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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Andy Murray can't repeat his win, Xavier Malisse stunts

Antwerp, 21 October 2021 - Two-time Olympic champion Andy Murray has not been able to repeat his first match, he finished Tuesday the fifth longest three-setter since 2008, against Frances Tiafoe. The Scot went down against the Argentine Diego Schwartzman in two sets: 4/6 and 6/7(6). At the European Open, Xavier Malisse and Lloyd Harris stunted against Brazilian Marcelo Melo and Croatian Ivan Dodig. As a result, the Belgian-South African team reached Saturday's semifinals rather surprisingly.

Winner of the European Open 2019, Andy Murray (ATP-172), took on Argentine Diego Schwartzman (ATP-14) in the one-but-last match of the day. For Schwartzman, it was the first match of this tournament but already a difficult one. Murray got off to a fast start and was able to break immediately. Schwartzman fought back in the first set and won set one with 6/4. In the second set it was evenly matched until 2/2. Then Schwartzman broke through the service of the Scot. But: Murray fought back with a break. The beginning of a very exciting second set that ended in a tiebreak. Schwartzman climbed to a 2/3 lead and it remained neck-and-neck until the end. Murray worked away a first match ball with an ace. It appeared to be a delay of execution, because in the end it became 6/8 in favor of the Argentine.

In the first second round match on Thursday, South African Lloyd Harris and German Jan-Lennard Struff (ATP-50) faced each other. Harris was too strong for our countryman Zizou Bergs (ATP-186) in two sets on Tuesday. Struff then fought his way back against Spaniard Albert Ramos-Vinolas (ATP-45) in three sets in the first round. It was clear from the start that Harris was too strong for Struff. He immediately broke through Struff's serve and was able to win the first set 6/2 after a little less than half an hour. Harris continued on the same path and after four match balls was able to win the second set (6/3) and add the victory to his credit.

Harris was back on Center Court a few hours later, this time at the side of his coach Xavier Malisse against the duo Dodig/Melo. Prior to this week, it had been eight years since Malisse had competed in another ATP tournament. The Belgian/South African duo started very strong with an early break and took 4/6 win in the first set. In the second set, the roles were reversed. The favorites were able to take that set: 6/3. However, Malisse and Harris did not panic at any point. They kept sprinkling relaxed tennis and clever points, even in the supertiebreak. It ended in 7/10, a real stunt for Malisse, who seemed to have recovered well from his match the day before. In the semifinals a duel against the Dutch duo Wesley Koolhof/Jean-Julien Rojer will follow on Saturday.

The second match on Center Court was one between the Spaniard Bautista Agut and the Hungarian Fucsovics. Fucsovics broke on love at a 2/2 score. At 2/4 the Hungarian seemed close to winning the set with 0-40 but Bautista Agut turned the tide. The Spaniard won no less than 13 of the next 17 points. At 5/4 Bautista Agut even got two set points but Fucsovics in turn worked away the set balls. The set was decided in a tiebreak. Bautista Agut took the best start with 3/0 but Fucsovics returned to 5/5. Yet in the end Bautista Agut won the tiebreak.

Fucsovics, who lost his quarterfinal at Wimbledon against Novak Djokovic in July this year, bounced back in the second set. He first saved two break balls and then went on to take a 0/5 lead with two breaks. And again the match seemed to tip over. Bautista Agut returned to 3/5. Fucsovics stayed calm

and served out: 3/6. He steamed on and continued to excel on his serve and with some clever points. At 1/5, Fucsovcis finalised on Bautista Agut's serve: 1/6. With 7/6, 3/6 and 1/6, Fucsovcis thus advanced to the quarterfinals, where he will face Harris on Friday.

The Flemish government joins hands with the city of Antwerp through EventFlanders to make this top event possible. EventFlanders operates within Tourism Flanders, but is a collaboration between Tourism Flanders, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Culture, Youth and Media and Sport Vlaanderen.

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