

Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters

Principality of Monaco

Saturday, 13 April 2024

Stefanos Tsitsipas

Press Conference



S. TSITSIPAS/J. Sinner

6-4, 3-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. First, what do you think about your level of play today, in general, but especially in the first set?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: It was one of the best first sets I have played on clay. So much consistency and great quality of shot-making. Just pure, clean game from start to finish. I was playing as equally good on the cross as I was playing on the down-the-line.

It was a great feeling to be kind of in the zone right from the beginning. It was important that I started the game like this to give myself a chance also in the third set, because, you know, I feel like my opponent knew that I had that level and I could play that any time so he, in a way, had to be careful of being consistent with me.

Q. Did you feel something special this morning? Did you feel like it could happen like this? How do you explain what happened at the beginning of the third when you began to less have focus on your shot maybe with a lot of framed balls?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Yeah, that moment, I still don't know whether it was my focus or the bounces were bad. You know, it happens with clay that you get bad bounces.

They cleaned the court in the beginning of the third set, but the bounces were not there. I was not framing during the entire match, so it did happen in that particular moment.

I didn't think much of it then. I knew I was getting fatigued and tired, but I just couldn't stop. I mean, I accepted that the break happened. I just had to move on and continue my game with whichever tools I had at the moment and just find a way through by fighting a little bit, by making a lot of returns in, by building up the points and seeing whether or not he cracks first.

Q. What do you think about tomorrow matchup? Do you prefer Djokovic or Ruud? What are you thinking to prepare for this?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, they have very good stats on clay, both of them. One has slightly a flatter, closer-to-the-baseline game. The other one uses much more spin in his game and uses a lot of rotations to try and open up the court, a very clay-court game.

So, you know, depending on whoever wins, I will approach certain things in a different direction and way. So far we don't know. So far they're still playing.

It's difficult out there with the heat. It's physical, and it wears you off? Is that how you say it, "wears you off"?

I think the conditions make the battle, there is pleasure in the battle, because playing in Europe under these conditions feels like home. You know, I grew up playing as a young kid in similar conditions, so grinding and playing for hours and hours out there brings me a little bit of my childhood memories on the tennis courts in Greece.

Q. We had a very, very key point today at 3-1 when it was the breakpoint for him. You made a double fault but the umpire didn't see it. Jannik explain that he was not that angry but maybe the cramps after that, because he was maybe overthinking, maybe nervous about this moment, he could have had a double break. How do you manage to forget this moment maybe and keep trying? How do you think this had an influence of the match?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: It might have had bigger influence to my opponent than it had on me. I was dealing with a break down at that moment.

Of course double break down wouldn't make things easier for me (smiling), and just holding serve there was crucial. I think the match would have turned out completely different if that would have been called out. I will agree that it would have been pretty bad for me if that call was made.

There are a lot of weird things on clay that we don't see on



other surfaces. One of them is the line calling and sometimes the marking.

As someone that has played a lot on clay, I try and make the calls myself. I don't rely too much on line umpires to do their job. Always, whenever I hit a ball that's close to the baseline or the sideline that I think might be out, I hit it and I just have a quick look before I continue the point.

So I have learned this way. That's why I don't get in conversations or arguments with umpires, because I understand mistakes can happen. I try to rely entirely upon myself. That's how I grew up doing.

Q. Are you happy with the fact that next year we will have the electronic line calling everywhere?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: In clay including? Sure, yes, less drama, for sure. It will help the game be cleaner and avoid any mistakes and tantrums such as the ones earlier this week on center court that we saw.

Yeah, tennis deserves drama, but I think it should all be done on the tennis court with performance instead of cursing and swearing and yelling. This is not a beautiful side of the sport.

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