

In a magic night, Federer defeated Zverev and helped break the record for the highest attendance ever in a tennis match

Nov. 23, 2019, MEXICO CITY — In a historic night for tennis in Mexico, Roger Federer defeated Alexander Zverev in three sets, a duel with which a new world record was established for the highest attendance ever in a tennis match: 42,575 sport enthusiasts in the Plaza de Toros Mexico, with a sold-out venue rarely packed like that.

As Mr. Federer promised, he went out with a green shirt in honor of the Mexican audience. For the five-minute warm-up, Alexander Zverev wore a black shirt from the Mexican national football team and eye-catching shoes representing the Mexican culture with golden motifs, a fashion choice that made the audience cheer.

In a genuine sports party, His Majesty overcame the German player with a 3-6, 6-4 and 6-2 score, thus leading his Latin-American tour 2-1.

On the first set, a couple of breaks by Zverev gave him the edge before an audience that was surprised by his great performance and his powerful serves. During this set, some funny moments were lived when the audience shouted “Acapulco” just when Roger was about to serve. The Swizz player smiled and kept on playing. Another highlight was when someone shouted “Come one, Rafa”, a phrase that prompted Mr. Federer to turn around and say “No”.

In the second set, the Swizz player broke twice, enough times to tie the game 6-4, all while posing for the cameras and waving at the audience.

Mr. Zverev felt some pain on his right side, which forced him to slow down, and Roger began the third set at full throttle, breaking the German player’s serves twice and winning the match 6-3.

The most moving moment of the match happened during the third set, when Federer grabbed an extra racket from his bench and gave it to Emiliano Jiménez, a boy who kept on cheering him the whole match and, with tears in his eyes, received this gift and two balls thrown at him by Mr. Federer before the cheering audience. The Swiss player also showed a couple of dance moves to the rhythm of the public’s claps.

There were several times when Mr. Federer was interrupted while serving when someone in the audience shouted “I love you, Roger”, to which he answered

saying “I love you too” with a big smile on his face. He also saluted the audience in the military manner, before people waving Swizz flags.

At the end of the match, Roger and Alexander received a very special trophy in the shape of the tree of life, as well as the traditional “charro” Mexican hat, with which they went around the stadium to thank their fans for being there.

Both players thanked the audience for the wonderful welcome they gave them and for the amazing atmosphere that they encouraged. Mr. Federer said goodbye saying in Spanish, “Viva México. Muchas gracias”.

Thus concluded Federer’s return to Mexico after 23 years. He came here for the first time in 1996 when he was an unknown player. Today he is the most renowned tennis player in history.