

Mubadala Citi DC Open

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Washington D.C.

Thanasi Kokkinakis

Press Conference



T. KOKKINAKIS/M. Purcell

6-5, 6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How did you come out of the match today? How are you feeling in your first singles match back in DC?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: I haven't played in a while, since I pulled out of Wimbledon. Yeah, I wasn't sure if I was going to play this week. I pulled out last week. Coming into the match a lot of doubts, more so with the body than anything. Got through it. Didn't feel amazing.

Yeah, it was a tough match against a Davis Cup teammate, a guy I know pretty well. He's obviously been playing some pretty good tennis as well.

Glad to get through that. Hopefully I pull up okay.

Q. Victoria Azarenka had a long match on stadium court, coming back from injury. You had a long match. What is that like in your first match back after missing a lot of time?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: It's not ideal. It's not like team sports where you can come in, play a few minutes, come out, sub. You're either all in or you're not. That's the tough part with tennis.

I'd liked to have had some practice matches. I didn't have any practice matches before the tournament either, which is tough. Just kind of went out there with no real expectations, just kind of seeing how the body pulls up. I'll know a lot more tomorrow.

Q. What ultimately was the difference maker?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Well, I served really well the whole match. He didn't have a break point, which is good from my end. Yeah, even the set I lost, I thought it was a little bit unlucky. I wasn't really tested on serve. I had the break points early that I didn't take. If I took those, maybe

it was straight sets. But that's tennis.

Yeah, I just kept playing well. I started hitting my groundies better and better. That was the difference.

Q. Being mic'd up for the doubles tomorrow, what are your thoughts about participating in this?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: I don't mind the idea. I like the idea. I was kind of for it. Initially I was told that they are kind of going to take snippets of it and play it back later for highlights or little sound bytes, which is something that I'd be interested in.

If it's live and they can hear everything I'm saying, I don't think that's going to go too well for me or Frances. If that's the case, I won't partake. If they do the other way, then I'll consider it, yeah.

Q. Did you have a chance to see what was available last night, some of the clips that were floating around today?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: I saw little parts. I haven't seen the clips or anything. I saw a little bit of the doubles. I think it was Harry that was maybe mic'd up. He's pretty clear-cut, talks mainly more about tennis than anything. I think if me and Frances were mic'd up, it would stray a little off topic. It might be interesting, but might also get us in trouble. I think we're going to be pretty mellow.

Q. How cognizant might you be or are you focused on the task at hand?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: No, I don't have good focus. That's probably my weak point. A lot of stuff comes into my head. A lot of times I say a lot of stuff. I talk a lot of rubbish sometimes on court. Not about my opponent, but to myself and to my team. It's hard. It's like a way of venting.

It's interesting if they can kind of clip some stuff for later. If they get the raw footage, it's not going to go down too well, I don't think.



Q. Outside of the rubbish and the lighter moments in a doubles match, what is communication like when you have a partner there, higher-stakes doubles? How valuable could communication with your partner be?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: I think all the very good teams, the people that mainly focus on doubles, it's sort of 99% tactics. I don't think that will be the case tomorrow when I step on the court with Frances. We're good mates, have been for a while. I think tactics will probably come second.

I don't know if that's conducive to good results. Yeah, it's a friendship first. We're just kind of playing to have fun and see how we go.

Q. Part of the idea here is that having doubles players mic'd up, another way to maybe put the focus on the doubles players, give them a little bit more of the spotlight. Do you see these as one of those outlets where it could grow a little bit?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Definitely. I've seen it in other sports. I think it's interesting. I like the idea of it, for sure. It's just the live thing is what I'm not super sold about.

One, if you're playing and you're hearing your opponents talk about tactics or what they like to do, I think that gives an advantage to the guys that are playing them next.

I think if you can clip some sound bytes of some interesting stuff, whether it be motivational or some rubbish talking within reason, I think all that is very interesting.

I like what they do with the NBA, how they can kind of play it afterwards. When a timeout comes, they'll show a little sound byte. They do that in Australian Rules Football, as well.

I think I like all those ideas. I'm just not sure about the microphone on all the time and everyone can hear it.

Q. Back-to-back matches against fellow countrymen. You'll have Alex in the next round. Has that ever happened for you on the tour?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: No, pretty rare. I guess it's a good position for us to be in. It means we've got a lot of players in the top hundred, a lot of players competing for good spots.

I'd say the guys, my opponents, are a little bit more match hardened than me, probably more ready for the tournament.

Yeah, it's always tricky playing a countryman, someone

you know well and grew up playing against. But it's part of tennis. You see the same faces week in, week out. You're bound to draw the same guys. That's just how it goes sometimes.

Yeah, it just shows what a good position Australian tennis is in to have so many guys there.

Q. Playing with Frances, obviously he's a bit of a celebrity around here. Have you been able to bask in some of the attention he's getting, tips of things around town?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, I haven't asked him too much about DC in general. We had the same agency growing up. I've known him for however long we've played a bunch of times. Yeah, one of my closer friends on tour.

I haven't asked him too much about DC. I know he loves it here. He's from here. They embrace him like crazy, as they should.

It is always good energy and atmosphere when he plays. I was supposed to play last week in Atlanta, but I couldn't play. Looking forward to getting out there on the court with him. It's always fun.

We're not expecting to be the Bryans out there on court. We're going to enjoy it and hopefully the crowd likes it.

Q. Similar vibes between Frances and Nick in some ways? Any similarities between how they play?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, definitely, definitely. I don't think mic'd up would work well with either of them, if I'm honest. I'm not the biggest saint either on court. From my end, it doesn't work perfectly.

Yeah, two guys who love their basketball, love talking rubbish, having fun, enjoying their tennis. Two showmen out there. Yeah, they're very similar.

Hopefully we can get Nick back on court soon. I think he's touch-and-go for US Open doubles. I think he's going to start with doubles. I just told him if he's ready, I'd love to go out there and play with him.

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