

BNP Paribas Open

Wednesday, October 13, 2021

Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/J. Sinner

6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What does it mean to be able to perform that way, go on a run like this in California at the end of a long season?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, it's huge for me. It's big especially to have a good win against a really good player yesterday, then kind of come back and play even better today against another really good player.

Just play my game, play it well, play confidently, just close it out. It feels great to do it. Also it's such a special tournament to me, as well.

Q. Were you extra comfortable out there because you had some experience practicing with Jannik?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think I definitely knew what to expect. I've only practiced with Jannik twice, I think. But both times have been I feel like I left the court and, Wow, that was such a high-level practice.

I feel the way he hits the ball feels really good for the way I hit the ball. I like the pace and the spin. I don't know how to really describe it. I feel like both of us hit the ball well off of each other's balls.

I definitely knew or expected to play well today.

Q. You spoke a couple times this season about how you see yourself from 26 to 30 years old. Give us a look into what that Taylor Fritz is like compared to what you're playing like now?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think I only said that yesterday, I'm not sure.

Q. I think I heard you say it once before actually.

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm not sure.

I think the finished version of my game, I'm going to be playing a lot like I was today. I'd like to still improve my serve even more, then have my forehand be even more reliable than it is now, more of a weapon, less errors on it.

I've been working a lot on coming forward to net. I'd love to be able to finish more points at net, feel more comfortable with it, because I hurt people with my power, kind of back them up. Coming to net can add another layer to my game.

Just improving the return, becoming stronger and faster, which I've been able to do over the past couple years. I think there's still a lot of room for improvement.

Everyone kind of peaks at different times, but I'm 23 right now. I just know that I'm nowhere near where I think I'm going to be as a player.

Q. Did you see a deep run like this coming heading into this tournament? How do you feel you were playing, physically, coming into the tournament?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'd say pretty good. I felt pretty good. The last couple months every tournament I've kind of come into, I just lost some close ones, maybe not performed my best in some really tight situations. It's nice to kind of put it together this week.

I feel like the level, the tennis level, and the fitness level, in practice and off the court, out of the actual matches has been there. It's kind of just nice to put it together.

Q. I hope you won't take this as an insult, but I don't think I've seen you show this type of emotion. I'm thinking the last time was in Geneva at Laver Cup. How big was this today for you emotionally?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, it's definitely -- I feed out of the energy. There's a lot of emotion in Laver Cup because you're playing for the team, I have the whole team pump me up. This also is a home tournament for me basically. It means a lot. Also my first Masters 1000 quarterfinal.

Most of the time I'm not happy with how I'm playing so it's tough for me to get really pumped up. Like I'm very, very hard on myself. That's something I think we've been trying to work on.

I'm super happy with how I'm playing. I played well the last two days against two really, really good opponents, really good players. I think that's where that's coming from, is the crowd, and me being very happy with my game.

Q. Reilly put out some interesting posts about media coverage of tennis, that you should have a voice. Is there something you would like to see change in the way pressers are done that might be more entertaining for fans, more interesting for everyone?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think the thing is media is just tough because it's at times tough to have a bit of a personality because there's always going to be people criticizing. It's very tough to make everyone happy. If you say something polarizing, you're going to rub people the wrong way.

It would be really nice for people to be able just be themselves, kind of say things how they are, not have to worry about I guess the implications of it.

I've always tried to keep it pretty real in my press conferences. That's one thing I love about Reilly, is he also just kind of tries to say things how they are, he doesn't really care about what people are going to say because he knows he's kind of speaking the truth.

Q. My hope is that we get a chance to talk a little bit more about this with you guys, just figure out a way to move it forward in a positive direction.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, of course. Players get a lot of criticism. No one really knows the players other than, like, the people that see them behind closed doors. It's very tough to judge players off of what they say in press. A lot of things people say in press, it's not them.

Q. There's the image, then the person.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Exactly. I think keeping it real is something that can let player personalities shine through. But it's tough because it can be so polarizing.

Yeah, that's kind of how I've always tried to do it.

Q. Can you run down how this week is different? Do you have extra family and friends around giving you extra energy during these couple weeks?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, it's definitely nice having a support team kind of around me, other than my base, my base group. My parents are here, brother, friends come out. I think it definitely, like, maybe pumps me up a little bit more. More than anything it's the home crowd, this being a special event for me.

Same with San Diego, though. Unfortunate. I kind of let it slip away from me in San Diego, if anyone caught the match (smiling). Yeah, it's just nice, really nice, to be here.

Q. You're making up for that here.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Trying my best.

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