

Davis Cup Finals

Wednesday, 20 November 2024

Team Germany

Captain Michael Kohlmann

Jan-Lennard Struff

Press Conference

J.L. STRUFF/D. Shapovalov

4-6, 7-5, 7-6

Team Germany - 2

Team Canada - 0

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations for the victory.
Questions in English.

Q. It was really important for you to get a comeback and steal the tie for Germany. How important was it for you to stay calm against Shapovalov's strong serve?

JAN-LENNARD STRUFF: Yeah, thank you. I believe it was a very good, tough game. Shapo was playing, firing the serves in, first serves, second serves. It started in the first set, breakpoint, second-serve ace with 180 on the line. Then he was changing directions a lot.

It was tough to read the serve. The court is pretty fast. It was tough to stay calm, because he was, yeah, playing pretty well.

He had some chances in the second to break me. I managed to stay in the game, in the set, and somehow got my chance, earned my chance. In the third it was tough. I served for the match, didn't play the best game there, but stayed in there, stayed aggressive, had the chance at 5-All. He served well again. Tiebreak.

Yeah, it was, like, very close. Just happy to get it over the line. We are in the semis now. We are very happy. Yeah, let's look forward to Friday.

Q. Struffi, why do you think you won that match? Because it was such a see-saw, up-and-down encounter. Do you think there was one specific thing that actually allowed you to get over the line?



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JAN-LENNARD STRUFF: I don't know. Tough, tough, tough question. Denis and me, we played many times. We played two years ago, same situation here. I was serving at 5-3. That time I had a match point.

He managed to get back. This time I served at 5-4. I couldn't convert it. But maybe this is sometimes a little bit in the head of both players maybe?

I don't know. We played many times before. I'm leading the series, like, head-to-head, so maybe this give me a little push that I know, okay, I can beat him.

I don't know what exactly in the match it was, but I think Michael told me in the match, okay, you're hitting through the ball better and better, so I kind of managed to win and get ahead in the baseline points and maybe gave him the feeling that I got the bit more control or aggressiveness inside the baseline points. Maybe that was the key, as well.

Q. A question to Michael. I think every team captain this tournament is a former tennis player. You also. You think it's a necessary experience to be team captain that you have a career after you?

CAPTAIN MICHAEL KOHLMANN: That's a good question. I never thought about it. I don't know if it's necessary, actually. I don't know.

Maybe in some moments it gives you, you have a little bit more experience how the players feel, like you can understand them, how they react to some things in some situations.

Maybe that's an advantage, but I don't think it's -- I mean, I personally don't think it's necessary, but I think it helps you on the bench to understand that all the players are a little bit different and you have to react also different to each player, so I think that's an advantage but not a must.

Q. Struffi, just going back to what you said about a couple years ago it was a sort of similar situation, and at 5-4 when you lost serve, did that previous match come into your mind at all?



JAN-LENNARD STRUFF: 100% that's in my mind, yeah. For sure I knew two years ago I couldn't finish it, I couldn't serve it out. For sure, you think about that in matches, of course. But I tried to push it away as far as possible. But it was a bit there, but it's normal.

But the big thing and important thing was how I recovered from that and managed to win the match. I wish I could win at 6-4, but it was crazy. In the end, it doesn't matter how, just that we got it over the line.

But it was a high-class match, I believe. Yeah, it's normal to have breaks, to serve for it or to break back, and to have opportunities, not to convert opportunities, but it's always important how to deal with this.

Q. After the ATP Finals success from the doubles now, the singles players are helping Germany team. Do you think the team in general make you stronger as a player?

JAN-LENNARD STRUFF: Yeah, it helps. It helps, of course, if you know you have a strong doubles team in there. It helps a lot.

But I thought in the match about this. Yes, I know we have a good doubles team. We can win the doubles even if I lose. I had thoughts like this in the match, for sure, because Denis was playing amazing.

But I thought, okay, Denis and Vasek were playing two years ago really, really well. We have a great team in doubles, but it's tough to beat them. They only lost against them, and maybe they think about this in the match, as well. If Denis is serving like this, it's not easy in the doubles.

You never know what happens. So I tried to tell myself, okay, hang in there, maybe get a chance. And somehow I got a chance, and it's much better like this to win 2-0, yeah.

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