

Davis Cup Media Conference

Saturday, March 5, 2022

Juan-Sebastian Cabal

Nicolas Barrientos

Press Conference



RAM-SOCK/Cabal-Barrientos

6-3, 6-4

USA - 3

Colombia - 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You knew you were going to be in for a challenge this weekend. You didn't have Daniel in singles, Robert in doubles. Talk about what that challenge was like and how you still battled.

JUAN-SEBASTIAN CABAL: Like you say, we're up to a big challenge here playing USA here. Now two guys of our team not here, it makes a huge difference.

But we got out there and play, tried to do our best, we fight. The result didn't come our side. Congratulations to America. Great matches, great singles matches, great doubles, great adaptation to the conditions. It wasn't easy.

We couldn't control anything. We were playing great opponents, guys on tour that have big experience on tour. They know how to control big matches.

We just get out there, fight, give our 100%. That's what we did. Simple as that.

Q. Juan, could you talk about Jack's forehand? Could you compare it to other forehands you've faced?

JUAN-SEBASTIAN CABAL: Yeah, it's no secret that's his weapon. Big serve, big forehand. For me it's one of the biggest forehand on tour. He's fighting with the big guys on tour, fighting for big forehands. He can do whatever he wants.

He did it over here in altitude. He feel the ball. He made it. That's his weapon. He control it. That's his big shot. That's a big weapon, especially in doubles when you make damage in the point, he can do whatever he want with the

forehand. Is always danger when you go to him.

Q. Nico, can you talk about when you knew you'd be stepping in in doubles? When did you find out?

NICOLAS BARRIENTOS: Yeah, it was yesterday. Obviously Robert had an issue with his neck. We were waiting for him to be at 100%. We were pushing until the last minute. But last night we kind of have an idea. This morning was confirmed.

So I was always ready the whole week. They told me to stay ready because you never know what happens. So I just kept training and working the whole week.

When I found out, I mean, I was sad because we didn't have one of our best weapons on the team. In a way I'm glad that I got to play with Sebas and I got to play with these guys because they're the top in the world. It's been a while since I play at this level so I'm very, very happy for being able to do it and to bring something to the team.

Q. I imagine your partner is somebody you've looked up to for some time, been at the top of the game.

NICOLAS BARRIENTOS: Yeah, yeah, I looked up to these guys since we were like 10, 12, because we grew up in the same club. Seeing him up there, it's great. Learning from him, I have the opportunity to train with him back home. He's great. I learn so much from him.

Like I said, for me it's the best scenario to do my first presentation in Davis Cup with him because he makes me feel comfortable and confident on the court. It was great.

Q. Juan, could you give us some details on technique and form? What is the key to hitting the around-the-net backhand?

JUAN-SEBASTIAN CABAL: No, you cannot practice that. That's simply just seeing the point came, how the point develop himself. I remember Nico hits down the line, Jack hits like an angle, and I just went for it. I said, If I miss it a little bit in my calculation, I will make it to the net. It was wide open exactly, so I can do that one. You don't read it that good, you make a fool of yourself because you don't have an angle to do that.



I just read it good, just believe that you can do it. I don't know. It's simple as that. You just have fun and enjoy it. I don't know what else to say. It's simple. Read the game at that moment, simple.

Q. What does the sport of tennis mean to you?

JUAN-SEBASTIAN CABAL: Tennis is my life. Tennis is my life. I been playing tennis, I don't know, since I am six, five years old. We grew up watching on TV big tournaments, Davis Cup.

In Colombia we don't have that big history like you guys, let's put it this way. We don't have big tournaments. We didn't have guys to follow up. It's a whole thing around tennis.

Right now, like, we just put the effort. It's not about one or two years. We put in the effort long time ago, fighting for the results, open the way, let's put it this way, follow the path, learning from you guys, from Europe, from everything.

When you grow up, you see how the people travel, how works, how the teams conform. That's what we try to absorb from the beginning. I think that's why we make great results on tennis.

We changed history, not only us, but Alejandro Falla, Gonzalez, Giraldo, Fabiola. Whole 10-year difference guys to us. Great results with Robert and I continuing in the top of the tennis level. We keep fighting for big tournaments on the top ranking, going to the great events.

We change tennis. Like now young guys believe they can be at that level, believe they can win the tournaments. They seen Colombians on that kind of tournaments. It's huge difference of mindset from when you're little to know and to see guys, teammates, like being there not having no one.

It's a huge difference, and I think that's the big difference we can make for history for tennis in Colombia.

Q. What has the success of Colombian tennis meant?

JUAN-SEBASTIAN CABAL: No, no, it's huge. It's huge. When not only us, but Nico or Falla or Fabi makes the results like everybody did, it was the first time. I can't imagine how it was in the U.S. when they won the first Grand Slam or first Davis Cup. It was like that. It was huge.

It is happening also in soccer. It's happening also in cycling with the guys in Tour de France, all this stuff.

Colombia follows up a lot of sports. But there is this new era of sports guys, athletes, are changing the history of our country. It's huge. We are really proud. We really follow.

Not only the fans, but the athletes, we follow up each other, we communicate, we congratulate, we talk. It's like we follow up everybody. We are pushing everybody to take up the best of us.

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