

# Australian Open

Friday, 12 January 2024  
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Daniel Evans

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Dan, how are you feeling going into the tournament?

DANIEL EVANS: Yeah, pretty good. Yeah, I played as much tennis as I could. Practiced pretty well. Yeah, I'm looking forward to playing.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. How difficult was it to deal with the length of time you had with the calf?**

DANIEL EVANS: I mean, it was the best sort of possible time to get injured really. I missed Davis Cup. Yeah, it was just pretty boring stuff to start with. Once I could play, I went and started practicing. It was just slow, really slow. Yeah, pretty boring basic exercises to get back up and going.

Had to be really cautious with it because all the doctors and physios said to do it again is not what you want. It was my tendon, as well, which is pretty important. That was the main thing. Had to take a little bit longer because of the tendon.

**Q. How long have you been fully fit? Do you feel like you have enough tennis in you going into this tournament?**

DANIEL EVANS: Yeah, my leg's fine. That's fully fit. My leg is fully fit. Obviously you have to work the rest up.

**Q. How long have you been able to play?**

DANIEL EVANS: I started playing sets the Thursday before Adelaide. I was obviously playing points and moving, but I hadn't really got into much competitive tennis before that.

As I said, needed to be really cautious with my leg. Yeah, I mean, it was a good first week. Just did what I could. Obviously was very sore in the second match. I played pretty good tennis, to be honest, yeah.

**Q. Wanted to ask you about your United Cup experience in Perth. I think you were the highest-ranked No. 2 singles player at the tournament. Was it tough for you sitting and**

**watching, especially given the amount of time you had spent on the sidelines? Were you raring to get out on the match court?**

DANIEL EVANS: No, I mean, again, I know I couldn't play. I wasn't fit really to play. Yeah, it was long days. Obviously Katie played some really good tennis. Cam played good. I think they lost, yeah, the mixed doubles to sort of get us through to the quarterfinal, which would have been nice for those guys. It sort of allowed me to then move on and practice and get going for myself.

Yeah, it's a very different event. It's sort of classed as a team event, but it's not really a team event. It's two sort of singles players playing. As you said, I was the highest-ranked player, so that says what the No. 2s are.

It is a team event, but it's very different concept. They're essentially playing for themselves, their own points, in a team. It's very different to Davis Cup. It's a pretty cool concept of mixed doubles. Definitely the highlight for me, watching some of the stuff on the telly at the end. In that way it was really cool to watch and see, yeah.

**Q. (Question about the Olympics.)**

DANIEL EVANS: Would never say no to playing for my country. I think, as we've worked out before, I'm not the chosen doubles player in our country. That's a different story.

**Q. Tennis on TV, obviously this is the first year Sky has taken over for Amazon. If you want to watch every tennis match that goes on, the cost is in the hundreds of pounds each year. Does tennis have a bit of responsibility to make sure that it's successful to watch on TV and have prices that aren't exorbitant? Your mates at home probably can't watch at home.**

DANIEL EVANS: I've never really thought about it like that. Yeah, I mean, I only thought about it as it's a good thing that it was back on Sky. For people like myself who's not great with smart TV and computers, I just want to use the remote and press 401 or 404 or if you're on Virgin, 501.

I don't know, I grew up watching it on Sky. When Greg was in the final, it was always on Sky. Again, I'm not just

saying this, people are positive to me about it being on Sky. It was way easier to watch. You could put it on in pubs, clubs, wherever.

I don't know, maybe they do. To be honest, I didn't think about it like that, yeah. I don't really know, yeah. I thought it was a good thing, but maybe it isn't (smiling).

**Q. Are you inspired by Aston Villa this season? Are you ready to go on a similar run?**

DANIEL EVANS: They're obviously doing very well. Take it match by match, I guess. Yeah, I have to see how things go here. Yeah, I want to do well. Obviously I feel like my game is in a good place. My body's still a bit behind.

After this tournament, I'll take a bit more time and do a bit of a pre-season again and get going again after that.

**Q. Even when you're off for a relatively short amount of time, does it make you appreciate it, look at the game, make you keep on wanting to go longer?**

DANIEL EVANS: I think, yeah, definitely it wasn't a good thing, definitely not. But it gives you a good perspective to get sort of reset. You can do that in other ways. I think tennis, how the calendar is, you really don't get a chance to think much about stopping or having a rest. Especially how the end of last year was looking, it was going to be Paris and Davis Cup. It was a funny sort of schedule. I think two weeks off, then play Davis Cup.

Yeah, it was nice to sort of sit back, albeit being injured, take stock of what the year was and what I can improve on.

**Q. Are you inspired by Villa? Just say yes and I'll leave you alone.**

DANIEL EVANS: I mean, I support them. I'm 33, I'm not inspired by much, to be honest with you (laughter).

**Q. A player of your age, suffering something like that, do you have any thoughts about long-term and the consequences of it?**

DANIEL EVANS: No, not really. The amount of people who say it's an old person's injury, pulling a calf, is astonishing.

No, I mean, I was confident that I look after my body well enough that it was sort of something that happened which obviously I hadn't looked after, which I didn't know about.

I've put the things in place now to make sure that part of my body isn't sort of out of kilter or out of sync.

I'm not really worried that it's going to affect me again. I put in the time, the effort. As I said, I was really cautious about coming back. I did all the right things I needed to do. The needed to do procedures, injections, whatnot.

I don't think getting older was to do with me getting injured at all. It was just there was some other stuff in my body which wasn't quite right and that probably caused it.

**Q. A tennis question for you. When you're returning serve, watching the player, do you ever try to see if they're looking where they're going to serve? Some pros still do it.**

DANIEL EVANS: Don't know. It's funny you ask that because where the court is now, with the shot clock, I look into where the shot clock is, what number I am. I was thinking that the other day. You're obviously on the deuce looking into the wide serve. I don't look at them, no. I sort of look at other parts -- yeah, maybe I should.

**Q. Andy has been talking about trying to make himself enjoy tennis a bit more, be a bit nicer to himself.**

DANIEL EVANS: How long did that take (laughter)?

**Q. How do you make sure you still enjoy tennis on the court? You're someone who isn't very nice to yourself.**

DANIEL EVANS: No, I enjoy it all the time really, to be honest with you. To be on the tour, getting to compete, it's the best part about it. I think we get to practice enough because we lose nearly every week.

No, it's important to look back, like I said before, and it's pretty cool to be out here competing in Melbourne, good city. Majority of the time I think I enjoy it and have the right mix.

Obviously sometimes it's not the best sport in the world to you. You're not the easiest on yourself. But I think we do, majority, do a pretty good job, I think.

**Q. Would you welcome a crack at Carlos Alcaraz in the second round? Is it a bit early for that?**

DANIEL EVANS: Definitely can win my first round. It's how my body holds up and how it will recover. It was sore last week. I just haven't had as much practice and training as I would really like to be coming into. But you can have as much practice as you like. If you're playing Alcaraz, it doesn't mean you're going to win anyway. We'll see.

Sonego is my focus. See how I pull up if I get to win that match.

