

# Australian Open

Thursday, 18 January 2024

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Max Purcell

Press Conference



C. RUUD/M. Purcell

6-3, 6-7, 6-3, 3-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Max, incredible performance. I know not the result you want, but what are your early reflections postmatch?

MAX PURCELL: Definitely committed to a more aggressive game style today. I was happy that I kind of continued it throughout the whole four-hour match and got so close. Something I haven't done a whole lot of in my career.

But yeah, no regrets. Great match with Casper. Looking to take that confidence into the rest of the season.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. When the roof shut at the end of the first set, do you think that might have helped Ruud? You said earlier in the week you wanted to face him in the sun. How do you think that change in conditions affected the match?**

MAX PURCELL: I mean, after the roof closed we were two sets all, to be honest. I lost when the roof was open. So I think the weather today wasn't going to help me anyway, really. It wasn't that hot.

Courts, yeah, didn't get as much heat in them as I would have liked with the roof being closed, but again, I don't think it was going to be an issue with the weather today anyway.

It definitely felt like it was a lot more dead in there, especially towards the end of that fifth when we had a long few games, not getting a ball change before that super-tiebreak, really noticed how dead the balls were, were kind of getting.

Would have liked to have seen some fresh balls towards the end of that third set and see how he handled the pressure when I was going after the ball. That's tennis. I can't tell the umpire when I want new balls and get them.

**Q. Casper talked about just how difficult it is to play against someone like you, just the net rushing style**

**and so on. What a challenge it was for him to find a way around that. How much can you take from that, someone at his level really finds your game a difficult thing to pick apart?**

MAX PURCELL: It's great. I've known Casper since I was probably like 12 years old. We're the same age, played juniors together and all that. I'm glad Casper still speaks highly of me.

Yeah, I think I do play a game that can kind of trouble anyone. In saying that there are obviously some still lower-ranked guys that beat me. I've just got that kind of game style that disrupts rhythm. Anyone on an off day is going to struggle against me. I like the fact the way I play can kind of beat anyone, but also I maybe lose to anyone. But I'm in with a chance every time I step on court.

**Q. Today was different for you in terms of how you went about it. This was kind of a bit of a radical shift even compared to how you normally play. Why did you do that? You beat him last time you guys played. What was today all about for you? Why did you think, okay, this is going to be different?**

MAX PURCELL: Conditions in Cincinnati were much more lively, so it was far easier to just serve and get to the net. It was so hard to pass there, so hard to return.

He had no idea what he was doing on return in Cincinnati, standing back, standing up. Not a lot of guys did, to be honest, returning in Cincinnati. That's why I wanted to play him in the heat here, to try and get something close to that, but obviously didn't.

So I felt like the conditions were too clean and the balls were too soft to just go about the way I was playing last time and think I was just going to just walk over and beat 11 in the world, Casper Ruud. I had to bring something else to the table. I had to try to give him no rhythm, go for a lot of shots.

Look, I made a lot errors, but I think that helped me stay free for the whole match and allowed me to almost get across the line in the end.

**Q. The last 24 hours, we've seen Australian players really push some of the best in the world. Alexei and**

**Jordan Thompson and Chris as well. I know you're all mates. Do you think that's something you were able to do, or do you kick yourself because you got so close against these really good players?**

MAX PURCELL: I think we're all just kind of finally where we want to be in our careers, top 100, playing in the big tournaments. Now we have a little bit more freedom with schedule and with coaches, with physios and all that.

In saying that, everyone is then pushing to be ranked higher than the other one. Everyone is playing good ball. That's kind of, you know, part of the reason why I think I've done well is because all these other guys have started to do well. Even Rinky losing to Struffy in the first round 10-8, and then we've got Kubs as well.

Everyone's had a few heartbreaks this week against some good players, but man, that's tennis. Everyone gets unlucky. Everyone gets luck somewhere else throughout the season. That's just how it goes.

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