, as I said during my initial speech, the current format is for staying, is for remain. I don't expect any change at the close future.

I think that in the partnership that we got with the ATP we have very clear the weeks of the Davis Cup. There is not

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

too much room for changing that. We don't want to change it, actually. But to be honest with you, I don't expect any change in short term.

DAVID HAGGERTY: I think just to reinforce, I think that we are very, very happy with the format and the changes that we have now. It doesn't mean that sometime in the future we couldn't consider, but we feel the most important thing is to stabilize. The players like this. They have told us that. They like the two singles and the one doubles. It works at the time of the seasons that we play. We don't see it, but thank you for your suggestion.

**Q. I have a question for both of you. Don't know who is gonna answer. I think this stage has gone very well. Group stage in September very well. Here the stadium is already packed. What would be the next step in order to gain more attraction from the public? I mean, it's so, so difficult to get better from this in terms of audience, from people here.**

ENRIC ROJAS: You mean the next step, or...

**Q. In terms of getting better. What are your plans to get more public, more audience, more engagement? Because in terms of people physical year, it's difficult to get better than this.**

ENRIC ROJAS: Well, you're right in the way that -- you know, if you take a look at the attendance these days, it's quite good. I think that one thing that we must improve, well, must or we should improve, is that this is the World Cup of tennis. We really want to be a really international event having as many international fans as possible.

So I gave the data of having 21% of people outside of Spain. That's, for me, it's the biggest point to be improve. If we can get, I don't know, about 50/50 or something like that, it happens in many other sports around the world, that would be great.

Then, you know, it's true that we got, I don't know which percentage of attendance we had, but being always above 7,000, there is room to improve, but it's true that sometimes at 10:00 a.m. or at 4:00 p.m. midweek is not that easy. That's why I really think that the guys of marketing and ticketing of Kosmos and ITF has done a terrific job.

So I would focus, and maybe later someone is going to tell me that there are other things to do, but I think we should focus on get more international people. Also, Malaga and the region is what they are looking for, and they want really spend here in the region from people coming from outside.

**Q. Dave, I think this is really a question for yourself. I think the tennis community was full of applause for the coming together with the ATP and the ITF with Davis Cup from next year onwards. Do you think there could be negotiation for ranking points to eventually come back into Davis Cup?**

DAVID HAGGERTY: Well, with our existing agreement with the ATP, there is the possibility of ranking points. So yes, that is there. That's in discussion.

What we have seen is that really in the past, when you play for your nation, you're not looking for the ranking points. It really doesn't matter to many of the players whether they have points or not. But it is, with our relationship with the ATP, we can have that conversation at any time, but I think jointly we believe that it's not necessary.

**Q. I want to ask you about Malaga as the venue of Davis Cup finals. What's the balance about the city? Did Malaga reach your expectations?**

ENRIC ROJAS: Yeah, I mean, it's repeating what I said at the beginning. Everyone is really happy, and we have had this week a lot of conversations with the different institutions, with the arena, the region or mayor or the area of Malaga. The feedback is amazing.

I have to say that, you know, Malaga is not the capital of Spain, so I have to say at the beginning we were discussing with them, you always have doubts about how the city, the region is going to respond.

But I think that after -- well, we saw it already when we started building everything, the feedback and the reaction of the people has been amazing. And they are extremely happy. I mean, it's probably the biggest event that this city has had. Well, I think it's the biggest one they have had always.

They are extremely happy, and, you know, they would like to -- well, we are going to be here next year again. So let's see about the future.

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