

Laver Cup

Friday, 24 September 2021

Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Matteo Berrettini

Bjorn Borg

Press Conference

M. BERRETTINI/F. Auger-Aliassime

6-7, 7-5, 10-8

Team Europe - 2

Team World - 0

THE MODERATOR: Longest match in Laver Cup history. Just how did you pull that one off?

MATTEO BERRETTINI: It's a tough battle against a good friend. Great atmosphere. I really enjoyed every minute out there. I think it was special, no? The best way to start like such a special competition with Bjorn on my side, so it's just great, you know. I really enjoyed.

I'm really happy that at the end I got the win. Could have done, could be either ways, but so happy that I brought the point for Team Europe.

THE MODERATOR: Bjorn, you have been a part of many great matches in the Laver Cup over the last three years. Where does that one rank?

CAPTAIN BJORN BORG: It's ranked in the top definitely. It was a long match and good tennis. They both played good tennis, and Matteo to pull that one off was a great thing.

They both were fighting and both wanted to win. It was a great match. I mean, long match. You know, I enjoyed watching these guys play. Like I said before, you know, to be around these champions here, it's the future of tennis. To see them play and to coach them, and to be on the court with them, that's a great thing.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Obviously you had your work cut out tonight. He's a good friend of yours. Just talk a little bit about what makes him such a tough competitor? What does he do on the court that is so tough?

MATTEO BERRETTINI: I think, I mean, he play overall like pretty well. Not just today but in the season he's playing really solid, but at the same time, aggressive.



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He's serving well, moving really, really well, returning a lot. I mean, it's just, you know, he has everything. He's showing everybody that he can play at this level.

He's so young. I think so many times we forget how young he is. He's been playing on tour really since three, four years. It's unbelievable and such a good guy.

We practice together a lot. We actually spent time a little bit in the gym after the match, and we were saying how we improve every time we play together. This is how you improve. Novak was saying after the finals in Wimby, no, when you play against the best guys, you just have to improve every time. That's what we are doing. I'm happy that he had like this great experience with me today.

Q. Bjorn, we know how cool you are on the exterior. How tough is it to sit through a match like that where it could have gone either way? How do you keep those nerves?

CAPTAIN BJORN BORG: Well, it's a pressure for everyone. I mean, even for the players who are competing, they feel the pressure. I mean, I'm nervous sitting on the bench because you want these guys to win so badly.

It's the same with the other team, too. They feel the pressure. They are nervous. I know John is nervous too, because he wants his team and players to win the matches.

But at the same time, as I said before, I enjoy watching the guys. So it's nice to see them play, especially a match like this they played today. It was unbelievable, great tennis, a lot of great points. That's what I like to see. That's what the spectators like to see. It was a perfect match to watch.

Q. Bjorn, quite a lot of pressure on Casper the opening match and Matteo who turned his match around. How impressed are you with their performances today?

CAPTAIN BJORN BORG: I'm very impressed. Both Matteo and Casper played really good tennis, played very steady. They won two tough matches.

But it's a long way to go. This is the first day, the first two matches. But I'm very proud of them. I mean, you cannot ask for a better start in Laver Cup, and we got the perfect start. Like I said, there is a long way to go.

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Q. Bjorn, how would you characterize your coaching style? I see Johnny Mac over there and he's kind of in his players' ears a little more. You kind of hold back and are a little more reserved. Talk about your style versus his.

CAPTAIN BJORN BORG: I think you compare me and John, we're different. I mean, he likes to talk a lot. I mean, I'm a little bit different. I don't say too many things.

I think it's important, I mean, these guys, they pretty much know what to do on the court and how they should play, because they have been playing against these guys for so many times. They know what to do, basically.

But for me to, I think to give them energy, you know, to motivate them. Even if, for Matteo to pull that match off, I mean, he needed energy and motivation. You could see on the court how motivated he was, how badly he wanted to win.

And he won this match. I take my hat off for Matteo.

Q. Matteo, do you like the format of the matches of the Laver Cup? I mean with the third set of a super-tiebreak. Do you like it? Will you apply that format at the ATP Tour tournaments?

MATTEO BERRETTINI: I mean, I'm glad today there was, otherwise I would still be there (smiling). I didn't expect, you know, like play indoors hard court and like last thing that I expected was like playing three hours, but happened and we adjust. We're tennis players, so we have to take what is happening in the day and try to work with it.

I'm not a huge fan of the third set. I think the third set, it has to be like it is on tour, but in these kind of competition, I think it's great. Like you feel the energy. I think that's always when you play a breaker that it's always something different, special. In these kind of competitions I think it's perfect, but I wouldn't change it on the ATP Tour.

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