

# BNP Paribas Open

Friday, October 15, 2021

## Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/A. Zverev

4-6, 6-3, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. It's obviously a massive result. How did you get out of those match points? If you could rate where you feel this result is for your young career.**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I was able to get out of those match points. I mean, the one on his serve, which is obviously the most dangerous one, he double-faulted. The one on my serve, I played a solid point. I made a pretty good pickup off a deep ball. I easily could have missed that.

I just told myself I really needed to hold that game just to kind of fight through that. I really wanted to make him have to serve out the match.

Obviously he's 3 in the world. This is the farthest I've ever been in a big tournament. It's easily the best win of my life, against a really tough opponent on arguably the biggest match I could possibly play. So it's great.

**Q. You talked on the court about confidence in the big moments. Could you talk about that a little bit. What are the conversations you're having with your coach? How do you approach that in practice to get that belief to go for your shots?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: You know, the thing is you can't. You can't practice those situations. It's just like, you know, you can't simulate being on a court playing for the points and the money. It's my whole life, so you can't simulate that in practice.

You just have to trust yourself, trust what you're doing. The best thing you can do off the court is just put the practice in, put the work in so you can trust yourself as much as you possibly can in those situations.

I definitely don't always feel like that. But it's nice, at the end there I felt like, I don't know, I was nervous but anytime

that thought went into my head of maybe being nervous, maybe when I was up in the tiebreaker, don't choke, I just immediately, the next thought that came in was, I'm not going to, I'm not going to choke.

I just had the confidence to keep hitting my forehand, keep being aggressive. Whenever the chance to kind of make a play happened, I went for it. I felt good about it.

It's the biggest positive I'm taking away from this match, for sure, is just how I felt.

**Q. As a student of this tournament, you probably know there hasn't been an American winner in the men's singles for 20 years. What would it mean for you to end that drought this weekend?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, I'm just taking it one match at a time. But it would be huge for me, huge for American tennis if I could win.

But like I said, just one match at a time like I've been doing. That's how I got here. Just focused on tomorrow, and then we'll think about the rest later.

**Q. I'd like to ask you about your next opponent, Nikoloz Basilashvili. What can you say about his game? What might be your strategy against a guy who can hit balls so well?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, he's very tough, especially when he's playing with confidence. He hits the ball so big off of both sides. I just have to kind of play my game, not get too pushy or worried about making balls. I have to be aggressive, stay aggressive, so he can't really push me around.

It makes sense why he's done well here, because it's slower conditions. He can hit through it. He has time to set up and just crush the ball.

I just got to focus on my own game, serve well, be aggressive, play the big situations well like I did today.

**Q. If you had to step back and put this victory, say one**



**or two words that just capture the experience, what would it be and why?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I don't know. Maybe just like it's unbelievable or it's a dream. I'd say something like that.

**Q. You grew up picturing these kind of moments. Would you take us to that moment where you clinched the match, the arms go up in the air, sun coming into the stadium, what was going through your head?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Kind of just like, Wow, I did it. The fans going crazy. I don't know. It's like a dream come true. It's tough not to almost like get a little bit emotional because I've worked so hard my whole life for these type of moments.

It's really amazing that it's paying off.

**Q. A side note. Angel Lopez said Pancho Segura used to make him play for money, even when he was training. Maybe you can play for Chipotle or something like that. You probably don't want to change up a whole lot between now and your next match, stay focused in that direction, but you played Laver Cup. You've had the crowd with you today. Working the crowd to your advantage. What are your thoughts about that?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm sorry? What's the question?

**Q. Just working the crowd.**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, can't really like work it. I'm from here. I'm in Southern California where I still live, where I was born. I'm very fortunate the crowd's on my side. I don't think I can work a crowd when I'm playing a match, playing a match in Europe somewhere.

It's just nice having the crowd on my side, kind of feeding off that home tournament energy. It's definitely really nice.

**Q. Correct me if I'm wrong, but the way you're talking about the confidence like you did earlier, it's almost as if it's some kind of a revelation, a new feeling. Is that the case? Have you felt it before? If not, why do you think it's come now?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, I felt it back a while ago. I'd say it comes and goes obviously depending on how well I'm maybe playing in that week.

For whatever reason, it's really feeling good this week. Just that confidence to kind of go after the ball and trust myself, not play tight, tentative tennis, just really go after it

and win the match. It feels good and I hope to keep it going.

I know when I'm feeling like this and playing like this, that's what makes me a good player, that's what gave me a lot of success early on in my career, was just that fearlessness to trust myself in the big moments.

It's just really nice to kind of have that feeling back.

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