

United Cup

Monday, 1 January 2024

Perth, Western Australia, Australia

Team China

Captain Wu Di

Zheng Qinwen

Zhang Zhizhen

Press Conference

DANILOVIC-DJOKOVIC/Zheng-Zhang

6-4, 1-6, 10-6

Team Serbia - 2

Team China - 1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What happened at the end of the first set? Did you think the set was finished?

ZHENG QINWEN: I just think the game is finish. I didn't realize that the game wasn't over yet. So that was my mistakes, yeah. Is just my head wasn't so focus counting on the score. Maybe a little bit dizzy in that moment, yeah (smiling).

Q. What was it like being involved in that match? It seemed like the whole team, the whole group, was having a good time during that with a lot of laughs.

ZHENG QINWEN: Yeah, we had a lot of good energy there, especially all of them, they're trying to make fun, make us laugh, to put us as relaxed as possible. Yeah, we had a lot of enjoyment during the match.

But I think today, especially me, I can do much better than that. Yeah, we played like really late match. At the end I was really hungry on court (smiling). I was not enough focus I think at the end of the super tiebreak.

Q. 2023 was a big year for you. Career-high ranking, 52. You did well in Shanghai, other tournaments. What was the experience like being on the same court as Novak? Did it open your eyes?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Yes, it is. Well, for the result, it's sadly. I had two lose to finish the year. I mean, I was a little bit more upset.

But looking forward, it's very good experience to play



world No. 1, especially Novak Djokovic, which all the time is the best. So there is a lot of thing you can learn from the singles. Doubles, we don't play too much. More experience learn from the singles.

I mean, I never play in those good player. Ruud was No. 5 in that moment. But No. 1, it's a bit different. Even second time if you give me one more chance to play, at moment I couldn't give you answer how to play. Yeah, this is the things.

Q. Facing Novak, was it what you expected? Was he better?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Well, I mean, for sure he's much better player. But, I mean, today I'm also a little bit scared to making rally with him. I cannot say really, really far away. At moment, I still couldn't catch this level. I still need to couple time, few years, to catch this level. Maybe which is I cannot. It's very good, very high level.

I think in short period I need to make another goal, just how to making close match, how to get little bit more damage to them.

Q. It was mentioned how good of a year you had last year, particularly the second half. Off court when you started to realize you were becoming a bigger name in China, you did the on-court presentation with Li Na for Roger Federer, you had your face on milk cartons in Shanghai. Was there a point where you thought you were starting to become more recognized in China?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: It just little bit embarrassing. If we're in the same elevator, there's a picture with someone else. The picture over there is feeling weird (smiling).

I'm happy to catch them. Even so far away, but I still trying to catch them, which is pretty tough, long way to go. Qin is also in front of me.

Yeah, I mean, why not? Why not to be the best?

Q. Was there a point last year that you thought you're starting to become somewhat of a celebrity yourself?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Last year, I didn't really think about this. Just trying to play my best tennis, then try to make better result. Then people knows me, that's extra things.



It's not I want to someone knows me, then I playing good.

I want to playing good tennis, then to improve my ranking, then the people knows me, which is good. I want to making, like, to show everyone I can be there, also can be there for the young generation.

Q. If you look back, your journey, first time United Cup debut over the past few days, what lessons did you learn from this experience? In which areas do you think you did much better than before and which areas should you improve?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Again please.

Q. You look back on all the United Cup matches, what lessons did you learn from this experience? In which area did you think you did better and in which areas should you improve?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Well, United Cup, it's quite short for us. Just two days. I play four match. It's two days in a row. We start from yesterday and we kind of finish today. I cannot tell you what is really difference.

I see many good point. Our team really, really like supporting each other. We like one team, one family on the court or off the court. We are really nice, everyone, super happy to be part of the team.

Also for me, I mean, from the tennis side, it's good - how you say - play singles, I do my job, and she will cover. Like today I lost the singles and she win the singles, so we can have a chance to play mixed doubles. Everyone have their own job. Looking forward. Looking to see if we have more chance, I hope.

ZHENG QINWEN: Yeah, asking about the tennis side?

Q. Both.

ZHENG QINWEN: I would like to say I enjoy with the China team together in this few days. Especially we had lot of fun in the doubles.

Second thing about tennis, is like I really feel Novak, he got super high first-serve percentage. When I was return his serve, he's always serving the corner with super good speed, high percentage in the same time. I had a lot of to learn.

Actually is really good for me to play against Novak in the doubles because I felt it's different than what you see on the TV and actually real play against the top one, super male who creating tennis history. That was really impressive.

Of course, I can do a lot of things better than what I'm doing the doubles. I think I will reset my doubles match

because I really feel there's a lot I still needs to improve, yeah.

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