

Brisbane International

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Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Alexei Popyrin

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Alexei, it's the start of the season. How are you feeling, generally? You've been here for a while. What's the mood like?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Yeah, I feel really good. I think I'm really looking forward to it. I feel good on the practice court. Came here a week early to adjust to the weather.

First couple days weren't easy, but now I'm feeling really good and I feel like I'm playing well, so that's good as well.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Nice to see you out there, smiling and laughing around with Nick. How does it feel to be around him?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Yeah, it's good. I think it's nice having Nick back on the tour. He puts tennis on the map really well, so I think it's good to have him back. Hopefully he can stay for the rest of the year.

Q. You're both in a good place. Do you talk with him about that, your challenges for the last year?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Not too much. I kind of keep my challenges to myself a little bit. I think that might be something I need to work on. Look, I think we're both in a good place. I know I am, that's for sure.

Yeah, I was able to kind of re-set after the season ended last year, and kind of, yeah, just make a few changes in the way I approach things, and so far it's been working this first week.

Q. Tennis is an extremely difficult sport, but do you think Nick can walk back in and do some damage still, despite the time away?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Look, he's one of the most talented players, so I think if he's mentally in the right space and physically is in the right shape, then yeah, he'll come back in and will cause difficulty for everyone.

But we'll see. I don't know what kind of physical shape he's in. Mentally looks like he's in a good shape. Yeah, physically, we'll just have to wait and see.

Q. Yourself, no stranger to some great tennis in Australia over the years. The ranking isn't where it was a year ago, but do you think you're still capable of repeating what you have done over the last five or six years?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Yeah. Look, I think for me, I'm not too worried about my ranking. Everybody knows last year was a tough year for me. This will probably be the last time I'm speaking about last year for me. It's really important to just focus on the years to come and this year to come.

So for me, I made some adjustments in the way I approach things. I kind of want to enjoy my time off the court when I'm traveling and playing all these tournaments. That will translate to me on the court. If I'm happy on the court, I'm practicing well and playing well, then the ranking will do its job and the results will come.

I think I have shown over the past couple of years that when I'm in the right head space, I can cause some damage and have some good results. I just want it to be more consistent this year.

Q. You mentioned that you came here a week early. Anything else that you're going to be doing differently this year?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Playing a bit more golf (smiling). No, but I think we kind of learned from the last couple of years, coming to Brisbane a couple of days before the tournament starts that I wasn't really ready for the tournament to start when match day was called.

So we decided to come a week early here and get used to the humidity and the heat here and the jet lag also. Yeah, and hopefully that will be kind of a good start to the year for me and then throughout the year. Look, I just want to enjoy my time with my family. I want my family to come out more often. I want the people I love to come out more often so can I spend more time with them.

I think it's important to have that, you know, personal balance between your worklife and your personal life. I think last year it was too much of my worklife was taking a toll on me and not enough personal life. I just kind of want to balance that out this year and see how it goes.



Q. Is there anything that you particularly love to do when you first get home to Australia?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: I was just talking about it earlier. Every time I come to Australia, I walk out of the airport and I just smell the fresh air. It feels like home.

Every time I come out, I'm, like, yeah, this feels like home. It's also important for me to spend time with my nephews and my sister who are here. I don't get to see them much. This is the only kind of month of the year where I get to see them and spend time with them. Yeah, it's important for me to spend time with them as much as I can.

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