

# Australian Open

Wednesday, 17 January 2024

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Alex de Minaur

Press Conference



A. de MINAUR/M. Arnaldi

6-3, 6-0, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Congrats, Alex. Were you surprised how straightforward it was, considering what an incredibly talented opponent Matteo is?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, look, I mean, I was definitely going in ready for a battle, but I'll happily take that result. Saying that, I think the match was still a lot tougher than the scoreline showed. It got tricky at the end, but I'm happy to come through.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. The shift to indoors, does that throw up any differences or different challenges for you when you go up against someone like that? Thinking it was a good thing or potential negative, given...**

ALEX de MINAUR: It definitely changes a lot. I think Matteo is an indoor player. I think he's got very good firepower, and he's very good when the ball's not really moving and in the slot. So I did find playing indoors probably a little bit harder to get the ball moving and out of his strike zone.

But saying, that, I'm very happy how I was able to adapt and manage the conditions and come up with a quality win.

**Q. How big is the belief in yourself right now? How does it compare to other times in your life when you've gotten on rolls and you've been playing and feeling the ball in a way that it seems like you're feeling the ball right now?**

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, obviously I think nothing can give you more belief than winning matches, and especially good matches, and I think that's what I've gotten this year.

Saying that, I feel in a good position where maybe I know if I don't bring my A game, I still got plenty to show. I've won enough matches this year to kind of know how to win certain types of matches.

I come to terms with not having to play perfect tennis out there but just do enough to get the job done. It's definitely, I'm playing probably my best tennis. I'm feeling great mentally and physically.

You know, happy to be in the next round.

**Q. Lleyton was asked to rate out of 10 where you were at, how close you were to your best. He gave you an 8. What would you give yourself today?**

ALEX de MINAUR: Today's match or...

**Q. Today and probably the first two rounds.**

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, look, in a way I'm always going to be my harshest critic, right? That's never going to change. Doesn't matter where I am in the world or what I'm doing. I do think I've got more to give, and I really, really would like to show what I'm capable of.

I think so far I have done what I needed to do to win the matches. It hasn't been probably the prettiest of levels or my best level. I played two opponents where maybe I haven't been allowed to be as aggressive as I would like, because, you know, they've got a lot of firepower. But I do think I've got a lot more to show.

**Q. You won 11 games in a row at one stage. When you have that kind of momentum, does it feel like you are almost unbeatable?**

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, I mean, something that I'm very proud of is my willingness to try and win every single point. That's something, you know, no matter what the scoreline is, I'm constantly drilling myself that I need to win the next point and I need to win the next point.

I am a little bit disappointed in myself for losing focus in the third set there. But again, I thought it was a pretty good level throughout the whole match. I had a little stint where I lost my focus and got broken in the third set and made things a little bit more complicated than I probably should have, but it does feel very good when you're winning a lot of points in a row.

**Q. There has been a lot of discussion about whether it's appropriate for Zverev to be sitting on the players council. What's your take?**



ALEX de MINAUR: Well, my take is that I'm good at playing tennis and I'm not good at making political decisions. Going to stay out of it and, yeah, focus on playing tennis.

**Q. This isn't the first time you've played a day match obviously, but we know night matches are prime time. Do you have a preference between the two?**

ALEX de MINAUR: Well, I think they are completely different matches when it comes to conditions and depending on the weather, as well.

Obviously at night it's a little bit cooler and a little bit deader conditions. Sometimes if you've got a hot day here in Melbourne, it's rapid conditions out there. I feel like the court is playing quite quick.

So it kind of depends a lot on the type of opponent you're playing, but any time I get a chance to play on RLA, it's a special moment. You know, just again, walking out there, seeing a full, packed crowd all supporting me, it's a pretty good feeling.

I'm hoping to play a lot more matches on that court.

**Q. You played with Storm Hunter during United Cup. She's in the third round for the first time.**

ALEX de MINAUR: She won?

**Q. She won. What did you see of her at the United Cup and what have you made of her progress? She's late 20s, but her progress at this stage of her career.**

ALEX de MINAUR: Well, I think I told her there I was so impressed with her level in the mixed. I thought it was unbelievable and the tennis she played throughout whole of United Cup.

You know, I think it's a pretty amazing achievement what she's accomplished, considering the lack of preparation she was able to have going from United Cup straight into qualifying. So I think that needs to definitely be mentioned and taken into account. Now she's in the third round of singles, which is great.

You know, hopefully this gives her the belief to pursue the singles career a lot more.

**Q. First two matches you spent little under four hours on court, which is a really nice way to start. How important is that for you just to have that extra bit preserved now when you're heading into what comes next?**

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, I mean, over the years you

have come to learn how important it is to, I guess, if possible, to conserve the energy, right? Because it is a long two weeks if you want to get to the end of the tournament, and that's ultimately the goal.

Now, I have learnt that the first week is all about getting through, like, finding ways to get through. Might not be your best tennis, but if you get through the first week, you give yourself a chance in the second week to, you know, show what you're made of. That's where, I guess, the best tennis is being played.

So the goal is to make it there, and hopefully I can have another good match in the next round.

**Q. I want to ask you, what is the thing you learned the most living overseas and learning from the Spanish and all the Latino, this Latin feeling?**

ALEX de MINAUR: Well, look, my mom is Spanish, and I've obviously lived almost half of my life in Spain. I've been fortunate enough to have both cultures growing up, and especially when playing tennis.

So I learnt, you know, from my early years in Spain how to win matches, you know, find different ways of winning matches. Because everyone is so competitive in Spain, and especially in Europe.

Then in Australia, I learned about being, you know, professional and everything I needed to do to accomplish my goals. I think with all those experiences, I was able to mature a little bit quicker than maybe a lot of the people around me. It gave me a little bit of an edge in my tennis career.

**Q. Can we just get you to talk about potential opponents coming up, one by one, Cobolli or Kotov. Can you talk about them, the potential matchups.**

ALEX de MINAUR: Cobolli, he's a young Italian player, a little bit like Arnaldi. Has firepower. He's rising up the rankings, playing some great tennis. Obviously came through quallies and, you know, it's not easy coming through quallies at a slam. So he's definitely got a lot of confidence under his belt. He'll be very difficult to play against.

Then Kotov, he's coming off his best year. He's had some quality wins against good opponents. He's dangerous. Hits the ball big. He's actually a good mover, and, you know, a very tricky opponent. I think both of them are very tricky.

Ultimately, again, it's about me focusing on my side of the court and trying to do the things that I do well and execute and, you know, hopefully that should put me in a good step going forward.

