

Mubadala Citi DC Open

Saturday, August 5, 2023

Washington D.C.

Tallon Griekspoor

Press Conference



T. GRIEKSPoor/T. Fritz

3-6, 6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, Tallon. Your first ATP 500 final and also your first top-10 win tonight. How do you feel about your performance?

TALLON GRIEKSPoor: Yeah, happy with the win. Beating American No. 1 here in Washington, Taylor, top-10 player, something really special. Making another final feels great.

Yeah, looking forward to tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Tallon, congrats on the win and a career year for you. What's been for you that difference that you see, that your coach Kristof has seen, that's gotten you to this level where Taylor feels like you're a legitimate top-20 player now?

TALLON GRIEKSPoor: I mean, it all started first week of the year winning Pune. I mean, it was not the strongest ATP, but it probably opened my eyes.

Playing third round Australian Open after. Semis in Rotterdam. Somehow week by week I just started to believe in really having the level to beat those kind of players.

Lost to some good guys this year. Played some great weeks. Winning at home was something really special. That gave even more confidence.

Yeah, coming here, first week of the American swing, I mean, I like the hard courts, but, I mean, making final here is something really special. Like I said, especially beating Taylor here at home. I mean, he's a Top-10 player for many years already.

I just kept working day in and day out, trying to do the right things. Trying to pick the right people around me. Got

Kristof back beginning of the year, someone I worked with for already five years before. He always believed in me, always had big things to say about me. But that it now is finally clicking altogether is something really special and, yeah, can't be more happy about how my year is going so far.

Q. Coming into this match, Taylor had only dropped two service games in his last 82 and only one in this tournament. You did it three times in this match. What were you able to figure out about his serve?

TALLON GRIEKSPoor: Well, I think at some point, I was reading the serve a little bit. I felt comfortable on the return. I know his favorite spots from the last few matches last few weeks.

But like I said, he is serving well. He's doing so many things well. I think at some point that just got in the right flow. Already at the end of the first, I think at 4-2, we had a pretty long game where I had, like, four or five breakpoints, didn't break him. I said to my coaches at 6-3, 1-All, if I can serve a bit better, can get a bit more momentum in my games, I might win this match.

I'm happy I started serving better, started to return. I did well on the return. Made him play some tricky shots, trying to use the slice a lot, and it worked out well in the end.

Q. I know you haven't played Grigor and you have faced Dan a couple of times, how do you feel like your game matches up against both of theirs? Do you feel like conditions are going to play a factor in tomorrow? Players have been talking a lot about how heavy the ball is, how humid and fluffy things are getting out there.

TALLON GRIEKSPoor: I heard a lot of guys complaining about it being slow. You know, I didn't really have this problem at all the whole week (smiling). I was playing on Grandstand, and I felt the court was pretty quick. Everybody was telling me, I cannot hit a winner, I cannot hit a winner.

I was not struggling with that at all. I don't know what it is,



but I'm liking the conditions. During the day but also during the night. I think the final is at 5:00 tomorrow. I mean, both of them, I lost to them twice last year. But I think I was not the player I am today that I was last year. I mean, Grigor, great player already, for so many years. Same for Dan.

It's going to be a tough final. They both like to use the slice a lot. So do I. Yeah, let's see. I think I'm ready for it. I'm looking forward to it. I'm feeling good. I'm feeling confident. My body is great. Yeah, not much to complain from my side.

Q. I just want to ask you, between you, Botic van de Zandschulp, Tim van Rijthoven before he had his elbow surgery, this development for you guys of the Netherlands, looming now in the mid-20s, is this something about the program back in the juniors, is it getting the potential out of you guys as they should early? What's been that whole level of leading to this boom for you guys in the mid 20s?

TALLON GRIEKSPoor: It's a good question. I think the program in Holland, it's all pretty well. The program, especially the juniors now, everything is there. It's maybe a little bit too good. Like all of it is too good. Maybe they are all too spoiled a little bit.

I don't know. At some point, me and Botic were sharing a coach at some point. We were practicing every day together. We basically still are because there are not many players we have.

Yeah, somehow when we were 150, 160, we spoke a lot to each other. We saw a lot of guys being 60, 70, 80. We really looked at each other, said, If those kind of players can be there, we can be there as well.

And I think little by little the belief was coming a bit more and more. Then Botic made quarterfinals of US Open out of quallies. This opened his eyes, my eyes, I think Tim, his eyes.

I had a great challenger run after, and somehow kept building. Yeah, I think we are looking good now. Tim had a surgery. I think he's out for a while, but Botic and me being there, some great doubles players, even with Davis Cup team it's looking good.

Yeah, I don't really have the answer on that, why we're all like around 25, 26, we start playing our best tennis. I also prefer it was at 18, 19, but somehow I'm really happy with, like, the path my career is going.

Just started futures, stayed in the challengers a bit longer,

just worked my way up there. This year it's all clicking, all coming together. I'm really happy with how it's going. Hopefully more finals coming.

Q. Because you have been locked in on your tennis this week and playing terrifically, has there been anything in D.C. you've enjoyed off the court? If not, what's one thing you want to do in D.C. you want to enjoy?

TALLON GRIEKSPoor: Well, not too much, actually. Had pretty long days here at the club because of the rain, yesterday two matches, day before we got canceled late. Had some dinners at the water. That's basically it.

Had to get used to the jet lag first few days, tired, slept a lot. Didn't do much. Tried to focus on the tennis, but yeah, having a great here. I feel like I will come back more often, yeah.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports