

Sydney Tennis Classic

Saturday, 15 January 2022

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Aslan Karatsev

Press Conference



A. KARATSEV/A. Murray

6-3, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Congratulations. Third career title. Must feel pretty good.

ASLAN KARATSEV: Thank you very much. Yeah, of course. To start a season with a title, it's a good start and good preparation for Australian Open. Yeah, to get some confidence beginning of the year, it's always good.

Q. Was it a tough match? Because you weren't only playing Andy, you were certainly playing the crowd, as well, because they wanted to see a match and they were giving him plenty of support.

ASLAN KARATSEV: Yeah, of course the crowd was unbelievable. They supporting so much him.

Yeah, it was good atmosphere in one side. On second hand, it's always good when someone is supporting you, but it wasn't today (smiling). I had some fans from Russia, but yeah, again, one side is good because it's a lot of crowd. The second hand, they are supporting him.

Q. Still, you stayed so calm in those situations. What was going through your mind with the match and how to stay so focused with all the noise that was happening?

ASLAN KARATSEV: It was a tricky moment in the second set, 3-1 service game, 15-40. It was important moment to keep the level, keep the serve.

I lost a bit the concentration on the first serve. Especially against him it's important to have a first serve, because on the second serve he step in and can dictate the point more.

That's what he did, he tried to do it. Yeah, it was tough game. I tried to manage it, to stay calm, to stick my plan. Yeah, it was important game.

Q. You touched on this a moment ago about the Australian Open, but if you could just maybe look

ahead and how important a result like this is going to be for you with the Australian Open.

ASLAN KARATSEV: You mean how I'm going to arrive to the Australian Open?

Q. How important the confidence and the boost, a result like this will do for you.

ASLAN KARATSEV: Yeah, definitely it give energy, confidence, especially when I was supposed to play ATP Cup. I didn't. So to start the year with the title and I arrive to Melbourne already in winning matches, tournament, it's for sure give some confidence.

Q. Congratulations, first of all. You were incredible on second-serve return today. You seemed to really go after Andy's second serve. Was that a very clear game plan in your mind before the match?

ASLAN KARATSEV: Yes. I mean, against him you have to always to play more aggressive, to try to dictate the point, because he's the guy who is I think one of the best defender, so he can defend unbelievable.

Once you get to his game, it will be tough to get out of it. So I think more important was to play more aggressive from my side.

Q. You also had a very long match against Dan Evans, and you seemed pretty fresh today. How are you feeling physically? You have had COVID, as well. That doesn't seem to have affected you too much.

ASLAN KARATSEV: Well, I did a preseason well. Yeah, prepared well. Yeah, I was recovering yesterday, do some recovering with the physio here from ATP.

Yeah, I had time enough to recover. We played night session, so was pretty enough time.

Q. Congratulations on the victory. Those of us who have been following Andy Murray's career, three years ago when he essentially retired, he thought his career was over, he obviously had that metal hip surgery. Just wanted to get your thoughts on what you have made of Andy's journey over the last couple of years, the fact that he still is competitive at



ATP Tour level?

ASLAN KARATSEV: What he does, for me it's unbelievable. Especially to play against him, well, I'm arrive a bit late to this kind of level, but especially to get this kind of player, one of the greatest player in the world and all time, like, for me it was really important match to play against this kind of player.

Yeah, what he does, it's unbelievable to come back. I think it's a huge comeback from him to play at this level after what he has in the past like with the injury.

Q. That fifth game of the second set seemed pivotal, I know you eventually won it after 13 minutes, but had Andy broken you, were you worried you might end up having another three sets, titanic battle, because it was sort of a swaying, wasn't it, that pivotal game?

ASLAN KARATSEV: In that moment you don't think about what gonna happen, so you try to think, okay, what should I do? I'm gonna serve. Where you want to serve.

Of course this kind of moment run in your head, so you try just to focus on the things that you have to do in that moment.

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