

National Bank Open

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Alex de Minaur

Press Conference



A. DE MINAUR/A. Davidovich Fokina

6-1, 6-3

ALEX DE MINAUR

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What does being in a final of the Masters 1000 mean to you?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Well, it feels great. It feels like, you know, all the hard work, all the hours on the court, off the court, they're paying off. It's good to see those results.

Because a lot of times you put in all this effort and hard work and the results just don't come; right? So it's always a huge boost of confidence when you're able to go on these deep runs.

But, you know, I get to play a final tomorrow. And, you know, the job is not done. Keep on going.

Q. Congrats on the win. You've talked a lot about kind of this uphill battle you've had over your career, never giving up, kind of always being the smaller guy, having to work hard. But I'm wondering is there a kind of opponent that you maybe have an easier time or a kind of opponent who has a more difficult time playing against you, the kind of opponent that you prefer to play?

ALEX DE MINAUR: That's a good question. I mean, ultimately, it kind of depends; right? Because a lot in tennis is matchups; right? And different matchups suit me. Some matchups, obviously, haven't suited me in the past as well.

I think, you know, ideally, I match up well against the bigger guys; right? The stronger guys.

But saying that, that means I've got to also, from my side of the court, I've got to play the right way. And that's trying to be aggressive, trying to make them play that extra ball and

make it as tough as I can for them.

And there's sometimes, you know, where I play maybe a smaller guy and we end up having, you know, a three-hour battle. So it just kind of depends on the day.

But what I'm most proud of is kind of the versatility that I've got to kind of, you know, have a couple different game plans ready for every match.

Q. Congratulations on your win today. You broke Davidovich Fokina's serve seven times this afternoon. Did you have a specific game plan on return and what allowed you to have that type of success today?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Look, I think a match like today, you can't really take too much out of it because of the conditions. The conditions were very, very tough for both of us, so it didn't allow for ideal tennis, perfect tennis. And I knew that from the first moment I stepped out on court that it wasn't going to be pretty.

So I just kind of just told myself that no matter what, I was going to compete every point, stay positive, and not get frustrated by how the match may go, and I'm just going to give myself the best chance of staying tough mentally. And I think that's probably what got me the win today.

It wasn't about how I played tactically or, you know, what I was able to do on the court. I think it was just mentally was the most important thing.

Q. Aside from what's clicking on the court for you, is there anything off court that's helping propel you to this result as far as your mindset when you step on the court, a certain pregame meal, a lucky driver? Tsitsipas once said he drew power for the CN Tower here in town. Anything like that?

ALEX DE MINAUR: You know what? The last couple weeks, I've -- in Los Cabos, due to the late matches, I got into this routine of having a little nap midafternoon. Nap, siesta, call it whatever you want.

And actually, here I've been kind of getting into the same routine. They have a beautiful, quiet room downstairs with a couple of beds. And I tell you what, I've been making

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use of that every day before my match.

Q. It's been quite the 24 hours for Australian sports. You making the final here, the Matildas advance in the women's World Cup. I'm curious if you saw any of the highlights of that. And what the impact of the women's national team is having right now in Australia.

ALEX DE MINAUR: It's amazing. It's huge, especially playing at home and the amount of crowd support they're being able to bring to these matches and just the excitement.

Look, they got the deciding penalty. I think it was yesterday? Yeah. And now they're in the semifinals of the World Cup, and I believe they play England; right?

So I've got something to kind of watch with Katie and, hopefully, the Matildas get the win as well.

Q. Speaking of the matchups that you were just talking about that suit you or don't suit you, what are your thoughts on tomorrow's final? Because I know you've beaten Tommy five times, but you've also lost to Jannik four times. So what challenges do they present to you, and what do you feel you need to do to get that first win or continue where you were already going with Tommy?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Well, look, I think, honestly, whoever wins tomorrow, you'll -- I mean tonight, you'll ask the same question, and they'll give the same answer: That tomorrow is a completely new day and anything can happen. And that's the world of sport and the world of tennis.

So, look, they're different players, of course. You know, Jannik is one of the better ball strikers on tour. You know, his ball speed is up there with definitely the highs from both sides. And he can definitely pound the ball.

Tommy has been playing great this week, beating the No. 1 in the world. So he's definitely bringing up his level. And he's very crafty as well. He's got a beautiful all-around game.

So, look, it's a final tomorrow. I'm going to bring the same mindset. I'm going to go out there and enjoy it and compete until the end.

Q. Congrats on the win. You have your mindset, your versatility. But what is the next step in your game to keep going up, to keep improving?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Well, I think it's what I've done this week, kind of going deep in the bigger tournaments. That's

always what has been lacking for me.

It's no secret I've been wanting to get to this stage for the last two, three years. You know, I've been top 20 in the world for maybe the last four years and kind of being stable. And, you know, there's a lot of merit in that, but, at the same time, I've been wanting to push for more.

And I think the step is basically just going on a run in a big tournament. That's the biggest difference. That's where you get all the points and where you're able to make the big jump. And then, all of a sudden, you start getting protected a little bit more with seedings and stuff at the bigger tournaments, and then everything starts to click.

So I think I'm in the right direction. And, yeah, hopefully this is the week.

Q. What has allowed you this week to go so deep and get to the weekend?

ALEX DE MINAUR: I think it's been a great mindset from day one. Yeah, it's -- I had a very quick turnaround from Los Cabos. So I got in at 1:00 a.m. Monday. I played doubles that day. And the following day, I had to start my singles on Tuesday.

And again, I just told myself that I was going to compete. And the first couple rounds, I didn't play my best tennis. Just things weren't clicking. I couldn't really feel the ball in the strings.

And I just told myself to keep going at it. If I kept on giving myself chances, that there's always a better chance that the next day I was going to play better tennis and find a better level, and that's what I've been doing.

So it's been great. Didn't start amazing this week, but I've been able to find a very high level throughout the later stages of the week.

Q. What would a Masters title mean to you?

ALEX DE MINAUR: It means -- yeah, it would be a huge milestone. I mean, this year, being able to get a 500 in Acapulco was big for me.

And also looking, you know, to prove a lot of the people wrong. That's probably the biggest thing for me. You know, I take a lot of pride in what I do. And, you know, a lot of people don't have a lot of belief in me, but I get a real sense of satisfaction proving people wrong.

Q. Second finals in two weeks in two different countries. Does it help mentally for your confidence or



is it a toll? Because physically it must have pretty tough to be in two finals in would weeks. How do you see that? Advantage or disadvantage?

ALEX DE MINAUR: Well, look, if I ever in my career complain about being in two finals in two weeks (laughing), then someone's got to have a serious look at me.

No, I think it's a big boost of confidence in bringing that consistency. That, for me, is the biggest thing. Week after week, showing good level. And, you know, not having one good week and maybe an early exit at the next tournament, which I've probably done a fair bit in my career.

So a step in the right direction, and we move on.

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