

Laver Cup

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San Francisco, California, USA

Chase Center

Team Europe

Captain Yannick Noah

Vice Captain Tim Henman

Jakub Mensik

Alexander Zverev

Carlos Alcaraz

Holger Rune

Casper Ruud

Flavio Cobolli

Tomas Machac

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome to our media conference with Team Europe for the Laver Cup for 2025 here in San Francisco. I'll get things started with the questioning here today, and then we'll pass it over to the rest of you in the room.

To get things underway, Yannick, welcome. Lovely to have you here as the Captain. First question is, how is it going? You've been working great in team events before. Do you think you can manage all of these lot as you get set for the weekend?

CAPTAIN YANNICK NOAH: Well, it's been like the third day, and I'm not fired yet, so I'm very happy. So far, so good. I'm very honored to be here and spend some time with the boys, and hopefully we're going to be good this weekend.

THE MODERATOR: Looking forward to that.

CAPTAIN YANNICK NOAH: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Tomas, great to have you here as the alternate. How has your experience been so far? What part have you been able to play? Plenty of practice?

TOMAS MACHAC: Yeah, I'm so happy to be on the team. The guys are amazing, and I'm enjoying the moment here. It's a great opportunity for me to be here.



LAVÉR CUP

I was practicing quite okay. So we don't have the court so many hours, so I try to be on the court as much as possible. Yeah, happy to be here.

THE MODERATOR: Flavio, you were in Berlin. You were the alternate there. You've had the experience of being around the event before, but now being in it, what is that feeling like for you?

FLAVIO COBOLLI: I mean, last year I was like Tomas, alternate, but I really enjoyed this competition. It's a pleasure and honor to be here with these guys.

I'm pretty looking forward for the next days because we start, and yeah, I'm really happy to be here, and I hope we can do a great job.

THE MODERATOR: Jakub, great to have you in the team. It's not the first time you've been around a Laver Cup, though. The very first one in Prague, I believe you were sitting in the stands as a young teen watching. The experience from coming from being a teenager and then being here to part of the team, talk about that.

JAKUB MENSİK: Thank you. Obviously my first experience with the Laver Cup was back in 2017 when I was there with my family, you know. The first time that this event were played was in Prague, so I was there as a visitor, as a spectator. We were young.

Actually, at the time if someone will tell me that in a few years I will be part of the team and be helping the team to win the cup, of course, you know, in the time it was unbelievable. So, yeah, obviously I'm super happy, super happy to be part of the team.

Actually this event is so unique and so special. Being the part of the best players in the Europe, it's just a great feeling. Like the guys said, we will do our best. I'm looking forward to next days when we start play. Hopefully we will do our best as always and, yeah, try to win it.

THE MODERATOR: Fantastic. Tim, Vice Captain. You've been on the other side where I stand in broadcast and the media side. What's the transition like going back into the playing group? Has that been okay for you?

VICE CAPTAIN TIM HENMAN: Yeah, it's been absolutely fantastic. I couldn't have enjoyed myself more. I've been to, yeah, a couple of Laver Cups in the past, London being my first.

So now spent some time with these boys on the court.

... when all is said, we're done.®



It's been absolutely fantastic just to see their quality and also the camaraderie. They are individuals, and they are competitors for the vast majority of the year, but the way they've come together in the last couple of days, the way we've been looked after with the facilities and the hotel and the staff, it's absolutely first class all the way.

Likewise, looking forward to getting started.

THE MODERATOR: Perfect. Casper, firstly, congratulations on the announcement of the new family member coming along.

CASPER RUUD: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Have you thought about how that might be going to change everything for you as you start traveling the world with a young one?

CASPER RUUD: No, you know, honestly, I have not really, no (laughing). Yeah, let's just say I didn't play Wimbledon this year, and it was time to do something different. So we got something special coming this year, yeah. I have to say, yeah (laughing). Did some off-court work, and we're ready for next year, an exciting next year.

THE MODERATOR: So that's why you didn't turn up.

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, that's why I didn't go to Wimbledon. Everyone wondered.

THE MODERATOR: Just a tennis question as well about the event. You've been in the event before. You know what it's all about. Explain how important it is to you to play well here.

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, it's really fun. I'm excited to get started tomorrow for the team, and I have some experience doing that in the past. I look forward to doing it again, and hopefully get Team Europe off to a good start.

Fun with some new boys on the team. Three of them are rookies, as we maybe would say in Davis Cup terms, but we can bring it on here.

Carlos and Sascha and I will try to guide them and be there for them if they need it, but they're great players, and they'll do just fine I think on the team. Great to have this week around again. It's really fun for everyone.

THE MODERATOR: Holger, you're one of the rookies, so to speak. You were meant to be on the court in Vancouver, but didn't quite make it through injury. I know you've been excited about coming into it. You've watched it. What's it like to be here for the first time?

HOLGER RUNE: Yeah, very excited to be here. It's an

amazing event. To be around the team is really cool. All the guys are really nice. We have had some nice trainings and dinners and everything together.

So I feel very privileged to be here. It's a beautiful event. Tomorrow we get started, so hopefully we can do very well.

THE MODERATOR: Sascha, the highest points here at the event, '21, it's quite the record. You've had a long association with it. Now you are more of a team leader. Do you like being in that position?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I mean, it's great to be part of the team, but I think all the boys here and everybody knows how to play tennis, and nobody really needs a leader here. I think everybody is doing just fine on their own.

But, yeah, we talked about it last night at dinner. This event is very different, the intensity of it. The competition is just different towards other tournaments. So if anybody needs advice or needs anything to talk about, I'm always here for the boys. But, yeah, I think --

THE MODERATOR: You've got a big job ahead of you, Sascha.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I'm just happy to be here.

THE MODERATOR: Carlos, great to have you here after another Grand Slam title at the US Open. I guess a lot of people are interested how the break was and then getting back into serious tennis again.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: What? Say again.

THE MODERATOR: How was your break after winning the US Open?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: No, it was great (laughing). I think it was needed to have some days after the US Open before here. So I just tried to be in a good shape, you know, in that week before coming here. For me, it's just great.

So I have battery enough just to pull it off, good things here in the Laver Cup. Let's see how it's going to be these days.

THE MODERATOR: Fantastic. I'm going to open it up to the floor now.

Q. Carlos, you're here in the Bay Area in San Francisco. Are you meeting with any tech leaders, and have you had a chance to see the new Meta glasses that have screens? I'm wondering if you think they might be useful for tennis?

CAPTAIN YANNICK NOAH: What (laughing)?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Yeah, I didn't get it.

Q. You're in Silicon Valley, technology. Are you meeting with any tech leaders while you're here? What do you think of being in the Bay Area?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: No, I still didn't get it, the question. I don't know, to be honest. What is this? I understand the question, but I don't understand what --

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: He loves the Meta glasses. He loves the new technology. He's met with all the world leaders. He shook hands with them, and he's part of Apple from tomorrow onwards.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: I don't know. Should I know that, the Meta glasses? I mean, I'm going to be honest, I haven't tried that. So I don't know what it is, to be honest.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Just say, it's great, it's great.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: It's great thing, yeah, yeah.

Q. Carlos, can you describe -- with your Captain sitting right next to you, can you describe Yannick Noah, the relationship with him? For people who have never met him, never know about his legacy --

CAPTAIN YANNICK NOAH: Be nice.

Q. Yes, Carlos, you need to be nice. He's sitting right next to you. How would you describe Yannick Noah to people who have never met him?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: I'm sweating right now (smiling). No, it's great, the relationship. I mean, I don't know if I, could I say, going to be nice. No, Yannick.

CAPTAIN YANNICK NOAH: Be nice.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Be nice, okay (laughing). No, it's a great relationship so far. You know, the first time that I met him was last year in the Laver Cup. I had the chance to meet him not that much, but just a little bit. It was nice.

Then the days that I have been here, I think it's -- I mean, he has a great energy. He's funny as well. He's telling good histories of the court, which is great.

Then, you know, on court I think, as I said, it's great energy for me, and I think for the team it's great to have that good vibes, good energy before the practices, before the matches, which I think him and Tim, we have a really good team that they are going to guide us in the best way.

CAPTAIN YANNICK NOAH: Thank you. Appreciate you.

Q. Really this is for anybody and everybody. I'm wondering, as we come into the end part of the season and the majors are all over and everybody is kind of tired and a little bit worn out, we saw so many injuries at the US Open and retirements and missing some key players here. I'm wondering, is there anything that can be done to make the end of the season not so hard and to prevent injuries? Are you building your own schedules? Do you have the luxury of doing that, or is the tour set up so that you can't do that? Who wants to go first?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: I've said too much already.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: You want me to start?

JAKUB MENSIK: You're the leader of the team.

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I'm not the leader.

FLAVIO COBOLLI: It's my first year on the tour, so...

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I guess I've been on the tour the longest. It's an ongoing discussion. Nothing has changed over the last few months. I think we've all said it. It feels like we're playing more and more, and our schedule is more dense than ever.

I've personally always felt like tennis deserves a proper offseason. Tennis deserves a proper vacation after the season is done and a proper training time, which we don't really have.

You know, if we play in Davis Cup or -- I always take the example of Alex de Minaur. He played his last match in Davis Cup last year I think the 27th of November and played the first match at the United Cup the 27th of December. So you don't really have time to go for a two-week vacation and then to not play tennis, to build your body for the following season, and then to build the tennis base for the Australian Open.

So for me, it's just too dense, too much from start to finish, because we're starting the season with a Grand Slam, and we are finishing the season with the World Tour Finals. You can't really say I'm taking the first month of this season off, I'm taking the last month of the season off.

That's my opinion. I don't know how everybody else feels, but I would just wish for everybody, especially for the young guys here, who will be on tour for the next 15 years, that they're going to get proper rest time at the end of the year. That's my thought on it.

HOLGER RUNE: Totally agree.

FLAVIO COBOLLI: I agree.

CASPER RUUD: I agree (laughter). What does that mean?

Q. For the wily veteran, Sascha, I had a question for you. Since you've been around so many of these Laver Cups, I'm wondering if there's anything like a home court advantage, sort of like Davis Cup or anything like that? When you are playing the US Open, when you are playing an American, the crowd will really get on that. If so, is that a disadvantage for you guys playing here in San Francisco?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Yeah, I definitely think there's home court advantage in the Laver Cup. We felt it extremely last year when we played in Berlin. You know, we were down all the way until basically the last match, and the crowd really pushed us through some of those matches.

I really think that now after eight years, you know, Laver Cup is something that the crowd really enjoys, and they really not only cheer for their favorite player, but they cheer for wherever they're from.

So I definitely think that there's home court advantage. We understand that it's going to be for Team World this year, but we also understand that throughout the entire year, except if you are called Carlos Alcaraz, you don't have home court advantage anywhere. You know, when he plays, he's the fan favorite.

We have a great team. We have a great support within the team. I think we got to feed off that energy.

Q. This is a two-part question. Maybe the first part, maybe for Sascha and Yannick. The second part for you, Carlos. In our sport we see lots of great matches, but once in a while we get a match that just transcends the sport, is magical, so special. Of course, we had that in the French final this year. My first part of the question is, what do you think that match did for our sport? Then for you, Carlos, what did you feel when you were trying to save those two championship points and then when you scored that incredible comeback at Roland Garros?

CAPTAIN YANNICK NOAH: As you know, you know you've been there a long time, like three, four years ago, we thought as tennis fans that we thought after Roger, Rafa, and Djoko, after their time, it's going to be a long hole. What's going to happen?

Next thing you know here are these champions coming. You know, a lot of people -- I'm not such a great technician really, but I really believe in the energy that it

brings because they are such interesting and different characters out there and very popular for the tennis fan.

Of course, they're playing great tennis. Of course, I mean, we all know that, but it's also the personalities that people like, to see the difference of personality. Even within the team, what I really appreciate and I like is the fact that I can meet different guys that are so all different. Their journeys are different. They come from different countries. That's what makes the circuit attractive.

Right now you've seen a lot of Carlos with Jannik and Sascha and most of the guys here, but what's interesting is that they're so different. You've got to go see the show. You don't know what show you're going to really see. You don't know, you know, and the level of tennis is amazing. So that's what makes it interesting.

Q. Sascha, your thoughts?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: I don't think anybody saw much of me the last six months (laughing), but thank you. No, I mean, look, the French Open final, yes. I think it was a tennis match that in many ways we have never seen before just from the speed.

The way tennis has been played, yes, we've had great champions in the last 15 years and great matches with Rafa, Roger, Novak. There were some tennis matches there that will be remembered for the rest of our lives, but the way tennis has been played in this French Open final, that was something that we've never seen before. Not like good or bad. Just the style of tennis, in my opinion. It was great to see, great to watch.

Yeah, those two guys, Carlos and Jannik, right now they're ahead of everybody else. I think it's our job from everybody else to catch up and to be on that level and try to compete with them.

This year nobody could do it. Hopefully, in my own perspective, we can be or we will be able to do it more next year.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: For me, I remember obviously the feeling that I had in that match that I was playing great until that match balls down. I felt like it was about the tennis, that it is that score.

You know, what I can say, I believed all the time that I was able to come back, that I was able to win that match, and I think that that's the most important thing for my perspective just to believe all the time, not to give up, just to keep trying. All the things that you think it might be the good things in the match.

Yeah, I thought in that match balls down that I was going to win that match, and I think that that was the best thing that I could think in that moment. A part of that I tried to

use the people, the good shots, the good points, the good rallies to my favor just to try to push me up in that moment.

You know, after that everything went great. Physically it was really demanding, but I stayed there all the time until a really tight final of five sets. As I said, again, I think it was all about to believe.

CAPTAIN YANNICK NOAH: That was probably the greatest match of all time. Yes, it was good for tennis, for sure.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: I wouldn't say to, but thanks.

CAPTAIN YANNICK NOAH: No, it was. You were not born, but there were some good matches (laughter), but this has to be probably one of the greatest match of all time and definitely a finals with quality of tennis and drama. Right, Tim?

VICE CAPTAIN TIM HENMAN: I agree, yeah.

Q. Sascha, you've been a part of so many of these teams now. I suppose each one sort of develops its own identity. I wonder when you look at this particular group, how would you characterize this team?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: Well, I mean, first of all, every single team member and every single player on this team knows how to win big tournaments and big titles and big matches. For me sitting on the bench while watching these guys is sometimes very, very comfortable. I have full trust in every single player.

You know, there have been very different kind of teams. You know, the first year I remember when the Laver Cup happened, being part of a team with Roger and Rafa, somebody that I grew up watching all my life and idolizing them. It was also special. It was extremely special, but I believe that this team can beat anyone.

Q. Being from Brazil, I have to ask Flavio, you're scheduled to play Fonseca tomorrow. You have played him before. How have you seen his evolution, his moving up in the rankings, and what do you expect about tomorrow's match?

FLAVIO COBOLLI: I think everyone knows the potential of Joao. I think he's a great player, but we are here to try to beat him, and I hope for the health of the team and the bench. I will try to do my best. I will give my 100% tomorrow to try to beat him.

Q. Casper, Sascha was talking about the different level of intensity here, and I'm wondering how you would describe it, comparing it to other things. I want to give Sascha a break. He's been talking a lot.

I'm curious, you've been around a few of these different teams, so I'm sort of curious how you would describe the level of intensity here and how you approach it and what it's like to sit on the bench and be on the court.

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, it's a little extra pressure, because you feel like you're playing also for your teammates and your Captains. You want to give your best. I've been on winning side of matches here and losing side, and winning is a much better feeling, obviously.

I played ties where it's been blow-outs both ways. I have played ties when we were leading going into day three and lost, and last year we were down going into day three and won.

It's a really, really nice sort of feeling of relief if you get it done, both in your match but also the whole Laver Cup. So it's different kind of.

Yeah, nerves will get there definitely from tomorrow on. It will be a long weekend no matter what, and many of the matches go to third-set breaker and a match tiebreak. So it will come down to whoever performs the best at the most important points. That's where you like to show up and play good for your team.

But, yeah, you feel the pressure a little extra here.

Q. Carlos, as people have mentioned, there was the thought that there would be this big void when the Big Three's time was finished, and you have kind of stepped in and filled that. I'm wondering, how much responsibility do you feel to uphold that legacy? Those guys were not only great players, but great ambassadors for the game. Does that put a little extra pressure on you?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Not really. I don't think about being the best ambassador for tennis and have the pressure to do it. I mean, I think we all, tennis player in general, are ambassadors of tennis, just to do great the tennis and get the people to watch tennis.

Obviously, I try my best in every match. I like and I love playing tennis. That's why I just play with such good joy and that smile, and I like playing great shots, great points, and try to show that in the matches.

I think those points, those shots, those matches gets the people to watch tennis, because it's something, I would say, different. It's not something that I do it because I have to engage the people. It's because I just love doing those things.

I don't feel the pressure at all. I'm thinking about myself, about enjoy as much as I can every time that I step on

the court, that I go to the tournaments. You know, I love when I see the people enjoy watching tennis. For me that's the most important feeling. That's all I try to do.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much, everybody. Good luck to Team Europe over the coming days.

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