

National Bank Open

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Alex de Minaur

Press Conference



A. DE MINAUR/D. Medvedev

7-6, 7-5

ALEX DE MINAUR

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Congratulations. Through to your first ever Masters 1000 semifinal. What are you most proud of with your performance today against Daniil?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Look, I'm probably most proud of my mental state. You know, throughout the whole match, I thought I was very level-headed and at no point in that match did I feel frazzled at all.

I knew my game plan. I stuck to it. I stayed positive. And I knew that any small chances I was going to get I was going to have to take them and try to be aggressive and, you know, it worked out. So extremely happy with that.

Q. Let's talk about staying calm. You were down 2-5 in the first set, 2-5 in the breaker, three set points, down a break twice in the second set. How do you stay calm and what do you tell yourself in that moment?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Look, I just tell myself that I'm going to fight till the end, until the last point, no matter what the score is.

And I think that's a big virtue. I learned it from a young age to always compete no matter what the score is. And, you know, it gets to the point where the opponents know that as well. They know that, and they're going to have to beat me. I'm not going to give up at any stage.

Yeah, just at those stages, I managed to put the ball in the court, play a couple good points. And then, all of a sudden, I got my chance and was able to turn that around.

So it's often how tennis goes. It's huge momentum swings. So you always got to stay in the present.

Q. I asked Daniil yesterday what challenges your game would present for him and he observed that you've been a consistent top 20 presence for quite some time now and there's not much that separates that from the top 10. Do you feel with wins like this one today that you're betting closer to that top 10 and what would that mean for you?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Yeah, 100%. That's been the goal for me for, yeah, a couple years. It's no secret that, you know, I haven't really been content where I am, and I'm always trying to find my way to push more.

I've always felt that I've got the level to break into that top 10. But it probably wasn't until end of last year where I was able to get my first win against a top 5, which was Daniil in Paris, that I really was able to have that breakthrough moment of really believing in myself.

And I think from that moment onwards, it's been a completely different -- it's been a change. I'm feeling a lot better. I've had a great year. I've wanted to do well in these tournaments, and it's great feeling to be in the semifinals here.

And, ultimately, I feel like that's what I've been lacking to break into the top 10; right? is going to deep in these bigger tournaments.

So it's a very good step in the right direction.

Q. My question is about Carlos Alcaraz. You could play actually against him here in Toronto. And the two times that you have played against him you have been really close to beat him. What are the keys with Carlos Alcaraz that you can say? Thank you.

ALEX DE MINAUR: Well, yeah, I got quite close the first time we played. The second time I had chances.

Obviously, Carlos is extremely talented, and he's got immense fire power.

I think, in a way, whenever I play him, it brings out my best tennis because I know I've got to take it to him and not give him too many chances to be able to dictate and push you



around the court.

But saying that, I'm miles away from that. I've got another Spaniard tomorrow, so there's my whole focus right now.

Q. Just to ask you about that Spaniard, Alejandro Davidovich Fokina, obviously, a huge opportunity for both of you to reach your first Masters 1000 final. What are you expecting from that match and what challenges does he pose?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Well, look, as you said, it's a huge opportunity, but I think we've both shown that we kind of deserve to be here by the opponents we've beaten. So it shows that we're both playing some great tennis. We're both playing some confident tennis.

I've known Alejandro for -- from almost day dot. We've played immense amount of junior matches, and we've been able to grow up together. So it's going to be a very fun match. I'm looking forward to it.

And, yeah, get ready for his fire power. He's got great hands as well. So it should be a great match.

Q. You talked about this theme in your career of never giving up, but you also seem to convince your opponents that no lead is ever safe. Is there anything that you think you do particularly well to make your opponents feel like, you know, you're never out of this?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Well, I think it's not really about what happened this week. You know, it's about the presence that I show since the day I got on tour; right?

You know, I might not have a lot of respect, you know, but one thing that I'm comfortable that a lot of the players will know is that I get the absolute most out of myself; right? You know, from day dot, I'm always going to try to get better. Always working, always trying to improve. And my career has shown that. It's been step by step.

And, you know, every single training session we have; right? every time I step out on court with them, they know that I'm going full intensity from the first point, and I'm fighting till the end. And not giving up on any practice, on any match, or anything.

And that kind of creates an aura, a presence, that, you know, at times it does help. Because, you know, there are, obviously, going to be times that I'm down, and then I play some unbelievable tennis to get myself back into the match.

But if you create that aura, as well, other people are going to start thinking about that. And then, all of a sudden, if you just stay solid, they start to overthink a little bit and you might get a couple of cheap errors here and there, and it works to your favor as well.

So I think it's not something that happens overnight. It's something that I put a lot of work in, and, you know, it's good to see it pay off this week at least.

Q. You're known in particular for your foot speed and court coverage. Are those things that you had as big skills from a young age, and is that still something that you work on to even improve further, or is that a box that you check off knowing, I got that one; I'll work on other parts of my game?

ALEX DE MINAUR: As a junior, I was, yeah, lanky. I had big clown feet and I could not move. I was like -- I was just lanky. Wasn't strong at all.

I struggled with my footwork. And it just became hours and hours of just footwork drills just to get all the technique right. You know, get used to moving my feet in a certain way.

And eventually what happened is I started to grow into my body; right? And then, from there, I was really able to exploit that. But no, it's not -- it still gets a lot of work.

I know that I'm never going to be able to stay comfortable where I am. I'm always going to have to work my tail off, not only on the court, but off the court with fitness.

And everything I do is just to get the best out of me and try to keep improving as well.

Q. My question is about the balls. How did you find the balls today?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Well, the first couple days I've been here, I really struggled to feel the ball on the string. I felt like they were flying, and they were very, very quick. Completely different conditions to Los Cabos. So it was, yeah, it was hard to control.

I think it's the ball that, actually, in Los Cabos they were getting quite big. But here they seem to get quite small and, when they are getting older, they start flying even more. I feel like the court speed is quite quick as well.

But I've been able to, you know, ultimately stay in the tournament long enough that I've been able to feel a lot better.

And for me, today was by far my best match. And I felt really confident with the ball on the strings and being able to be aggressive.

So, yeah, it was night and day from day one to today.

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