

cinch Championships

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Queens Club

Alex de Minaur

Press Conference



A. de MINAUR/H. Rune

6-3, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Well done, Alex. Was this your best match this week?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, I think it was definitely close with my first-round match. I think I played at a very high level. I knew I needed to.

Very happy that I was able to perform in a big stage. Looking forward to tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. You're the first Australian to reach the final here since Lleyton Hewitt in 2006. Were you aware of that? How does that make you feel?

ALEX de MINAUR: Well, he's played pretty decent here over the years (smiling). He's got a pretty good record. I think I'm a little bit, yeah, a little bit far away from that, but, you know, I would love to be able to put my name on the trophy tomorrow.

It's been a great week, and I have been enjoying myself. That's probably the reason why I have been able to bring such a good level this week. We'll go out there tomorrow, give it all I've got, and try to put my name on the trophy.

Q. Do you remember watching any of those finals with Lleyton Hewitt when you were about four, five, six years old?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, probably not those ones (smiling). I have watched other ones. But yeah, I have been fortunate enough to hit with him on the grass. Yeah, it was a nightmare, an absolute nightmare (smiling). This is way past his prime, so I can only imagine how he made his opponents feel whenever he stepped on a grass court.

But yeah, he's been a huge mentor and my Davis Cup captain, so he's been messaging me this week as well. You know, hopefully I can keep it going.

Q. As I remember, you grew up in Europe. Where have you learned to play this well on grass?

ALEX de MINAUR: Well, I was born in Australia. When I was five, moved to Spain for eight years. Probably one of my trips back to Australia, maybe around eight or nine, was the first time I played on grass.

I had my first tournament. It was like a little summer camp over there in Sydney in White City. And yeah, that was kind of the first tournament I won. So it was actually on grass (smiling).

But yeah, from that point onwards, I always told myself I was going to enjoy the surface and I was going to love it. Then spending a lot of time in Australia, I was able to play a fair bit on grass. It's always suited my game, so I have always enjoyed it.

Q. With the messages from Lleyton, is it positive, upbeat stuff, or does he get more technical in it? Is he just trying to give you that bit of will and confidence to win?

ALEX de MINAUR: No, I think he's just letting me know after every match, good job, well done, just positive, you know, just being there. Probably not as much technical stuff.

But yeah, he's definitely keeping track of every one of my matches. You know, it's going to be great. We'll have a bit of a dinner next week, which I'm looking forward to. It will be with the players and it will be fun.

Q. What do you like the most about playing on grass? Because so many players obviously talk about the movement and how difficult it is to move and the ball skids, et cetera. So first question is what do you really like about it? The second, when was the last time you hit with Hewitt on grass, do you remember?

ALEX de MINAUR: So what I like about this surface, I think I finally get a little bit of purchase of the court (smiling). I'm able to hit a little bit flatter and let the court do the work for me.

In a world where it seems everyone is hitting the ball



harder and harder, it's always nice to be able to kind of, you know, get rewarded for hitting a nice flatter shot out there.

You know, I think it makes me be aggressive as well. It makes me play the style of tennis that I think it's going to take me to the next level. The movement, I have always been comfortable moving on a grass court, so that always helps.

The last time I think I hit with Lleyton on grass was probably, yeah, probably at Wimbledon one or two, two or three years back. And, yeah, it was almost like playing Mannarino a little bit. The ball just did not bounce.

After I finished my hit with him, my back was very sore the next day, just bending down. That's probably the last time I hit with him.

Q. Alex, you're Australian No. 1. You've got Katie as British No. 1. Can you talk a little bit about how inspire each other, especially coming into a week like Wimbledon?

ALEX de MINAUR: I mean, to be honest, I was probably inspired by her last week. I mean, I think she put in a hell of a performance, all things considering. I mean, she's playing her home tournament. She's British No. 1 for the first time. She's nonstop playing more Brits, so there's always a lot of nerves and pressure.

She went out there, had a great week, made the final, and then the biggest match of her career, she played one of the best matches I've ever seen her. To be able to stand and deliver in that crucial point and win her first title, I was, like, yeah, I've got to watch what she's doing and learn myself.

I think I have tried to replicate that a little bit this week and just be nice and calm, have a positive mindset. You know, it definitely helps. I've got to get a couple more tips from Katie.

Q. She was here cheering you on yesterday. I didn't see her today. Was she there?

ALEX de MINAUR: No. She went to Eastbourne. She's playing Eastbourne next week, and she's getting ready for that. You know, it was amazing that she was able to come for a couple days though.

Q. Are you going to Eastbourne as well?

ALEX de MINAUR: I am, yeah.

Q. What happens in that week? That's the first chance you have had to get together, I guess, in preparation?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, so throughout this grass swing, she played Surbiton. First week I was there. I had a little bit of a training week, and I watched her play.

Then I went to 's-Hertogenbosch. She played Nottingham. This week she was in Birmingham. I was here. Eastbourne we normally have it, we're both playing that week. Then we've got Wimby together.

It's always good when we're both at the same tournament. You know, we just need a little bit of help not playing at the same time so we can support each other, for sure (smiling).

Q. Just a word on whoever you will play in the final, whether it's Seb or whether it's Carlos. Can you talk a little bit about both of their games? The only time you've played Carlos was a very tight match on clay. You might get the better of him on grass. Just wondering about that on that point.

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, I mean, the great thing about it is I'm playing a final of Queen's. I'm excited for that.

Now, on the opponents, I played Korda on the grass at Wimbledon. We had an absolute battle. He got the better of me. He's obviously a very dangerous player.

You know, Carlos, he's finding his footing on grass and playing some great tennis as well.

It's going to be an absolute battle. I'll try to do a bit like I did today and play my game and try to dictate myself and not get pushed around, because that's when I play my best tennis. Hopefully I can, you know, come tomorrow, step on the court, and deliver some of my best tennis.

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