

Australian Open

Friday, 26 January 2024

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Andy Lapthorne

David Wagner

Press Conference



LAPTHORNE-WAGNER/Ramphadi-Sasson

6-4, 3-6, 10-2

THE MODERATOR: Just want to say congratulations. Obviously it's always tense, match tiebreak. Just tell us the relief at the end of getting through that.

DAVID WAGNER: Thank you. No, the tiebreak was great. I mean, look, they're an extremely strong team. We knew that going in.

You know, we didn't really want to go to a tiebreak, but if it goes there, it goes there. Andy just stepped up and basically went God mode and locked down and didn't miss. I just had to be patient, and my role is to look to finish when Andy sets it up. I've always had a setup partner, and I don't do it by myself. Without a setup partner I can't do it.

Yeah, just not missing in the tiebreak and just saying, you know what? I'm here, I'm a backboard. When Wags gets a chance, I'll take a shot at it. Take my looks when I can. I mean, seems to have paid off.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. This is your fifth AO title together, and it spans 10 years now, which is really cool. I guess when you were in that match tiebreak is there a confidence that, you know, we've done this a lot before, we've got a really good history here, we combine well? Does that ever come into your mind?

ANDY LAPTHORNE: Yeah, 100%. We're playing a guy out there today that was in his first Grand Slam final. I was well aware of that, and knew that if I could just use all my experience, use all my championships, go back on that and lean on that experience, that would probably be enough and would pay off. I played probably one of the best 10, 15 minutes of tennis that I've ever played at a Grand Slam in terms of just not missing a ball and feeling really confident on every ball under the amount of pressure.

DAVID WAGNER: Minus the time you kicked the ass of

Dylan Alcott in a final, hole in one.

ANDY LAPTHORNE: To be fair.

DAVID WAGNER: That was an ass kicking. Will always give him credit for that one. He didn't play as good as that but second best.

ANDY LAPTHORNE: It was up there. It was up there with that.

Yeah, I think just using the experience of knowing that we've done it before. Had lots of notifications about it being ten years since the first one here together. That just gives you confidence.

DAVID WAGNER: He even had hair back then.

ANDY LAPTHORNE: I had a lot of hair back then but none now. We are where we are.

We're just really happy to be in this position and still winning titles and playing well as a team and getting the job done.

Q. Do you have anything like to do another ten years or aim for that? Do you ever discuss about what long-term goals are given where you are at this point in your careers?

ANDY LAPTHORNE: We said it on the court there, until we stop being given things like that we will keep going.

I think now for us the challenge is to back it up. That's the hardest thing to do, and that's what we now need to try and do. It's difficult because obviously we don't live in the same country, we don't get time to train together very much, but we'll be looking to back it up.

Look, we're not stopping until someone stops us. Hopefully as long as possible.

DAVID WAGNER: Then it's viva la Mexico.

Q. In terms of you have been coming to the Australian Open for long, but the two teams that won women's and men's doubles earlier both commented on the growth of the tournament. You played your final on Margaret Court Arena. I'm not sure where



you played your first one in 2014. Again, obviously the place has changed and all of that. Reflecting on your time here, what do you think about the progression of the tournament? And the tournament expanded as well.

DAVID WAGNER: Yeah, I can speak to being here from day one in 2008 for the quads initially for us. And I believe that year we were a huge draw of, like, 24 players. We played the first two rounds at Albert Reserve and then the quarterfinals moved over here to Melbourne Park.

So it's really cool to see. We took a few steps back by being a smaller draw like 8 for the men and women and 4 for us from a 24 draw initially, but then slowly getting that increased to eight, eight, eight. Now 16, 16, 16, right? That progression is so huge in the sport of wheelchair tennis. You know, to see that all three divisions are equal is huge.

There is no discrimination between one, two, or three division, men, women, quads. We're all the same, treated the same and equal to the same.

Now we're just working on all the other Grand Slams to follow suit. We're still thankful to be in all Grand Slams. Wimbledon is next to get to 16 quads, and we're going to keep pushing for that and make that happen.

Roland Garros, you know, we're gonna push on there, and US Open already did it. You know, we led the way at the US Open, and it's cool to just see the progression and the way the sport has evolved. The way it's been embraced here in Australia, especially, for the love of the sport, you know, and not just the typical Aussie way of let's just support our own people, but they get behind it and support the whole movement as a whole of wheelchair tennis.

It's awesome and it's really cool to be part of that, just a small part of that. Keep pushing the boundaries and keep pushing the increases in exposure and draw size and all of that.

I don't know if that answers your question or not.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports