

Mubadala Citi DC Open

Saturday, August 5, 2023

Washington D.C.

Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. GRIEKSPoor/T. Fritz

3-6, 6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Apparently not the result you wanted, Taylor. What do you think made the difference tonight?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, he was just better. He played really well. I think I took advantage of, like, the worst game he played on his serve, which was the first game, that I was able to break him. Kind of the only game that he missed a good amount of first serves and made a couple of mistakes. Then I did a good job just kind of holding serve, kind of like I have been doing all week, to win the set.

I mean, when he broke me in the second and when he broke me in the third, he played, like, incredible games. I don't think I did anything wrong in those games. If I'm being extremely, like, nitpicky about it, I guess I could have hit better spots on some of the serves and stuff like that, but, like, when we got into the rallies in those points, I thought I played them all really well.

It's extra frustrating, because it's, like, I don't really, like, have an answer for what I would have done differently in a lot of those rallies that I ended up losing. I thought I played them all really well.

When I got broken in the first and the second, I gave him one mistake both games, trying to take backhands, like, cross off the court and follow them in the net. But outside of that, there wasn't really anything I did wrong. I think he played exceptionally well.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Considering how you played him three years ago, Australian Open, straight-sets win, first set, how vastly has he improved in the last two sets you have seen him play from how he's made this incredible jump this year?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, to be honest, I can barely remember that match, a long time ago. But I do remember

from that match, conditions played a big part in it. Australia conditions are much faster, but I remember in that match just playing a ton of me going forehand to forehand with him.

Yeah, I was obviously able to win that one pretty routinely. He's improved a ton. A lot of it has come over the last year and a half, two years, he's way, way better of whatever it is, like 30-something. He's much better than that.

I think he's definitely top 20 in the race so far this year, so he'll for sure end this year as a top-20 player. For sure that's where he belongs. He's very good.

Q. Even though you never want to lose any match, you built that momentum from winning Atlanta last week, the possibility of you going deep in both Toronto and Cincinnati where you may feel you save up for the Open, possibly might be overplaying, is that a silver lining where you say, You know what, he was just too hot tonight, I'll just focus on Toronto and Cincinnati and go deep in both of those venues?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, tonight, it is what it is. Honestly, I think it's more frustrating when I don't have an answer or something, I would have done different in a lot of situations, like, it's easy for me on the court to process when I lose a point or lose a big point, I did this wrong, did this wrong, I can fix it so it doesn't happen again, a lot of points tonight where I wouldn't change anything I did in that point. I don't know how I lost it, and I just kept losing it.

It is frustrating. But yeah, I'll get a couple of days. My body will get to rest a bit. I will feel ready to go for these next two tournaments.

I think switching back to the Wilson balls will, it will be much better for my game. The conditions will play much faster. So, yeah, I'm excited for the next two weeks. Then I'll get a week off before the Open. It will work out.

Q. Was there any sort of carryover effect from the long day you had yesterday, playing the two matches?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, I'm sore. Like, we have all



played sore. I think, I mean, I guess a little bit. Like, I'm going to be beat up after the day I had yesterday. That's just normal.

But again, it's not like I didn't play well in this match. I played fine. Like I said, all the things that I say, I could have done better, is being extremely nitpicky.

So I really didn't do too much wrong. He was just -- he was just really good.

Q. Specifically on his return, how would you characterize him as a returner?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think he returned pretty well. I think him going to the chip return a lot probably wouldn't work if we were playing in slightly faster conditions, because then I can just whip my backhand cross and come in behind it, which I still tried to do tonight, but because these conditions are so slow, dead, like, it's really, really tough to spin a ball and still make it, like, go.

So when he gives me, like, that chip short to the backhand, I have to kind of make it, try to make it a little better than I normally would have to if I want to follow it in, and that's where those mistakes came on both the games I got broken, on the backhands, I missed them wide, because I was trying to make sure I pulled them off the court enough. Whereas a little bit of a faster ball, I don't need to do that. It will go through the court for me to just follow it in.

I think that worked well in these conditions. I thought on the second serve he returned really well. If I didn't hit my spot when I went to his backhand, he'd return it well, and yeah, all parts of his game I thought were good.

Q. Can you just compare how you're feeling this week in comparison to last week both physically and how you thought your level of game was here in D.C.?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I feel like it's really good. Again, two extremely different conditions. It almost feels like playing two different sports in terms of how it played from -- last week, if I make a first serve of, like, let's hit hard, it doesn't even need to be placed well. I'm probably just going to win the point. And if I hit one good shot anywhere, I'm probably going to win the point.

Like, in Atlanta, you're trying to first strike and try not to miss, because it's really easy to miss because everything is so fast. Balls are flying off your racquet.

Here it's the opposite. You have to hit your spots perfectly. You have to be prepared to attack, attack, attack, and then have the point reset by them just hitting, like, a dead slice

or something. Physicality is way higher.

For everything I have been through this week, I think my body feels pretty good. I feel like my confidence is good. I feel like I'm playing well, and, you know, I'd say these conditions don't necessarily suit my game, but I feel like I still played really good tennis all week. I feel like I gave myself a good chance to make it to the finals as well.

I'll go into the next weeks with confidence kind of knowing that regardless of the conditions, I can still make it work.

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