

Citi Open

Tuesday, August 2, 2022

Washington D.C.

Nick Kyrgios

Press Conference



N. KYRGIOS/M. Giron

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Welcome back to D.C. How does it feel to be back here?

NICK KYRGIOS: Well, honestly, last year, I had a bitter taste in my mouth. I lost first round last year, and I was just going through a lot. I just didn't really have fond memories of Washington, to be honest.

Then today I just came out pretty nervous. Obviously had won this tournament before, but I wanted to make sure I had a really good performance this year. I have been training really hard. I just feel like I'm in such a better place with my tennis. Mentally as well. I wanted to show that to the fans.

Last year was a really poor performance from me, to be honest. I just really wanted to make sure I came out and gave them a good show, just to redeem myself. Just looking around the crowd, such an amazing tournament. I had such a bad taste in my mouth from last year, so...

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. It was 59 minutes. Super efficient. Forgive me for not understanding. You may have addressed this to the crowd. Right before match point, you went to a woman in the front row, just thrilled her to death, seemed like, and asked her something. Was it a suggestion on your serve, or would you share what you asked and she said?

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, in 2019 I was just doing that on match point, just asking someone in the crowd. I think it's just a cool experience for, you know, someone that's paid money to come watch you play and potentially to go home with that memory, if it's a young kid or an older lady like today, I think that's something that's pretty cool. I wish I had that experience when I was watching tennis matches.

Q. (Off mic.)

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah.

Q. Was it ever in doubt that you'd be able to play this tournament, given your court date in Australia was originally set for today? Like it only came out on Friday that that had been pushed back. Curious when you were aware of that. Did you think you might have to go to Australia this week?

NICK KYRGIOS: Not at all. I have got people in my corner and are on my team dealing with those things. They are out of my control. You know, all I can do is just continue to work and continue to keep my head down and do what I love to do every day, and that's play tennis and inspire millions of people and enjoy the world with my beautiful girlfriend. You know, that's all I can do.

Q. I was curious about the decision to play doubles only last week and how that prepared you for singles this week?

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, I think playing doubles is always, especially playing with a good friend, it's always enjoyable. But for me, I'd rather play doubles and have that kind of competitive juices flowing rather than going out there and practicing.

I feel like it's obviously more stimulating for me to go out there and compete and obviously still play for money. To pick up another title with Thanasi, it's huge.

He had a pretty bad loss last week. I think he would be the first to say that. To be able to bounce back and win a doubles title is never easy.

Hopefully that's helped him gain a little bit more confidence, as well. For me, it definitely helped me today. Came a bit slow, but then I started to have my eye in on return. My serve has always been great, but especially last couple of months it's been on another level.

Q. After big results, it can be hard to find motivation, but you seem as motivated as ever. Are you surprised or relieved to be feeling the way you are feeling on the



court now?

NICK KYRGIOS: Not really. I'm playing for a lot more than myself, and I feel like I'm just in a totally different mindset.

I think a couple years ago, after having a great Grand Slam result, I think I would have struggled, as you said, to find motivation, obviously probably a bit more selfish. But now I feel like I had some time off in Bahamas, but I was still forcing myself to train every day. Coming to these tournaments in shape and ready to go.

You know, Marcos Giron is like 50 in the world. And to beat him in under an hour is not easy. I feel like I'm doing everything I can, but I just have so much motivation at the moment.

Q. I didn't hear you clearly on the court. Did you suggest maybe after Wimbledon that it knocked you out a little bit, just as far as the run? Are you able to pick up where you left off? Are you able to build momentum? Is the run sustainable, in other words? Even predating Wimbledon, you have been on a nice stretch.

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, I mean, I'm having a great year. I think if Wimbledon had points, I think I'd be around top 15, top 20 in the world. I definitely feel like I'm playing that level of tennis. If not top 10, top 5 at the moment.

Yeah, obviously that match hurts. I think ever since I picked up a tennis racquet, I had coaches in my ear saying the Wimbledon trophy is the highest accolade you can achieve in the sport.

To have that opportunity and come up short wasn't easy for me to stomach. Obviously another couple million dollars would have been nice to me and my girlfriend, but obviously just to have that accolade, I think no one can say nothing. I think, at the end of the day, if you have a Wimbledon championship under your belt, no matter what result you have after or before, you have achieved that, you have achieved the highest thing.

It was hard. I feel like a Grand Slam final doesn't come around so often for us normal players. Obviously Federer, Nadal, Djokovic played a ton of Grand Slam finals, but that was like the golden opportunity I felt for me. Going up a set as well.

There are so many things I would have done differently I think now that I have digested that match, but I'm doing all the right things to put myself in that position again. I think I'm doing that, and my whole team is helping me achieve that goal.

I think we all know that it's possible now. I don't think we thought it was possible to contend for Grand Slams, but now it's a genuine thing. I think all about motivation and we are on the same page.

Q. You sound pretty driven, then?

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, it's taken me 27 years.

Q. Two different questions. 3-All in the opener, you hit a ball out of the stadium. Curious what prompted that. Nice shot by your opponent.

NICK KYRGIOS: I just felt like doing it.

Q. Secondly, how would you describe your confidence right now, and how much obviously does Wimbledon and that result have to do with where that's at?

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, good question. I mean, look, to be honest, I wasn't thinking about the Wimbledon final at all out there today. I think I had such a bad experience, and a lot of stuff was going on last year around this time that I just didn't have a good time on a tennis court at all.

I was really struggling, wasn't enjoying my tennis. I was out of shape, losing a lot of matches.

I just really wanted to force myself to have high energy today and pull out a performance. I know that I'm capable of playing great tennis. Honestly, my confidence was a bit low coming out today just because just being on that court again. I got disgraced last year first round, and it was tough to stomach after coming off a win.

So it was hard to be on that court again. I'm proud of my performance today. It wasn't easy. Obviously wasn't feeling as confident as I would like early on in the match, but obviously turned it around in the end and had a good ending.

Q. And then you have a lot of nice shots obviously, but I think you lost maybe three points on your service game in the second set. How much strength or confidence do you draw from that, and how good do you feel like you're serving it at the moment?

NICK KYRGIOS: I just feel like a bit of a perfectionist at times. I'm maybe a bit too hard on myself. I feel if any singles player wins a match in under an hour, they are usually pretty happy.

You know, I'm up like 6-3 and 4-whatever it is, and I'm still getting mad at things. I feel like that Wimbledon final has

made me just obsessed with trying to play a perfect point every time when it's not realistic at all in tennis. No one has ever played a match and they don't make an unforced error. I don't care if you are Djokovic, Nadal. Everyone makes unforced errors.

I think I'm going to be a bit nicer to myself and stop expecting myself to play the perfect point every time. I might miss a ball like this, I might double fault. I'm just really high strung and obsessed at the moment with my performance and playing well.

So, you know, it's a new experience. Sometimes people play a slam final or win a Grand Slam and they struggle for the next six months, but I feel like I don't want to be one of those players. I want to be one of those players that rides with it and continues to play well. I don't want to have any lulls or down matches after a Grand Slam. It's a small window, so I'm going to use it.

Q. You have been very open about mental health and your struggles with that, which I think is great for young people to see, honestly. So how important do you think it is to speak on that and for people in the public eye to talk about that, fame at a young age and what that's like and everything?

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, I mean, I think it's very important to make it known that it's okay to feel that way, but, you know, I feel like sometimes I almost used it as an excuse sometimes.

But I definitely had to force myself to get out of that way I was feeling. There were steps to recovering and feeling myself again. You know, sometimes I felt that way, and I wasn't helping myself. I think that's the biggest thing I learnt that I really had to dig myself out of that hole.

Me personally, when I first opened up about it, it was hard because I went through my messages on Instagram, there were millions of messages of people dealing with things. Me personally, I tried to help those people and it was taking my energy away and it was hard for me to balance everything.

I feel like there are a lot of athletes and a lot of people in general now who are opening up about it, which is good, but honestly, when I was going through it all, I didn't really have that one person who was kind of talking me through those things, and it was just kind of snowballing out of control.

So I know how much it means when I see a kid low on confidence or he's embarrassed or insecure to go out there and play a sport because he might be overweight or

anything like that. I know what that feels like, so I feel like I can help a lot of people, but it's gotta start with that person. They have to want to be better.

And, yeah, I mean, look, I turned it around. If you told me a couple years ago I'd be here feeling like this and playing like this, I would have said no chance.

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