

Australian Open

Monday, 22 January 2024

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Alex de Minaur

Press Conference



A. RUBLEV/A. De Minaur

6-4, 6-7, 6-7, 6-3, 6-0

THE MODERATOR: Alex, I know this is not the result you were hoping for, but could you share with us when did you feel the momentum changed for you on court?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, it's a tough, tough match to finish up my campaign here. Obviously had aspirations for more. Yeah, my time here was cut short.

Andrey deserved the win today. He played too good in the fourth and fifth sets. He kind of, in my eyes, just let go and started swinging freely, caught a little purple patch. Yeah, it was too good in the end.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Congratulations on a great summer. It's going to be hard to sink in right now, but can you tell us physically how you felt towards the end? Did he hit you off the court or did you start to feel it physically?

ALEX de MINAUR: That's the thing, it's tough because I thought he was hurting physically in the third and in the fourth. He just let go. He started swinging. The balls went in.

It's not a match that I thought I lost physically. It was just that the racquet was taken out of my hand. Got to a stage where I just could not get him moving or expose that movement. He was just standing and hitting from every single part of the court at just mach 10.

That's probably the most disappointing part of the whole match.

Q. We saw you had the medical timeout. Did that impact you after that? How were the blisters after that?

ALEX de MINAUR: No, didn't impact me. An injury is never going to impact a result in my matches. Ultimately doesn't matter if, yeah, I'm playing on one leg, I'm going to be competitive till the end.

It was completely fine. I just got a blister and I just

needed a little bit of taping and padding. Yeah, it was completely fine.

Q. You mentioned that Andrey basically threw caution to the wind in the final two sets. When he leveled at two sets all, did you consider you might adopt a similar approach in the final set?

ALEX de MINAUR: To be honest, I think probably a couple things let me down today. My serve was probably one of them. I just was not finding first serves. In those crucial moments, I was giving him too many second serves and he was able to just swing freely.

But no, I felt great. I thought we were going to go into the fifth set and I was going to be able to expose him physically. I played a couple average points in the first game, and he played two really good points, and all of a sudden I'm behind the eight ball and I was playing catch-up.

Yeah, he just let loose.

Q. What is the impact of a five-setter at this point in the tournament?

ALEX de MINAUR: For Andrey?

Q. For you.

ALEX de MINAUR: For me? Well, I'm out of the tournament, so there's no real impact. Ultimately it doesn't matter if I can't move tomorrow, I've got nothing to get ready for.

Q. Did you feel the pressure tonight moving through the fourth into the fifth?

ALEX de MINAUR: No. As I said before, I think the match was basically changed when he started to get a little bit more fatigued and he started to realize that he probably had to go after it a little bit more, and adopted a more aggressive game style. He executed that and I wasn't able to expose his movement.

Nothing about pressure. Nothing about expectation. None of that. Just he played too good in the moments. It's going to (indiscernible), but it is what it is.



Q. Very tough to find positives right now. Those second and third sets where you were able to aggressively take it to him, hit as many winners as he was, you talked about that's what you have to do against the best players to beat them, is that something you can take forward now and show you can compete with these guys?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, I think night and day a different player. Maybe a couple years ago or even last year I would be sitting here, maybe even happy with the result, saying, I probably shouldn't have won, he's higher ranked than I am, I took him to five sets, pretty decent effort.

But it's completely changed because now I'm sitting here and I'm absolutely devastated because I saw it as a great opportunity and a match that I strongly believed I could have won. But it just slipped away.

Q. Have you spoken to Lleyton after the match? He's someone that faced a lot of big hitters in his career. Maybe was limited by that. Do you have any thoughts about what you can work with Lleyton on?

ALEX de MINAUR: Well, I think I dealt with it pretty good until a certain stage. Realistically, again, I think what let me down was my serve, the inability to get that my service games because, again, I had more break points than he did, had more chances than he did, but I just wasn't able to execute those chances and he was, right?

I think there lies the difference in this match. My serve was something that has been really good to me this whole Australian summer, and today kind of disappeared. It's a little bit disappointing.

Yeah, it is what it is. I mean, life goes on. I know the areas I've got to work on. Again, like I've done my whole career, I'll get better, I'll improve, and hopefully next time I'll be able to take it to the next level.

Q. You said you know which areas you need to improve on. What are the gears you're going to try to go through to get to that next level?

ALEX de MINAUR: Look, I mean, I know it's a little bit disappointing that I'm sitting here after a loss in the fourth round. I do think I've made a lot of steps in the right direction.

I think my level is quite there. Against top-10 opponents this year, I'm 3-1. It's not the worst of things. I was very close today. I'm doing the right things.

Yeah, the serve just needs to help me out a little bit more in those stages, in these types of matches. Yeah, that's probably it.

Q. How are you going to look back at your summer?

ALEX de MINAUR: Not really sure, to be honest. Perspective changes with results, right? All of a sudden expectation and what you believe you should be achieving also changes. Maybe in the past I would have been somewhat content with a fourth round, but I thought I had more in me.

It is a bit disappointing. In due time I'll take the three top-10 wins at United Cup, I'll take it as confidence. Even this match, I'm playing some great tennis. It's the start of the year. Importantly, if I can keep this level throughout the whole year, quite confident that I'll be able to finish where I want to.

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