

# Laver Cup

Saturday, 20 September 2025

San Francisco, California, USA

Chase Center

## Team World

## Vice Captain Patrick Rafter

## Joao Fonseca

### Press Conference

J. FONSECA/F. Cobolli

6-4, 6-3

Team Europe - 2

Team World - 1

THE MODERATOR: Joao, great battle out there. First points on the board for Team World. Talk us through the match.

JOAO FONSECA: I mean, it was a great match since the beginning. I was playing good tennis, good level.

I started a little bit more nervous, and then after, I mean, missing some easy balls, and after a think with my team and a little shout with Agassi and the team helped me keep positive and find a way to break him again and keep playing good.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Just talk about what the environment was like. Obviously you said you had some nerves, which is understandable, but just to be out there in that environment, is it everything sort of you hoped for, and how did it feel?**

JOAO FONSECA: I mean, it's crazy. It's literally a show. You know, it's a great vibe. Being with the team, it's unbelievable. Tennis is an individual game, and being there with our team off court and on court, it's just unbelievable experience. So, yeah, putting the vibe with them.

Then I said to Alex and Fran, like, You can talk to me, help me, you know. Let me keep positive. If you guys want to sing something on the game, just tell me. It's going to help.

Then they have been great friends. Both of them speak Spanish. Yeah, we are talking good. So, yeah, I want to



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thank a lot to them.

Yeah, feeling good.

**Q. With Team World down 2-Love going into that match, did you feel a lot of pressure to get a point for Team World? What were some of the things that Agassi was telling you through the match, because he looked very -- he went through a lot of emotions. He was very happy at the end.**

JOAO FONSECA: I mean, I think pressure is not the word. I mean, I knew it was going to be a difficult match, and I knew how important it was.

I saw after one, I saw the team on the locker room a little bit more, like, sitting down. Then I started jumping, like, Come on, guys, it's just 2-Love. We have one match. I could win, and it's 2-1. We can beat these guys in doubles, and it's tie.

So, yeah, I knew how important it was, and happy the way that I managed to keep positive, keep good mentally during the match. Yeah, I think Andre helped me a lot to understand a little bit of some things, like putting pressure on the returns and letting him feel -- I like to play aggressive, so letting him feel this, going more to the net and approaching more, let him, like, suffocate, you know. We say in tennis, like, you let him not breathing, you know. Just don't let him space.

So, yeah, it was good mentality day.

**Q. I have a question for Pat. You've been together for a few days. I would like to know your impressions about Joao and what do you think catch your eye?**

JOAO FONSECA: You can say the bad things.

VICE CAPTAIN PATRICK RAFTER: I will say the bad things.

**Q. Both in tennis and in terms of his game and personality as well, if you can.**

VICE CAPTAIN PATRICK RAFTER: The words that come to mind, incredibly mature. A very good tennis brain. He's calm. He's open to suggestions. He's open to learning. He's quick to respond. He's quick to learn.

I see that side of him as such a mature part of the game that you can see what he'll need to take forward. So in a year's time, he'll be a great player. In two year's time, I

. . . when all is said, we're done.®



think he'll be exceptional, because he has the ability to learn. He wants to keep improving his game.

We just saw what he can do out there, but he's not there yet. You know, what I saw today was maturity. I saw him practice through this week, and I went -- because I wanted to know his game a little bit better and what he was focusing on. It's serve and keeps the pressure on the next shot. Like be super aggressive. Return, hit the next one really firmly. He did that for four days.

Today I was thinking, I hope he controls it. He just went out and played such a mature match. Cobolli threw everything at him. He moved very well. He made him play a lot of balls, and he withstood that for the whole two sets, and then he confused Cobolli. He just turned the match on him.

That's a sign of how powerful his game is and where it can go. He's got to adapt to different surfaces, different speeds, different balls, and not everything will suit him throughout his next couple of years, but he will learn. I have no problem with his ability to take all that information on. Just his career path, to me I only see really good things.

**Q. Joao, can you maybe pinpoint a conversation, a moment, whether it be Andre, Pat, your contemporary players, that struck you more than anything this week that maybe something that hadn't entered into your mind as a player in this environment?**

JOAO FONSECA: First of all, thanks (smiling).

Yeah, I think the crazy thing about this tournament is that you open your, like -- normally tennis you just open with your team, and now during the match, like I was talking to all of the guys, and they were talking their weakness. It's different, because on the tennis world we are, like, opponents, and then now we are teams, teammates.

They keep, like, putting their weakness, like -- I don't know. They're going to serve on my forehand, and I don't know. Sometimes I think about my forehand. I don't know. Something about what they are saying, it's different. This environment is super good, because they trust you on helping, and I trust them on helping.

It's crazy how we need to change in one week. So, yeah, having this experience from that players and even Pat and Andre, it's super cool. Them talking, them telling experience, telling stories. I'm the youngest one, so I'm just listening. I'm not talking.

So, yeah, I'm just observing everything that I can to put in work. So, yeah, those guys telling stories, telling their weakness, telling what they did good, what they did wrong. So, yeah, I'm just trying to figure out what is

going to be my path and take any experience from those guys.

VICE CAPTAIN PATRICK RAFTER: You've only got a few days with these guys, so we can't give them too much information. It's going to blow their brain.

Andre is a massive thinker, and I can overthink things as well, but we've got to be careful. Our job is to dumb it down. Well, not dumb it down, but one or two little things here and there that hopefully they can take away and help with their career later on. It may or may not stick with them. It may not gel with them. It may not be right for them, and they'll sort that out, and they'll work it out, and they'll take on what is right and what is wrong.

JOAO FONSECA: Andre is always thinking. You know, after the first match was, like, sitting on the bench, like he's doing some talking with himself and thinking.

I mean, because I know how difficult it is. You're coaching for one week a player that you don't actually know. You can tell something that is not good for him, and you can tell something that is unbelievable good.

So, I mean, you need to be careful sometimes. That's a good personality of Andre that he always thinking if that's a good opportunity to talk or no. If the guy is a little bit more shy, should I talk less or more?

Yeah, I want to thank for Pat and him for understanding that. It's not only me, but all the players.

**Q. Pat, this is your first day of Laver Cup actually out there as opposed to all the lead-up events. Can you talk about the experience for you and how you feel out there? Was it what you were expecting?**

VICE CAPTAIN PATRICK RAFTER: Well, the first four days it's quite intense in terms of all the on-court stuff, but dealing with personalities, getting to know them, seeing if you are comfortable with them, see if they're comfortable with you. You're dealing with a lot more emotional side of things.

Then managing how much you can tell the guys and then a lot of media. There's a lot of that, so it's quite draining. I just couldn't wait to see what happened when we got out on the court and just watching these guys. And then just the experience.

It's a great buy-in. These guys, they're into it. Andre and I are so into it. I didn't think I would be into it, to be honest. I came here really open-minded thinking, what is this event really all about? I'm sold. It's awesome.

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