

Nitto ATP Finals

Sunday, 12 November 2023

Turin, Italy

Pala Alpitour, Torino

Stefanos Tsitsipas

Press Conference



J. SINNER/S. Tsitsipas

6-4, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Stef, tough match today. Can you walk us through this match, please.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: First of all, I would like to congratulate Jannik on a very good match, a great performance from start to finish. He showed good strength, very responsible play from the beginning of the match, from the very first point.

He was attacking a lot, serving really well, kept his composure in those crucial moments that were a few today. He kept it quite clean and didn't get too affected by any situation that came his way.

Could have been better, but I'm happy to keep on moving in this event.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. In the last hour there have been some rumors about your health. Can you confirm that you're feeling good or is it true that you've been through some scan in your lower back? Someone said also at the elbow.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: No, not that I'm aware. I'm absolutely fine and I'm ready to play this tournament. Turin is one of the most important events of the year for me.

I'm healthy. I'm ready to compete.

Q. You also are facing Holger Rune later in this tournament. He had a tough period the last couple months. What do you think about facing him? Do you think he's back at his best now?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Yes, every single opponent is at their best right now. I'm not entering the court thinking that I might get a chance or an opportunity or having someone under-play of what their potential is.

Holger has been pretty good against me in some of the encounters and matches that we've had against each other. I believe that he's a tough competitor and someone that fights really hard on the court. Whether he's up or down, he will not give up.

Q. You know what is the ATP Final, you won title here. How you can restart yourself after losing the first match here?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, I have two more matches to go. I hope for the best. I hope I can stay here until the last day.

That's the beauty of ATP Nitto Finals: it's not over until it's really over. You can always re-bounce and you can always come back. It's a good format. It allows for great competition and for some good comebacks that we don't really see in the sport because our tour is based on knockout rounds, a single opportunity in every tournament.

Q. I'd like to know, you were very nice to say the improvements of Sinner. Were you anyway a little bit surprised, especially about his serve? He lost only 10 points in 10 games. Normally the serve was his weak point. How have you seen him progress in one year?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: He definitely has improved his serve, and he showed it today on the court. There wasn't much I could do. I was trying to guess sometimes. He serves really close to the lines, to the corners.

I'm not the Elastic Girl from the superheroes to be behind these balls. I tried my best, and he played a very good quality match from his side.

I think today, maybe if he was aiming for improvements, today those improvements were definitely exposed and shown on the court. He definitely had overall a big improvement in his game.

I tried to do my best.

Q. Since the tour is back in Europe, indoor Europe,



your tennis seems more efficient. How do you explain that?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I enjoy playing in fast surfaces much more now than I did years ago. I think my tennis suits fast surfaces way more than it did slower. My shots are big. I can hit big shots.

Well, I feel like my single-handed backhand can be an element of surprise when I play against my opponents because I think that they believe it's my weakest shot. I have worked a lot on it, and my confidence has grown more and more over the last two weeks to step in and hit the backhand and feel like I'm solid on that part of the court.

It all has to do with my footwork and my preparation. My game, I would believe it's pretty complete. I can play from both sides. I can also come to the net, which is something you don't see these days very often. I'm not skeptical or afraid to do so if it's required, especially on shorter balls.

I believe that element of my game, that ability of me being able to step in and come to the net and play a much more open, creative tennis has helped me have a bit more success in the faster surfaces and in the indoor season.

Sometimes it takes adjustment because you get started with these events in the beginning, the first few tournaments, you're not confident because you haven't played in those conditions. These are your first few weeks. It takes a little bit of time for you to step in, get on the comfort zone of being able to cut time from the opponent. For sure it takes a few repetitions for your mind to pick it up and to be much more confident than you are starting in that indoor season.

Every single opportunity that I get to play a match, I think that confidence grows and it becomes better. I'm able to get an understanding of my game much more clear and with much more clarity.

It's a very aggressive and sometimes risky game. But I think if I'm on a good day, it can perhaps do a lot of damage to any opponent.

Q. If I can ask you to look ahead for a moment. The Australian Open is expanding to 15 days. Is this something the players like or don't like? Maybe it will help avoid some of the very late matches. What do you think?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I don't really have a problem with it. I don't think a day makes that much of a difference. We are there. Obviously, we are aiming to be there for two weeks. That's our goal starting in those kind of

tournaments.

I believe a day, whether that's a day extra or day less, you don't really feel it when you're in Australia because you start the season and you mentally are prepared that you're going to stay there for a month.

Australia is a great destination for tennis. It's one of my favorites to play tennis at. The weather is great. The people are amazing. I get so much support when I'm in Australia.

I've spoken about how Australia feels like a slam to me. Spending an extra day, it's one more day being home pretty much.

I don't have anything against it. Think it's absolutely right. Roland Garros had it there and I see no reason for Australia having it.

Q. Stef, considering today's result, what do you feel you really need to do to turn things around with the next couple of round-robin matches?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I think it's quite simple: play better tennis.

Q. Overall? Anything specific?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, my return games. Just press more, put more returns deep into the court. Just get started with my shot-making from the baseline. Whenever I get a short one, just come in.

I think not a lot of players approach it this way, but I think it kind of suits me when I play this way. I guess in the past I've tried to stay behind the baseline and rally, not punish my opponents when they throw in a shorter one.

I see this tournament for me also an opportunity for me to grow my game through maybe bigger risks. Why not? It's a great tournament and I really want to do well here.

At the same time I want to try things in which I believe I can achieve a higher level of excellence when I approach my game with that mindset.

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