

# Citi Open

Wednesday, August 4, 2021

Washington D.C.

## Brandon Nakashima

### Press Conference



B. NAKASHIMA/D. Evans

7-6, 6-0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Pretty successful summer so far. What do you attribute it to? What's clicking for you?**

BRANDON NAKASHIMA: I think it's just the confidence right now. Getting some of those early wins in Los Cabos a few weeks ago, getting some wins under my belt, keeping the confidence high has helped me get deeper into these tournaments and kind of scrap out some of these matches even though I'm not playing my best. I think that's been pretty big for me the last few weeks.

**Q. A lot of Americans playing well. What are your thoughts on your generation of young Americans?**

BRANDON NAKASHIMA: I think all of us are really, really talented in our own ways. It's nice to see all of us doing really well right now, especially the hard court season leading up to the US Open. I think we all can make a deep run there.

So I'm definitely happy for American tennis. I'm sure we can all do well in the future.

**Q. Your time at Virginia was brief, but memories from that? How that experience maybe laid some of the groundwork as you got your pro career started?**

BRANDON NAKASHIMA: Yeah, it definitely gave me a lot of experience both on the court and off the court as well. Obviously living away from home was an experience that I had to go through while I was there that I think helped me prepare for this pro life with traveling a bunch, staying away from home and family. I think that helped me there.

Also just the development during the matches there at UVA has helped me a lot. In college tennis, there's a lot of pressure points, there's a lot of other things going on in the crowd and everything. I think that has helped me get

through some of these matches as well, just the mental aspect of it, especially during these crucial points and these big matches on the pro tour.

**Q. That wasn't exactly around the corner for you, UVA?**

BRANDON NAKASHIMA: It wasn't. Obviously it was a tough decision deciding what college to go to. But I'm happy that I decided on Virginia. I'll always have that experience there.

**Q. How do you describe the zone you're in?**

BRANDON NAKASHIMA: Yeah, it definitely feels great right now. Having all this confidence from playing all these matches, going deep in tournaments has been good for me. I'm sure every player would want to have this feeling right now of playing well and winning all these matches. I'm just trying to embrace it as much as possible.

Of course, there's always room for improvement in my game. But I'm just glad that it's working out right now and I'm able to beat these top guys and make deep runs in these tournaments.

**Q. What was your approach heading into the match? How difficult is it to deal with someone that throws off-speed looks at you?**

BRANDON NAKASHIMA: Yeah, going into the match I thought it was obviously going to be a tough match for sure. I mean, he's top 30 for a reason and has been at the top for a while, has beaten a lot of the top players. I think it was Djokovic this year already.

Going into it I knew that it was going to be a tough fight. He's obviously a good competitor out there, uses all his advantages well, mixes up the shots really well, as well.

I just tried to just stick with my game plan, just stick to what I'm doing well out there. Obviously I knew I had to serve well and return well to get into those rallies. For me it worked out pretty well today.



**Q. Winning the first set tiebreak and getting the early break in the second set, how do you maintain the mindset of step on the gas and finish it off?**

BRANDON NAKASHIMA: It was obviously difficult for me to win the first set tiebreak. I think even if I would have lost that first set, I still would have been in a good chance to win the second set. Yeah, it was big for me to win that first set tiebreak.

Getting that early break in the second set, after a few errors from him I believe, obviously just me staying solid out there, I think it was big for me.

I kind of saw that he was maybe struggling a little bit with some of his strokes, with his serve a little bit. I just tried to tell myself to stay the course and just try to capitalize as much as possible.

**Q. Last year was difficult for everyone with the schedule. As a younger player, how did you deal with that? Did you use the time to work on your game that is helping you now?**

BRANDON NAKASHIMA: Yeah, I think it was obviously really frustrating for myself and for all other tennis players when we're playing all these tournaments and all of a sudden all of the tournaments get canceled and we're not really sure when it's going to come back up again.

For me it was a little bit tough at the beginning because the beginning of last year I was kind of on a roll, too, similar to this, where I was going deep in some tournaments and had my sights and goals set on the next tournaments until they all got canceled.

For me, I just went back home and went back to the practice court and just tried to use the time to focus on my game and try to improve on the practice court as much as possible.

Yeah, I think that has definitely helped me improve the last year, year and a half, using that time to get on the practice court and improve as much as possible. It's great to see it paying off right now.

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