

Australian Open

Friday, 19 January 2024
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Alex de Minaur

Press Conference



ALEX de MINAUR/F. Cobolli

6-3, 6-3, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Alex, congratulations. Into week two. Your next-round opponent is either Sebastian Korda or Andrey Rublev. Can you give us a quick comment on both of them, please?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, look, I've played both of them. I've had success against both of them. I've also suffered some defeats against them.

Both quality players. I think they're going to have a very good match on. I'll be looking forward to watching that one.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Must be pretty thrilled with tonight's performance. You played quite well tonight.

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, I'm happy. Maybe I was a little bit on edge during the match, but I'm happy to get through. Again, being in the second week, it feels like the tournament really starts.

Q. First player since Lleyton Hewitt to make the fourth round three times in a row. What would it mean to follow in his footsteps?

ALEX de MINAUR: First of all, I'll try to get a little bit better and beat my personal best, get to a quarterfinals. That's the first step. I've made a couple fourth rounds in the past. I maybe have gotten to that point and not played the type of match I wanted to. I'm hoping I can break that barrier and go one further.

Q. This is the third time in the fourth round. Each of your matches have been two hours or under. Physically how are you feeling this time around compared to the other two times?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, I probably must be feeling the freshest I've been getting at this stage of the tournament. Obviously I got a little bit lucky with Milos pulling out. Therefore, the match wasn't too long. Then I played two straight-sets wins that weren't too long.

Physically I'm feeling great. Now it's just about giving all my energy for what's to come.

Q. You mentioned a couple of times that you feel like it sort of starts now. Is this because the level of opponent is going to rise, but also because you've been here before and now it's about going to the next rung?

ALEX de MINAUR: I say this because this is where I want to be. This is where the tail end of the tournament starts, the second week of slams.

I've always been told that the first week of a slam is to get through however way you want to, and the second week is when you start to play your real tennis.

Hopefully I can do that. Now the matches are all against normally - it should be against better-ranked opponents. I'm looking forward to that.

Q. What do you feel you need to do better? It looked fairly comfortable tonight. You didn't seem particularly happy with your game. What else do you want to do?

ALEX de MINAUR: Look, I'm not too unsatisfied with the performance today. Ultimately I won in straight sets. I won playing some decent tennis. I think probably just playing on a different court today made it a little bit tricky for me to find my footing and my timing in certain shots. That's probably the slight thing.

I have been playing some great tennis. Maybe today wasn't my best level, but I still know that I've got that in the bag. Hopefully the next match I can show that.

Q. Did you feel like your return game today was one of the real strengths? You seemed to be almost on him every single time. You talked about when you were playing your best tennis you're playing aggressively. You seemed to have more opportunity to do that tonight.

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, definitely I felt like today was a match where I had a lot of time, and I could definitely be the one dictating play.

It's probably not until the tail end of the second and the third which I really started to implement that more, that I got that success. That's the style of tennis I'm going to have to play against the best opponents.

But, again, it's all based on matchups, right? I could be playing two completely different opponents. One of them I can be maybe a little bit more solid, and the other one I definitely can't allow him to dictate. I've got to try and get him on the run.

Q. You're on the same side of the draw as Novak. Both playing tonight. You have John Cain Arena. It would be a big move for organizers to make, but would you like to play on RLA prime time on Sunday?

ALEX de MINAUR: That's a great question.

I mean, I would love to play on RLA. Obviously that prime time slot is pretty special, and you've got to earn it. If the organizers decide to put me there, then I'll be happy to play on it.

But, yeah, ultimately doesn't really matter when I play, whether I play first match, whether I play last. Whether I play on RLA or Court 27, I'm still going to be the same. I'm still going to walk out there and enjoy it and give it 150%.

Q. You just spoke about your prospective opponents. Which one were you talking about for which style? For instance, if it is Rublev, you do have a winning head-to-head record. Do you feel you match up with him particularly well?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, against Rublev, we've played a few times over the years. We've also played at different stages of our careers. Last year I think we played twice. I got him in Rotterdam, and he got me at the end of the year in Bercy. Both indoors. Both kind of solid conditions. Both tight matches.

Against Andrey, he's got some immense firepower, and his forehand is deadly. It's basically do your best to not allow him to hit forehands, especially from the middle of the court. That will probably be the game plan against him.

Then Seb, I played twice that I can remember: Wimbledon and Bercy. He's got more of an all-court game. Maybe doesn't have the firepower in the sense of ball speed as Rublev does, but he's got more of an all-court game. He can be dangerous by coming into the net and just being maybe a little bit more aggressive from the baseline, trying to take the net.

Two different opponents. Two different game styles. Hopefully I'll be able to execute them.