

Laver Cup

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Berlin, Brandenburg, Germany

Team Europe

Alexander Zverev

Press Conference

T. FRITZ/A. Zverev

6-4, 7-5

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THE MODERATOR: Welcome, Alexander. We saw a hard fight with a tough ending. How would you describe your game against Taylor?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I thought he played amazing. Very different match to the US Open. I thought, I don't know, he has to speak for himself, but I have never seen him play like this. I thought this was the best match I have ever seen him play.

To be fair, I did the maximum I could today. So credit to him. He definitely won today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. You have lost to him three times in a row this year right now. What is it about his game right now that's giving you problems?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Well, Wimbledon I had a broken bone, so that was giving me problems. US Open I felt like I played terrible. And here it was an amazing match. He played really extraordinary.

I served I think 75% first serves and only won 60% of those points. I think that doesn't happen very often for me, so that's full credit to him.

Actually, from the baseline, also didn't feel like I played bad. I felt like I was hitting the ball quite good, actually. But felt like it was impossible to hit a winner. He was everywhere. It's very unusual for him. He's somebody that is a big hitter but maybe not the best mover.

Today, definitely it felt like I was playing, you know, Novak Djokovic from a few years ago (smiling). Absolutely nothing to say. He played better than me.



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Q. Are you content with your own performance? At times it seemed as if you were struggling, I don't know, with breathing or coughing or something?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Yeah, I mean, I was a bit sick this week, yeah. So I think my heart rate was quite high generally today.

Q. Carlos Alcaraz talked about it a little bit about the busy schedule. It's not a new topic in tennis, but I was wondering how much do you feel your body at this point of the year? And does it get worse from year to year that you feel your body earlier?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: No. I mean, so far not. Ask me again in about seven, eight years' time. Then I'll probably answer differently.

But we do have the longest season in sports. I mean, I have said it before. It's unnecessarily long. We have unnecessarily, you know, we have unnecessary amount of tournaments. I do believe that we don't need to play now from the 27th of December, when the United Cup starts, till the 19th or 20th of November where the World Tour Finals end, and plus if you play Davis Cup afterwards, it's even longer.

So there is no time to rest, but more importantly, the rest, there is no time to prepare your body. There is no time to build muscle. There is no time to just say I'm not going to touch my tennis racquet for a month and I'm only going to physically prepare for a long and very difficult season.

We don't have that time. We come back from holidays, and we start with tennis practice straightaway, because we just, in two or three weeks' time, we have to play in Australia.

So that just doesn't exist. It exists in other sports, and that's why I think injury prevention and longevity is maybe a bit better in the other sports, except if you're playing a schedule like Roger played in last few years of his career and Novak is doing right now where they're taking longer periods of time off.

But if you're an ambitious young person still who feels like hasn't achieved the things that they want to achieve yet in their career, that's not an option. You know, the tour goes on without you. That's not really an option.

So I do feel like we need to do something about it. I do think that -- I mean, I'm on the player council, so I do think the ATP is working towards that. It's not an easy solution, but it's definitely a solution that needs to be

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Q. You had some very good results this year but also some tough losses. After the French Open, you said that you needed to take a look at every factor, including your team. Have you been able to draw any conclusions from that yet?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Well, I have a new physical trainer. Even though my other physical trainer is and was still very, very good, but he's taking a break from my team for different reasons. He's taking a break for health reasons. Hopefully he's going to be fine and healthy very soon again.

But I do feel like I lost the French Open final because I got tired, and that's something that I don't want to happen for next year.

Q. Here you're connected with most of the top players, if I return back to the topic. Are you talking between each other how to change season to be working for you? Because, to be honest, ATP cannot do it without the best tennis players, and I think...

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: No, the ATP doesn't care about our opinion. It's a money business.

Q. But you should stand up together.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: And then what? Boycott? We're not allowed to boycott. We get fined if we don't play tournaments.

So what do you think we should do? I'm asking you. Like, what do you think we should do?

Q. Definitely step together and boycott it.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Okay, and then what? Step together. Step together and --

Q. And definitely find a solution. Make less mandatory tournaments.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: But you're just saying things that we have no control over. It's not us who decides. We don't want mandatory tournaments.

Q. But...

THE MODERATOR: I think it's time to --

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: No, wait, wait, wait. This interests me now, because this is always the questions that journalists ask. They want us to find a solution, but you guys don't have a solution either.

Q. Believe me, the tour will stop at some point

without the best players. They will stop. Believe me. Also the journalists will try to ask why are not they playing?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: But if you want to become World No. 1 and if you want to win Grand Slams and if you want to be the best player in the world, you have to play them.

Q. Yeah, but if you're together you can make a better thing. The season, it suits everybody probably.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: No, it's not, because there is money involved. Tournament costs, a 250 costs a certain amount of money. 500 costs a certain amount of money. Masters 1000 events, a license costs a certain amount of money.

You cannot just take them away. You cannot just say, you know what, you don't have a tournament from now on. The ATP has to find money to pay back to those tournaments the license that they bought, which is millions and millions and millions of dollars.

So it's not as simple as, you know what, from next year we're going to decide Turin will be played after the US Open, and Paris Bercy and, I don't know, Antwerp and Stockholm and Chengdu and whatever is just not going to happen.

That's not how it works. They have license. They bought the tournaments. They bought the rights to play those tournaments.

So it's not just about, you know what, we're canceling your event. You have to pay them back. You have to find the money to pay them back.

Q. No problem, but make less mandatory tournaments.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: But how, again, it's a licensing thing. They have a license for the mandatory event. Paris Bercy has a license to be a mandatory event. Shanghai is a license to be a mandatory event.

That's all money that costs extra. You cannot just say, you know what, we have decided now we don't want mandatory events.

Q. Maybe not one year, but may five, six years?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: No, you have to buy it back.

THE MODERATOR: We gave you a bit of time. I think it's time to move on.

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