

# BNP Paribas Open

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

## Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/M. Berrettini

6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Seemed like this one really was an important victory for you. Kind of something you have been waiting for for a while. Tell me exactly what it means to you. Do you think it can be sort of a trigger for you to notch a huge top-10 win like that, especially in California?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, I have been looking for some good results in these big events for a bit, and I definitely let more than a couple kind of slip away from me that I felt like I should have won.

So it's nice to kind of just play a solid match, close it out, close it out in the end there. You know, move forward, give myself another opportunity to maybe make quarterfinal, semifinal here at a big event.

Obviously this one being close to home, being a tournament I grew up coming to, it's a little extra special.

**Q. I wonder if you could answer me a question about the younger generation of Americans, Brandon, Sebi, and Jenson. Reilly made some comments about how those guys are really strong and he thinks maybe even stronger than the generation of you, Reilly, Tommy, and Frances, of course. I wonder what your thoughts are on those guys, having faced them and how they are coming along. Is it kind of nice to have this younger crop pushing you at this point in time?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, you know, it's kind of a new thing that -- I mean, I guess we are still pretty young, but we're not the young guys anymore, you know. I'm 23, and Tommy and Reilly -- me and Frances are 23. Tommy and Reilly are 24 now. Yeah, it's kind of weird we are not the young guys anymore.

All three of those guys are really good. I think Sebi might be a little bit older than Jenson and Brandon. I could be

wrong. I'm pretty sure though.

Yeah, I mean, all three of them are really good players and only time will tell, you know, in a couple years where they end up and how they develop their games. They all have a lot of potential.

**Q. You mentioned growing up around here, coming to the tournament when you were younger. Can that put more pressure on you when you show up here, or are you very comfortable being here?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: No, I'd say I'm pretty comfortable here. I think they said this is my sixth or seventh time playing this tournament. I'm pretty settled in.

It's like any other tournament, but I feel, if anything, more confident here just because it's close to home, I feel like the crowd's always great for me here. You know, if anything, extra, extra confidence playing here.

**Q. All your family and friends show up?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yep, exactly.

**Q. Do you hang around with them afterwards too, or do you try and isolate yourself a little bit and still be in tennis mode?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: You know, it depends. I mean, this week since the tournament has been going on, I have just been kind of sticking to myself, doing all things I would normally do at a tournament just to make sure I'm at my best, ready to go. Kind of just been in tournament mode.

**Q. You have had a recent injury and came back pretty strong from that. What do you attribute that to? Because for a lot of players, it's not that easy to come back so quickly.**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, I got lucky with my injury. It was a pretty simple fix of, you know, basically all the -- you know, "surgery" is obviously a bit of a scary word for an athlete, but of all the potential surgeries, it was one of the quickest turnarounds, quickest recoveries, and, yeah,



my surgeon did a great job.

Then I went straight into rehab and strengthening just a couple of days after my surgery, so it's not like I had that down time a lot of people have after surgery where you lose everything, you lose your muscle, you have to rebuild. I went back on the tennis court to hit. I had probably only taken a week off of tennis, which is not that match.

So I didn't really feel like -- you know, I healed very quickly.

Diet was a big part of it I think to keep the inflammation down, get the swelling down quickly. Then a lot of hard work, physical therapy. That managed the injury part of it and the recovery to the surgery, and then the tennis and the fitness never really went away, because the down time wasn't long enough for me to, I don't know, lose muscle or lose like my feel hitting the ball.

I think the biggest thing was just showing up to a grass court tournament not having played a grass court tournament when I got to Wimbledon. But, yeah, the time in between the injury and me playing again was so short that I actually didn't have to kind of mount a full-on comeback like a normal, you know, like someone who had a surgery is out for a couple of months.

**Q. On the age question, and it seems like at this point in the tours, the age at which players are peaking seems to be ticking upwards a bit. How does that give you some, I don't want to say hope, but inspiration to know that's the trend and maybe you don't look back on the earlier years in the career and say, Well, I missed the opportunity, because the opportunities are definitely still there?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, I know that I will probably be playing my best tennis when I'm, I don't know, somewhere between 26 to 30 years old. So I'm just trying to work as hard as I can, put myself in as many opportunities I can to have big weeks, breakthroughs, just kind of get myself in a good position for when I'm playing my best tennis where I can really have a big breakthrough.

Yeah, it happens at different times for everybody, and I know that I'm nowhere near playing, you know, the best tennis that I'm going to play. I know that I have a lot of improving to do, and I'm working extremely hard to do it. I have just got to kind of keep putting myself in these opportunities, winning some of these matches, getting myself deep in these tournaments, and you know it will start falling into place soon.

**Q. Could you share with us just a special early memory of either playing here as a boy or being here as a fan very early in your life?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, when I was like probably like 10, 12 years old I'd come here with my friends. We'd kind of just hang out, roam out here, maybe not watch that much tennis, hang out. It was cool to be at a tournament.

Then I played here, played Easter Bowl, won Easter Bowl here when I was 16, 17 years old. Then I played the prequalifying tournaments here a couple years, you know, hoping to win it, get a wildcard in the qualifying. I thought that would be pretty cool when I was 15, 16. Never actually won the prequalies, but I have spent a lot of time here.

**Q. What was your Easter Bowl result? Do you have a favorite particular memory watching the soccer games practice fields or match from early on?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Sorry, what was my Easter Bowl result?

**Q. Your Easter Bowl result, yeah, the year that you played it here.**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I won it when I was like 16 or 17 years old. I remember I was down -- it was that first practice court that everyone is always watching over there. I don't know the actual number of it, but I was down a set and 5-0, and I came back and won I think in like the second or third round. That's a pretty good memory here.

**Q. You had an opportunity to play San Diego recently, and I will tell you the fans in San Diego thought that that tournament was an incredible gift for them. What were your impressions of that event? How would you feel about that event continuing?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, as far as ATP 250 events go, that was like a very high-level one. Fans were great. The tournament was well run. It makes perfect sense for them to have it again. I don't know why they wouldn't.

It felt so much better than a lot of the tournaments we do have on tour, and the fans really appreciated it, which is awesome, you know, get a lot of fans out there. That's just like -- the tournament was kind of thrown together very short notice, a lot shorter notice than most tournaments are. So with all that taken into consideration, still they did a great job. I'd love to come back to my hometown and make that a yearly stop.

**Q. I wonder if you could look ahead to facing Jannik Sinner, a player who has been on the rise for quite some time. What are your thoughts facing him with such a big opportunity in front of you?**



TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, you know, he's a really good player. We have practiced a couple of times, and it's always actually been really high level. I have said I kind of like the ball he hits, the pace he gives me. I think he does too. You know, whenever we practice, it's always very back-and-forth, big hitting.

I think it's going to be a lot of that in our match. I think I'm going to have to be aggressive, serve well. It's going to be a lot of side-to-side, big hitting off both sides.

**Q. With the conditions at Indian Wells, a lot of people have different feelings whether they like it or don't like it, the ball flies, the high bounce. How does that suit your game? Do you like playing here?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I like the conditions here. The ball typically, if you play during the day, the ball typically goes through the air pretty quick because it's so dry. It's hot. I like that. I don't necessarily love the balls, to be honest. I think they get pretty big. Sometimes they fly.

I don't know. I have never really played great with these balls, but I like the courts, slow conditions. If you play at night, it's extremely slow conditions. But it's entertaining. It's a lot of long rallies.

For whatever mixed feelings, for whatever reason I feel like I have always played well here, so I can't complain.

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