

Laver Cup

Sunday, 22 September 2024

Berlin, Brandenburg, Germany

Ben Shelton

Press Conference

B. SHELTON/D. Medvedev

6-7, 7-5, 10-7

Team Europe - 7

Team World - 11

THE MODERATOR: You started the day off with the doubles and then played an impressive and tight singles match. Who made the call for that order, and where do you find the energy to play like that?

BEN SHELTON: Yeah, I think playing for the team, I have a lot of energy. I really enjoy competing in this atmosphere. I didn't think that it was really an option to get tired or be tired out there.

Obviously the format is shorter than what we normally play on tour with two sets and a tiebreaker, so I think in this format you've got to put it all on the line, and it only takes a set and breaker to win a match.

So I think that I was upset after the first, because that lapse that I had at being up 6-4 in the breaker and not getting it done, although he played some great points, I think that kind of helped me hold on through the second set and be able to get it done in the end.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Was a little bit of the college feeling that had you choosing to play doubles and then singles? Because you did that a lot back then.

BEN SHELTON: Yeah, it's funny. We were talking in the locker room yesterday about who's going to do it. Fritz played singles night match last night, didn't really want to play the first singles.

Also, if it came down to it, we wanted him to be the closer, and I was, like, well, I know I'm playing late tonight, but I'm already going to be out there for the doubles, I'd rather not have to rewarm up and then go out there again, because I'm not sure if I can do that. But if I just stay out there, yeah, I'm used to it. I have been used to it for two years when I was in college. Yeah, you're dead on.



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Q. You played, as I remember, four times. What's your body status after these five times? Because you fell down a few times. You jump over the fence.

BEN SHELTON: That wasn't a jump. I just took a spill. Yeah, that one hurt. That one hurt, but I feel good.

It's a lot of matches in a short period of time, but obviously the climate isn't too difficult to play in out there compared to the U.S. swing that we have just had.

I think, you know, a lot of adrenaline out there, and the format is really, really fun. Maybe my body will be feeling it tomorrow or the next couple days when I'm flying to Asia, but right now I feel pretty good.

Q. Did you expect and the team as well that there would be a disqualification after Daniil threw his racquet outside the court?

BEN SHELTON: No, I don't think so. So when he threw it first, and I saw the way the lady that it was going at reacted, I thought it was, like, right at her head, but Mohamed told me that the video showed that it was like four meters away.

So, I mean, you know, I wouldn't condone throwing a racquet into the crowd. Obviously it was an accident. He was throwing it down into the court. Lucky, lucky that it didn't hit somebody. But, yeah, I definitely didn't think that after he explained it to me that he should have been defaulted, but yeah, kind of a weird situation.

I was a little bit out of sorts for, like, a couple of seconds after because I kind of looked up, and I just saw the racquet fly into the first row.

Q. I know you want to get out there quickly, as do we, but a quick question, what do you say to the challengers who say Laver Cup is an exhibition, there are no points, it's rigged, things that we have heard, I assume you have heard them, what do you say to those people?

BEN SHELTON: Yeah, one of my friends that actually was on my college team text me this morning, yeah, it's the Laver Cup, it's all rigged, huh? I was, like, I don't know. We're out here battling. If it's rigged, I haven't got the memo yet. They haven't given me the script.

No, I think you see Sascha dealing with some sickness yesterday and coming out to battle again today. He's always a guy who is really tough. But I think you see



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how hard Carlos and Casper came out and played in that doubles today. That was I thought an incredible performance. These guys are playing tough, you know.

I have never seen this many singles guys try 100% in doubles matches in my life, I don't think. So I think that's kind of a testament to what this means to us. We care a lot about the captains, especially being the last year. I think that everyone on Team World has played multiple times has created a great bond with John and Patrick, and we really don't want to let them down. We want to go out with a bang.

Me and Frances were kind of making a joke this morning in the locker room, like man, if we get this win this years, it's ride off into the sunset with Johnny Mac and Patrick. Yeah, I love this event, and I think that 99% of the time you're seeing really, really high level out there on the court.

Q. I have just been asking some the players if you could make one change to the Laver Cup rules or format, what would you like to see done differently in future years?

BEN SHELTON: Gosh, I love the format. For me, I wish there was -- I don't even know how you'd accomplish it, but say you have someone who is a great doubles player or someone you want to play multiple times in doubles or playing doubles on Day 2 and Day 3, you play the last match of the day on Saturday and then the first match of the day on Sunday. Tough night for me last night. I felt like I didn't really get to sleep until almost 3:00 a.m., and I was here at 10:30, trying to get myself up for a warmup.

Obviously we have six other guys that we could also play, so this is a little bit of a different situation. But I'd say that's one thing for me, playing on back-to-back days, even if you're not playing the night match and you're staying there to watch your teammates until midnight, which is very tiring also, not as tiring as playing, but very, very tiring, and then to go back to the hotel after that match is completed and try to get ready for first on the next day I think can be difficult.

But I love the format. There is not really any changes I would make.

Q. You just said that. Is it harder to be on the bench watching Frances, your great friend, or is it harder to be playing?

BEN SHELTON: I think it depends. It's easy right now because I put some points on the board for the team (smiling). But I think it's tough to sit on the bench all day if you have a match at the end of the day. If you have already played, you're kind of sitting on the bench, I think it's all right.

I think it depends on the situation, but with the team that we have or the teams that we usually have on Team World, you've got characters, right? Nick, Jack, Frances, me, okay, thanks, so it makes things entertaining being on the bench. It makes things fun.

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