

US OPEN

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New York, New York, USA

Carlos Alcaraz

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Carlos, welcome. Your thoughts as you get ready for this year's US Open.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Yeah, I think I'm ready. I'm practicing well. Obviously I'm super excited to play my first match here in US Open again.

So let's get it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. A little bit about Novak, your matchups with him are really turning into nice rivalries for this sport. When you look at him as a player, what are the things you take away most that you might model in your own approach?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, obviously he's one of the greatest of all time from our sport. No doubts about it. Everything he does in the game is unbelievable.

Probably his mental rock. I going to say he never give up. I mean, tough, tough moment, probably he shows that he's down and he's going to lose, and he's always give the chance to himself to keep playing and be able to win.

Probably that's the most important thing that he has, and I try to take in my own game. Like in the final that we played, it was exactly the same I'm talking about. That's something that I learn and I'll try to do in my own game.

Q. How would you describe how your life and your thinking are different today than they were one year ago?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, my life change a lot, a lot (smiling). Probably is different life, talking about the way that I'm more, let's say, famous. A lot of people is starting to know my name after the US Open last year, for example.

The personal life didn't change at all. I'm the same guy, normal guy. Obviously I feel that I'm more mature on court. I feel that I'm a better player than I was a year ago. Even I

got my first Grand Slam last year, but I feel like I'm more mature and I'm better.

Q. Your growing friendship with Jimmy Butler continues. Have you replaced Sascha as his favorite tennis player? What is your favorite thing to do in New York besides obviously winning a Grand Slam?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Sorry, the first question?

Q. Your growing friendship with Jimmy Butler, him being a Miami Heat fan, Sascha Zverev.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Yeah, I think, Sascha knows Jimmy a long time ago. I started to know him like one year ago, to have a close relationship that is pretty well.

He's a really huge fan of tennis, as well. He try to play. I think it's great for tennis, as well, to have Jimmy coming to a tournaments and supporting us. It's great.

Talking about me to have him supporting me, a great athlete, NBA star, so it's for me almost crazy to have a good relationship with someone like Jimmy.

I like to play golf here in New York, as well. It's a really huge city. So many things to do. So many places to visit. I'm just walk around the most famous places here in New York, great restaurants as well. I try to do a lot of things while I'm here in New York.

Q. Favorite restaurant?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: No favorite one. I like some of those.

Q. Juan Carlos Ferrero I don't think was with you in Canada, but he was in Cincinnati. Could you explain the difference you feel on court when he's not there versus when he was there, how helpful it is to have him there.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, obviously for me it's always great to have Juan Carlos with me. I understand that he cannot travel the full year. Even that he's traveling 90% of the tournaments, but sometimes he has to take care about his family, as well.



I have a really good coach when he's not there, that is Toni. He was Juan Carlos' coach when he was player. He become No. 1 of the world. He's really nice coach, as well.

I don't feel any difference if Juan Carlos is there or not. I know that I surrounded by great professional and great, great coaches when he's not there, as well.

Q. As the defending champ, in your mind is it a little bit more complicated, more challenging this year?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Probably, but I try not to think about that. This week, this practice week, I try to do exactly the same thing that I did last year, trying to practice the same way that I'm going to play, and focus on that. I'm not focus on the defending champion, the points, whatever. I'm just focus on show my best level, try to improve in every practice, and let's see how is going to be the tournament.

Q. When you're walking around cities like New York, do you enjoy the fact that people recognize you or...

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Sometimes I like it; sometimes no. Sometimes you want to feel like a normal guy, to walk normally. Here in New York, there are a lot of Spanish people, South American people as well. It's difficult for me to walk normally sometimes.

Yeah, I wish some days to be someone not recognized at all. But it's going to be impossible. I have to enjoy that part as well. But sometimes it makes difficult.

Q. Looks like you're wearing a Jordan shirt and Jordan hat. It sounds like you're a basketball fan. Are you a fan of his in particular? Would you pick him in the NBA G.O.A.T. debate?

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, I started to follow the NBA not too far ago. Obviously I hear a lot about basketball, about NBA. I didn't watch it so much.

Obviously I've watched a lot of videos. Everybody knows Michael, what he did to the game. He was something unbelievable. I huge fan of him, huge fan of his clothes as well, as you can see.

I'm not going to talk about the G.O.A.T. (smiling). Is not a doubt that he's one of those.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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