

Davis Cup Finals

Saturday, 23 November 2024

Team Australia

Captain Lleyton Hewitt

Alex de Minaur

Press Conference

J. SINNER/A. de Minaur

6-3, 6-4

Team Italy - 2

Team Australia - 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Team Australia.

Q. Alex, I can imagine how disappointed you may feel. Just what can you reflect about today?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, look, it's never easy playing the No. 1 player in the world. He's obviously playing with a lot of confidence. It was a tough match. Had chances. Had opportunities.

But, yeah, look, he hasn't won a million matches this year for no reason. There is a reason for that. It was tough, but yeah, things to improve for me, and, you know, hopefully next time I'll have a better chance.

Q. Lleyton, your thoughts and comments. Thanasi was so close. Obviously you must be feeling gutted, as the rest of the team are at the moment?

CAPTAIN LLEYTON HEWITT: Yeah, it's bloody tough for all the boys. They put in a lot of effort to give themselves a chance to be here and come so close again.

But Thanasi left it all out there. Yeah, there's a couple points in it. Berrettini played a fantastic match, all three sets. Yeah, he could have easily won in straight sets, as well. He had his chances in the first set. Thanasi did great to find a way to get out of that.

We had a breakpoint early in the second set. If we got a look at his second serve there, it could have been slightly different.

Yeah, third set, we had to fight off some early breakpoints.



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Thanasi dug deep and then we're probably a millimeter away from getting a breakpoint opportunity late in that third set, as well.

Yeah, that's tennis sometimes. You know, there is not a whole heap in it, but yeah, super proud of the guys and the effort again that they brought and put in for the whole team.

Q. Lleyton, just wondering how much you agonized over whether to bring Alexei Popyrin in for either match today?

CAPTAIN LLEYTON HEWITT: Oh, there's always thought in it, but yeah, I guess just how Alex and Thanasi have been practicing, you know, throughout the week since we have been here, the pace of court, as well, and obviously Thanasi had a massive win in the first match for us.

Yeah, you can look, but until you're actually in the group and know what's been happening in the week leading up, that's where the coaches back the decisions.

Q. Earlier in the press conference, Thanasi said he had the impression of playing an away tie. How much did the atmosphere in the stadium have an influence on your performance?

CAPTAIN LLEYTON HEWITT: Oh, I don't think it had much influence, to be honest. Obviously, once again, we're a lot way from Australia, aren't we, playing at home. Feels like every time we play at the moment it's away.

We don't have much choice. It would be nice when they finally take our bid seriously to host the Finals. I think Australia would put on a bloody good event.

Q. Alex, we see you broke your racquet on match point. How do you feel now? How do you feel after this loss?

ALEX de MINAUR: (Smiling.) Yeah, I mean, right now I regret that decision. That was, you know, a decision made in the spur of the moment that I regret obviously.

Yeah, I'm not going to tell you that I'm happy that I lost that

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match. This is something that we've been trying to win as a team for a while now, that we've put in immense amount of efforts throughout the last three or four years, and everyone in the team has done their part.

You know, it's been really great to be a part of this team. I wish I could have done a little bit more on my part and, you know, give some of my best tennis in the later stages of this year, but I think looking as a whole, it was just bad timing for us as a team.

We suffered some injuries in crucial moments that when we're all playing some of our best tennis, we probably could have taken this whole thing. But it is what it is, and, you know, there is always next year.

Q. Alex, you're in a situation like the vast majority of players at the moment when they come up against Sinner. What is it like to actually be on the court with him and playing a match against him?

ALEX de MINAUR: Well, it's like trying to solve a puzzle that not a lot of people have managed to solve. That's probably the best way I would describe it.

His ball speed, his consistency feels like there's no real letdown of focus throughout the whole match. So if you want to go out and beat him, you've got to go out and play some of your best tennis. Especially in those big points, you need to step up.

So, yeah, that's how it feels like. It feels like he comes out, he's solid, he plays well. In the big moments he steps it up. He's just a very tough player to play against this year, as many other opponents have definitely felt that.

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