

Davis Cup Finals

Wednesday, 22 November 2023

Team Australia

Alex de Minaur

Press Conference

A. De MINAUR/J. Lehecka

4-6, 7-6, 7-5

Team Australia - 1

Team Czechia - 1

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. Massive job to do out there. Immediate thoughts, given the stakes, given how it played out, does that feel like one of your more special wins?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, it's always special representing your country, and, you know, I hope everyone in the team, everyone back home sees what it means to represent your country. And probably all the young ones coming up, as well.

I mean, that's a big motivation for me to show what it means to represent Australia in Davis Cup. Yeah, it was definitely a special one. Hopefully the boys can get the job done.

Q. What did it feel like during the match? It was such a roller coaster. Down a set and a break, you work your way back. What was going through your mind? What were your emotions in the middle of the match, physically and everything?

ALEX de MINAUR: Look, to be honest, it's been a very long year, right? I think it would have been quite easy for me to roll over under the circumstances, but that's just not the type of player I am.

So I'm always going to fight until the end. Look, if he would have come out when he served for it and played too good, then, you know, I end up shaking his hand, his captain's hand, and we say, Too good. Check. You guys were better than us today.

But it wasn't the case. I got a little sniff. I was able to roll with it. You know, I think my reputation kind of is quite



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strong when it comes to these types of situations.

It kind of precedes me. Maybe I won that match because of that today.

Q. There is kind of two sides to the net, and one side is that maybe he was feeling a little anxious at times. Did you sense that? And then also from your side, do the wins over Murray, for example, help you in those kind of desperate situations?

ALEX de MINAUR: I mean, ultimately the way I saw the whole match, I had plenty of looks on his serve, but he came up playing very good. I mean, I believe it's a lot easier playing when you're 1-0 up and playing a little bit more freely and you can have a swing. It just felt like that.

Probably the only time I felt a little bit of an opportunity of him kind of lower that level a little bit was the first point serving for it. From then I kind of got a little sniff. I was able to kind of play a solid game there, and after that, I felt like the whole momentum kind of changed.

Yeah, I have had some matches recently, obviously over Andy, but I have had plenty of these types of matches in my career, and, you know, it's part of my identity. I'm not going to give up. I'm going to fight till the end.

Q. Well done. You're a warrior and you never surrender. Do you think that there was more pressure in this match and there will be also now in doubles, because if you win, honestly you have a great, great chance to reach the final again. That makes it change? Sometimes in the mentality of a player, nobody thinks about the next step that could be done.

ALEX de MINAUR: I mean, if you're trying to put more pressure on us, you're doing a very good job (smiling). But look, ultimately we play the people in front of us. Today we played Czech. If you look on paper, then we're the favorites.

But what happened today, right? Davis Cup rankings goes through the roof. It means nothing. Anyone plays. People find another level when they are playing for their country.

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Look, I was happy I was able to get the job done and keep us in there, but saying that, you know, everyone can play. There is no easy matches. We still got a doubles to get through and hopefully we're able to do that.

Q. There was pretty sort of crazy defensive points in those closing stages, sending the rest of your team pretty wild on the bench. I noticed you were staying pretty calm out there. Was that a deliberate effort to keep a lid on those emotions, or was part of you desperate to celebrate along with the team as well?

ALEX de MINAUR: I mean, to be honest, I wanted to scream my head off, if I'm honest (smiling). But I don't know. I just felt like through that match at the times where I celebrated like crazy, he ended up playing better.

I was, like, you know what? I'm just going to keep it the same. I'm just going to have a little bit of a poker face and try to just not react, not act, and try to play the same point over and over again.

I was able to play four points like that and get the break. Look, it's all about conserving energy, knowing when, you know, when you need to release some of that pressure, and that's probably when you'll here a big "Come on."

But the support I got on the sidelines was unbelievable. I mean, these guys, they've got my back from the first point to the very last. They were giving more fight up than I was on the court, and that's what you want to see when you're playing, looking at your team and them being fired up from the get-go. I can guarantee they'll be ready for this doubles, as will I.

Q. During the match, did it ever cross your mind that Australia was done Love-1 and it was all up to you, do or die? Going through all the emotions, yes, and rallying back in the match, but that sort of a point, did that enter your mind at all?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, of course. It's pretty hard not to know that. I mean, ultimately you're kind of entering with your back against the wall. You've got to do your best to focus on what's ahead of you and the opponent in front of you.

Sometimes it's tough. Sometimes you get into very dark spots in that match, and you've got to find a way to stay positive and stay your course, you know, kind of change the mentality.

That's what I try to do. I try to stay positive whenever I could feel myself entering a little bit of a low, a little bit of a,

look, I'm getting tired, he's playing very well, I'm not taking my chances, you know, I'm in genuine trouble. I just told myself to keep fighting, keep playing till the last point. You never know. Sometimes you get your chances.

Q. I hope you forgive this question, but you are one of the best friends in circuit of Jannik Sinner. You played doubles with him, you played the finals in Canadian Open. Were you at all surprised because what he won recently and beat 7 players out of the top 3, 7 times the top 3 players, and 11 times a top 10? Did you expect something like that six months ago, or were you surprised?

ALEX de MINAUR: I mean, I feel like every time I talk to you you ask me about Jannik, and look, I really like Jannik. I think he's a great guy. I've got a lot of time for him, and I really enjoy playing doubles with him. Very happy for his success. He's an amazing player, and he's, I'm sure, got a lot more to fulfill in his career.

But I'm here. This is Team Australia. We've got the doubles to talk about. So I'll stick with that.

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