

Nitto ATP Finals

Sunday, 10 November 2024

Turin, Italy

Inalpi Arena, Torino

Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/D. Medvedev

6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Congrats, Taylor. Must be a good feeling to have your first win. Can you walk us through the match today.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, I thought I played a really solid match. I served well. You have to hit your spots very well on the serve against him because he's such a good returner.

A lot of times you can hit a good serve and he'll still get it back. I did a great job at kind of getting free points, then hanging in some tough rallies, being solid, kind of just showing him that I wasn't going to make too many unforced errors or just give it to him.

So yeah, I'm super happy with how I played.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Are you going to watch tonight's match? Who are you cheering for?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm probably not going to watch. To be honest, I don't watch a lot of tennis. I feel like I'll probably go back and watch once I know the results just to kind of scout and see. Then I kind of know. I'm specifically looking for things in the match, knowing who I'm playing.

But I guess just to watch it, probably not (smiling).

Q. If Sinner will win tonight, you probably have to play him. Today your match was sort of a challenge who was either going to be No.1 or No. 2 in your draw more than de Minaur, who is still good but doesn't have the same probably background than you and ranking than you. How important was it to win today? How do you see your match eventually versus Sinner, if Sinner wins? I am thinking about the US Open, sorry...

TAYLOR FRITZ: Obviously you're going to need to win, most likely win, two matches if you want to make it out of the group, so...

Yeah, it would be really tough. It would be really tough to start with a loss. It's huge for my chances obviously to get out of the group.

But really anything can happen. I think everyone in the group is obviously very good. I wouldn't be surprised if any combination of two people made it out of the group. It's only a couple matches.

Yeah, obviously I will be playing Jannik, not for sure if it's the next match. Obviously we're in the same group, we're going to play.

I'm excited because I think after I played him at the Open, I played Carlos the next week at Laver Cup, I played Novak right after in Shanghai. I feel like those three matches I learned a lot about what I kind of needed to I guess improve on, get better at, if I want to hang with those guys. I think I've done a good job since then kind of working on those things and improving.

Yeah, I'm excited at the opportunity to see if what I've been doing will help me.

Q. How encouraging was it to win some of those very long rallies with Daniil, even before he completely lost his cool?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, it was huge obviously. I think it was a very tight match. He had break chances on me. I was in a lot of return games on him. Could have gone either way. Obviously I was able to save break points with some of those long rallies. I kind of just fought through.

I mean, it's very encouraging. He's so good from the baseline and just wearing you down. I felt like he was much more aggressive today. I mean, it makes a bit of sense. He didn't want me to get time to attack and control the points. He wanted to get me moving and be aggressive.

In all of the rallies, I didn't really see anything I liked too much to really pull the trigger on. When I saw it, I attacked. When I didn't, I was happy to run and play defense.

I thought I did a solid job, like I said, just showing him that I wasn't going to give him a lot of free points.

Q. I read your tweet one week ago more or less against, let's say, the coaching that would be allowed everywhere from next season. I would like to understand your opinion a little bit better.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I think one thing that makes tennis such a unique sport, such a cool sport, is it's genuinely as mental as it is physical. It's a big, key part - in my opinion - to be able to figure things out and strategize by yourself.

People change things that they're doing on the court to adjust to the opponent. I don't want a coach to be able to tell someone, Hey...

You see things differently when you're not playing the match sometimes. I just think 'one versus one' part of tennis where not only are you playing against each other, you're also having this mind battle almost against each other. It's such a big part of the game. I think not a lot of people realize. I think you do have to play almost at the highest level to really understand how much strategy is going on.

That's something that should be between the two players. I think being able to make strategies, how you handle decision making, coming up with these kind of things under pressure, I think is just as important as hitting a serve or hitting a forehand.

It would be insane if someone could come on the court for you and serve, right? So why can someone tell you what to do?

That's just how I feel. I compare it to the same as everything else you're doing on the court. Why would anyone be helping you?

I have no problem with it in team events like United Cup, Davis Cup, Laver Cup. That makes sense. Coaching, okay. Individual, the rest of the season, it just makes no sense to me.

Q. I agree.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Most people do (smiling).

Q. Taylor, on the point of coaching, you feel it should be eradicated completely when it's one on one. Not

even the coach giving a player some direction or anything is allowed at the moment. You were just saying, having played Jannik, Carlos, Novak, you've learnt stuff from those matches. What is it that you've learnt for yourself from those matches?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, for the first part, I think as far as it should go with the coach talking to you is giving you encouragement, saying, Great shot, good job, keep going, keep fighting. Stuff like that.

I think when it gets into strategic, Back up, hit it this way more, cover this, I don't think that's...

I think a lot of the reason they made this rule in the first place is they were almost in a way bullied into it because a lot of people would just break the rules anyway and coach anyways.

I mean, I think there should be mics in the boxes. I think there should be someone monitoring the mics. It should be very, very strict to where if anything goes past just encouragement, immediately you're penalized.

That's how you fix it. That's how you have no coaching. Players have to figure things out on their own. That's, like I said, one of the great things about tennis.

I mean, the second part, I can't really say because I'd be giving away too much of what I guess bothers me about them playing when they're playing me.

I think it's a very copout answer every time I lose one of those matches to say I could have served better. When I lose a match, I can almost always serve better. I don't think I've ever lost a match and said, I served perfect. Anytime I've served amazing, I wouldn't normally lose a match. It's very copout to lose to those guys and say, I could have just served better.

There's things deeper with point structure, certain shots in rallies, certain shots that trouble me that I need to get better at.

Like I said, kind of playing those three matches in a row, I felt like I got to see some common trends. I've been working on some stuff to help me in those situations, on those very specific, particular shots.

Q. What did you think when you saw Daniil with the upside down racquet?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, I was just laughing. I think he's really funny, to be honest. Even when he's not playing me, he always cracks me up. He's pretty funny. I was laughing

more in between the points when he was, like, tossing the racquet up.

It's just him. He had the upside down racquet, but it's 40-Love on my serve. It's whatever. He ended up making the return anyways.

I had to tell myself to really, like, focus. The way he played some of the points at 5-2 when he was serving showed me that he wanted to hold that game, then he was going to try to break me at 5-3.

Sometimes when your opponents, like, make it appear almost like they're not trying, maybe they're not trying for a game, you can kind of lose your focus. Then they start trying again, they kind of catch you off guard. That happens a lot more in pro tennis than you think, the kind of half tank, then I'm going to try a real quick play, and then they get you.

I had to stay focused and be ready at 5-3. I knew at 5-3, if I didn't serve a good game, he wasn't just going to just give it to me. He was going to try really hard. He was going to play a good game. So luckily for me I served a really, really solid game there. Didn't really give him a chance to play that game.

But yeah, I mean, he was going to definitely fight for that game. If he breaks me there, we're basically back to even, so...

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