

Omnium Banque Nationale

Sunday, 11 August 2024

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Alexei Popyrin

Press Conference



A. POPYRIN/S. Korda

7-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: First of all, congrats, Alexei. After four top-20 wins, you are in your first Masters 1000 final. Earlier in the week you were joking about your motivation to win here is to get onto the private jet to Cincy, and now you're on it. How does it feel?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: It's funny because I've never been on a private jet before, so it will be a first for me. It was a topic of discussion just before the semifinals that, Oh, would we be able to make it or not, and I'm glad I did. But I'm just really happy to be playing in the final now.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. The first set, it's 5-5. He breaks, takes the lead 6-5. What goes through your mind at that particular moment that you were able to break back eventually?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Yeah, I think it's just the whole first set was topsy-turvy. There were breaks both ways, and I had a lot of break points in the first set also. I had a few set points the game before I got broken.

I just tried to stay calm. I let myself have, like, five seconds of anger, but then I tried to forget it, sat down, recomposed, and knew that I would get opportunities on his serve if I kept playing the way I was. I managed to find a way to do it.

Q. How would you describe the week and the run you're on right now? Is it the best times of your career?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Yeah, I would say so. It's probably the best week of my career so far. I think it's just the quality of opponents that I've beat I think is the reason why. Not just that I'm in the final of a Masters, but just the quality of opponents and the way I've been playing I think it's just showing that all my hard work is paying off.

Q. If I may go back to the first set, then you get to the

tiebreak, and you shut him out 7-Love. How do you describe what happened?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Once I got the break back at 6 for 6-All, that first point was really important. It was like that really long point where I think it was probably the best point of the match.

I felt like I had the momentum after that break in the tiebreak. I honestly didn't expect to win it 7-0, but I expected to at least have the momentum going into the tiebreak.

I played some really solid tennis from the tiebreak onwards. That kind of progressed into the second set also.

Q. If I can go back to your win against Hubi earlier today, at the end of the match you seemed to have a long conversation at the net. What was told, and is he one of your friends on the tour?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Yeah, definitely. He's one of the nicest guys on tour. He was just explaining to me what he was kind of talking to the ref about at I think it was 3-All deuce or something like that.

He wanted to kind of clear the air there. He just was saying that he was waiting for the court to dry, and I kind of said, The court was dry. But I think it's just a little bit of a miscommunication here and there. Then, honestly, it's nothing much.

Q. Yesterday you saved three match points against Dimitrov. You beat Shelton. You beat Korda. You were down in a lot of those matches as well. So how would you describe the mental toughness this week as well? It's a big part of your success, right?

ALEXEI POPYRIN: I think I pride myself on fighting. I pride myself on my fighting spirit. I never give up anywhere. So for me that's one of the biggest things in my game right now is my fighting spirit.

I felt pretty comfortable my first two rounds going against Grigor. I knew it wasn't going to be easy, but all the match points that I saved were on my serve. So I just knew that if I executed my serve really well, then it would be kind of a



plus for me in terms of saving those match points, which I kind of looked at at the time as just break points. I didn't think, like, if I lost this, it was going to end the match. So it helped me trick my brain.

Then against Hubi I was sitting a break down. I had opportunities on his serve also. So I was just trying to find another way, trying to find another opportunity that I could capitalize on, and I did that.

**Q. A couple of words about your next opponent?
What can you say about him?**

ALEXEI POPYRIN: Yeah, Andrey, I've played him this year in Monte Carlo. I won there, and then he beat me the last time we played on hard court.

So I know he's an unbelievable player. He's one of the best players in the world. So I know it's not going to be easy.

We had a fun little practice session before the week started. I think it was, like, two hours we were in the heat battling it out. I saw the way he was playing, and he is playing some unbelievable tennis. It's definitely not going to be easy out there.

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