

BNP Paribas Open

Sunday, March 13, 2022

Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/K. Majchrzak

6-1, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Last year's semifinalist off to a good start today. Talk about the win.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, first match, a little bit of nerves, obviously, so it was good to kind of get through it safely. Played pretty well. Some things I would like to work on tomorrow, do a bit better, but all in all like in a pretty good place with my game after that match.

Q. After your nice run here in October, you arrive this year with more confidence, obviously a great starting match, or do you not feel differently?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, definitely more confidence. How I'm kind of like approaching the tournaments definitely different than last year. Last year I wanted to, I really just needed like a win, a couple wins. And this year I'm looking obviously to take it one match at a time. But like I'm looking to go deep and have a similar result to last year.

Q. The change in your coaching setup, what led to you doing that and what benefits have you found from that so far?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean it's not too much of a change. Paul is still coaching me, working with me in L.A. And so is Nainkin is still there. I was just told by the USTA that Nainkin was going to not be traveling anymore. They were going to keep him at the center in Carson, so I just needed to kind of find someone to travel with me full-time.

I had done some weeks with Mike, and especially at the end of last year we did some weeks, and it was going really well. So bringing him on to the team has been really good. Like I said, it's kind of just we knew that it worked already, so I had a lot of confidence hiring him more full-time.

He brings a lot of intensity and he pushes me really hard to work more. And sometimes I need that extra kick to do extra and work extra. So I think that's something that

works really well with us.

Q. Curious about this film crew. Are you doing something for Netflix?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, for Netflix.

Q. Is that weird having people following you around all the time? Are you used to it?

TAYLOR FRITZ: No, it's not all the time, but it's... I don't know, like I think if I was really worried about, like how it was going to be like perceived I think in the show, I think maybe it would be. I would have to like watch things I said, what I did, whatever.

But like I've answered a couple times, like I'm just going to be myself and it is what it is on the outcome. I hope people like me, but if not I'm just going to not worry about it. So I haven't really paid too much attention to it.

Q. You looked super comfortable out there today. Is there a difference between maybe where you were last year mentally, where you sort of expect yourself to be successful, as you push deeper into these big-time events?

TAYLOR FRITZ: For sure, I think just my level as a player has gone up. I think I've gone up several levels. I think I'm a way better player than I was when I was here last year and I think I've improved a lot.

So, yeah, I expect a lot more of myself. Back then when I think I was ranked about almost 40 six months ago, however long ago this tournament was, and now I'm in between 15 and 20. I'm looking, my goal is to move into the top-10. So I definitely have a lot higher expectations.

So today maybe it didn't look it, but a little bit of nerves, kind of got to shake it off in the first match but I feel really good.

Q. You talked about just now going up several levels. Is that more on the forehand, having confidence to go for shots? Could you talk about how you have done



that.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, it's a combination of a lot of different things I've been improving, for sure. But what's kind of I think tying it all together and really making the difference is just the forehand. That's become so much more of a weapon, I hit so many more winners on it than I used to. It's just something I really kind of needed in my game. It sets up a lot of points, it wins me a lot of big points. So, yeah, just kind of having that clicking has been really important for me.

Q. You always had a great forehand, but how did you pick it up? Was it practice, practice?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm not sure. Honestly, I think I would always have this joke that I hit my forehand better when I was younger, when I was 17 or 18. And actually just went back, last year just went back and like watched some videos of me hitting it back then and kind of started like visualizing that, and then it just started like clicking in matches and I started really swinging out on it and it just started feeling really good.

Q. In your conversations with Michael at the ATP Cup, and I'm curious you guys look at statistics, are there a few statistics that you measure yourself by that you're focused on that you want to hit during matches or?

TAYLOR FRITZ: What do you mean by that?

Q. Just wondered are there some key statistic that's maybe you and your staff use when you want to measure how you're performing?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Not really. I think not statistics we can really look at. Like I'm definitely trying to target a certain ball speed with my groundstrokes. I feel like when I'm hitting the ball above a certain threshold, like miles per hour, then I'm usually playing pretty well.

I definitely play my worst when I'm playing tight and hitting the ball soft. But we don't, it's not like I'm going to go look at my stats and see how, where my average groundstroke speed was today. More of the stats that I look at are like before the match I like to know my opponent's like tendencies in certain situations, serve, and where they like to go and stuff like that.

But as far as my game goes, like it's more about just like playing my game and we can see that without the statistics.

Q. I would like to refer to your going to Reno and Davis Cup play. If you were asked to give a tip or

advice to just a weekend warrior who is going up into the mountains to play in high altitude, what would you tell them? And secondly, what was it like for you to sort of ping-pong from the high altitude down here?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I would tell them to definitely tighten their rackets up maybe like four, five pounds. It would help them keep the ball in a little bit. And then, no, I'm definitely not a fan of playing at altitude, for sure. I think I've had all the worst losses of my career in the high altitude.

But that being said, I went there with a good attitude, knowing that I just kind of had -- we kind of just had to get the job done and beat the people that were in front of us playing for Colombia, and so we did that.

It was a fun week. And, yeah, I am glad that I -- I would have rather done Reno than somewhere on the East Coast and then have to come all the way over here, so it was close to Indian wells, so I am at least happy for that.

Q. Doing a piece on the American men that are 24 and under and younger, and there's a lot of them. But I'm curious to get your take and Jenson Brooksby. Some people describe him as tricky. What makes him such a special player so quickly on tour?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, he's definitely tricky. I think a lot of people might underestimate him just because of the way he plays. But he's really scrappy, gets a ton of balls back, puts you in uncomfortable positions. I really think that he catches a lot of people by surprise and he competes really hard as well.

Q. When you win a 57-minute match to start a tournament does that sort of set you on a better course than if this was an almost three-hour match or something like that?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean it feels good. Like confidence wise like yeah, I feel good. I think there's a couple things I need to work on tomorrow kind of like brush up and practice. Maybe could have just done a, sounds like very nit picky because obviously the match, it was 6-1, 6-1 today, but I think there were some things I could have done a bit better.

So, tighten up some things tomorrow in practice but, yeah, confidence-wise, it's great to start out with a match like this.

Q. You've done a lot of great things in your career, been willing to travel far and wide, play on all surfaces, but if you could change one thing that you've done so far what would that be?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Like what do you mean?

Q. Oh, choice of coaches, choice of tournaments played.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Okay, I got it. Back in 2017 I had some like knee issues and stuff, but like, honestly, I was feeling pretty good. I think I had just won a couple matches here and I played pretty well in Miami and we made the decision to skip the clay court season and just do a ton of fitness to try and get myself a lot stronger and then be ready for Wimbledon.

And I wish I would have just kept playing throughout that time. I think maybe I got a little bit stronger, but I showed up like really not match ready when I came back. I was fit, but like I didn't think my tennis was there at all.

That year was like the worst year since I've been on tour. I think I finished it outside the top 100. I would have preferred just to keep playing and not skip that clay season that year.

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