

# Western & Southern Open

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Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

## Taylor Fritz

### Press Conference



T. FRITZ/N. Kyrgios

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: First meeting with Nick, a good friend. How did it feel out there for you today?

TAYLOR FRITZ: It was good. I think the most important thing for me going out there was to serve pretty well and take care of my serve, because if he kind of steals a break from you, then he's really good at just holding serve, and he's going to kind of run away with it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Do you have a feeling early in a match if your serve is just on and going to stay on? Do you know before a match it's going to be on?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, honestly it's just the rhythm of the serve. Unfortunately for me with just the injuries this year there has been times where I feel like my service rhythm is really good, and then I have to take a couple weeks off and I come back and it's not quite there.

To be honest, I think the last week the serve rhythm was really bad. I thought I was serving really bad. It actually started clicking for me like halfway through my warmup this morning. I kind of started feeling good. Then when I got on the court today, I was kind of just keeping those little cues, I guess, in my head that makes it feel good.

Yeah, the rhythm just felt great the whole match. I didn't think it was going to go anywhere.

**Q. I know you play and practice with Nick a lot. What's the feeling like to face that serve, such a quick-hitting motion? Is it a hard thing to read?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, it just comes off his racquet so big. It's very tough to read. He hits his spots really well. I typically don't lean on people's serves because I feel like I'm pretty long and I have a lot of reach, and I feel like I can typically return serves if they aren't perfectly placed.

I definitely felt like I had to lean against Nick, because I know on a big point he's probably either going to miss his serve or he's going to hit his spot and there is not going to be any chance to get it. I felt like I did have to kind of pick sides a lot on his serve.

**Q. I know how much you like to sort of analyze the match as it's going out there in your own mind and try to see what's going on. To what extent do you talk about it with Mike now that you can have that dialogue? Like how deep into the analysis do you get?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, with him, not too deep after the match, because typically the dialogues go on during practices where we can, like, you know, right after I hit a shot or right after something happens, I can talk to him about it. You know, we can have our back-and-forth.

So, you know, when it comes down to the match, we will talk about certain things, but it doesn't get too deep with the matches.

**Q. During the match, now that the rule is available, you don't really use it as much?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: No, I honestly haven't even noticed. I haven't talked to Mike and he hasn't talked to me one time since the coaching has become a thing. It's a dumb rule.

**Q. Why is it a dumb rule?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Because tennis is an individual sport. Why are we making it not an individual sport? A huge part of tennis is, in my mind, like as tennis is as much mental as it is physical, and a big part of it is you need to be figuring it out on the court for yourself. You need to be the one figuring it out.

I think it's ridiculous that you can be mentally not there, not good analytically, not good at kind of working through things and coming up with strategies, and you can have someone tell you what to do. I hate it.

**Q. How much of a goal still is top 10 for you? I know maybe your goals have changed because of the**



**success of the season.**

TAYLOR FRITZ: It's a huge goal. Just growing up as a kid, being a top-10 player in the world, it's always something you kind of dream of.

It's still a big goal, but I think sometimes when you get really close to reaching these goals, it almost makes you, like, I guess, tighten up a little bit. We have almost re-evaluated. We said, Okay, we are not thinking about top 10 anymore. We are thinking of top 5 now.

That's just the correct -- with that mindset, it will just make it easier to make it into the top 10, I feel.

**Q. Top 5 gets you to the range of No. 1? That will be the next?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Exactly. You take it one step at a time.

**Q. You and Nick have been having a great season so far together. You are friends off the court as well. Can you talk about how you are playing off of each other's energy or not?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: No, when we talk, we don't really talk about, Oh, like, you're playing great, I'm playing great, like, Let's go, good for us.

We don't really have those conversations.

**Q. You obviously know Rublev quite well at this point from many years. What are you looking for in that match? Just focusing on yourself or...**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, I need to -- if I can serve like I did today again, that would be really nice. You know, I need to attack as much as possible. You know, he's a very aggressive-minded player like I am, as well.

I feel like I need to try and beat him to the punch as much as possible. I can't be the one being passive, letting him kind of move me around the court, work me around the court. I just need to kind of focus on myself, play my game and be aggressive.

**Q. Have you been asked about Novak and your thoughts on that?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: No.

**Q. What are your thoughts on that?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: It's tough. I think on one side of it, like I think it's tough to make certain exceptions to the rules for

certain people. I don't know how I feel about that, but then, at the same time, it's like, I mean, we're not the most COVID-safe country in general with, you know, how we are doing things.

So it does seem like, you know, what's the harm of letting the best player in the world come play the US Open?

But like I said, at the same time, it's conflicting, because I don't know how I feel about making special exceptions just for one person just because of who they are. So I see both sides of the argument, to be honest.

It's tough to, you know, differentiate obviously. It's good for every player if Novak is not in the draw (smiling).

**Q. As a defender, would you like him there or are you happy that he's not?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Oh, I don't know. Novak is one of the only people on tour that I have never beaten, so I don't know (smiling).

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