

BNP Paribas Open

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/M. Fucsovcics

6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Another solid performance for you today. Also some surprising shots, like the reverse serve you did earlier. Talk a little bit about that maybe.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, it was a good match. That was a super, super long game we were having. I couldn't seem to win it even when I was making first serves on my game points. I felt like the balls were just super blown up and I was against the wind. Even if I hit my spot and hit a good serve I feel like he was returning it.

I just got to the point where I was like, nothing else is working so I might as well just do my reverse serve, and maybe that will -- I was just kind of at the point where nothing else was working so I might as well try it. I ended up winning the point, so I guess it worked out.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Does it just get more and more comfortable for you, the groove that you have on these courts in this place?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think for sure once you get a couple matches in a row, for me it just does feel like more comfortable. I feel more confident. I feel like I can play better each match.

I think it's just getting better and better for me each match for sure just building the confidence.

Q. Facing Ben early and having a really difficult challenge maybe kind of set you free a little bit?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think it would have been the same effect if I played maybe an easier match and played well. I think just playing good tennis, winning, is what's going to give me confidence. I maybe could have gone without such a tough match (smiling).

But it was, you know, it was great to get through that one of course.

Q. On the big picture, you have really set the tone for the American men that were constantly talked about over the last year, with the 10 guys in the top 50. You're on the top right now, but you know Tommy and Frances have really followed your lead and done incredible things. Do you feel like a leader in a sense in setting that tone? If so, is that important to you?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I wouldn't say "leader," but I would say I've shown -- I think I've shown everyone what's possible, because they know, they've always known they can play with me and can compete with me, and if I'm able to do something then I know that they believe they can do it too.

I think it gives a lot of -- what's the word I'm looking for? -- I guess a lot of reassurance or confidence to them that they can produce the same results that I can produce. I feel like if roles were reversed, I would feel the same way, as well.

I guess it's extra motivation as well to try and catch me, try and gun for me, I guess. That doesn't change the fact that we're all extremely close friends. It's great to see them step up as much as they have in the past six months, for sure.

Q. I asked Tommy the other day, and he commented on, he said, We all want to be where Taylor is at and we're gunning for that. He also said you made a lot of improvements, especially your defense. He said your defense is way better than it has been in the past and it's no longer even close to a liability. It's a strength. I just wanted to ask you, what do you think about Tommy and Frances? How have they changed and improved over the last years? The results certainly say they have.

TAYLOR FRITZ: For me, Frances I think has just been, I feel like Frances hasn't -- I feel like the level has always been there. I think he's just been kind of getting over the hump and winning a lot of these close matches that used to not go his way.

I think he is just more consistent putting the results together. For me personally I think he's just been a lot



more just professional, just take care of business. That's something that maybe he would, you know, some weeks be on, some weeks be off, whatever.

He's just become so much more consistent and gotten over the hump of winning those matches that just sometimes wouldn't go his way, which makes a big difference when you're late into a tournament and the points vary from 180 to 360. It's a big difference when you start winning those matches, and he's been winning those.

With Tommy, I think a lot of it is the consistency as well. I feel like sometimes he could play loose games in matches and loose points, and I feel like he's really tightened up his game a lot. He's the same player. He just gives a lot less free points and gives you a lot less than he used to. I think that's been a big change.

I think from both of them too is just the belief that they belong and they should be having these results. I think that's always a massive part of anyone having success is just believing that they should be having success.

Q. Do you guys talk about it together at all or does it just go without saying where you're all headed and what you all want to do?

TAYLOR FRITZ: We were talking about Davis Cup the other day. Frances was like, Come on, guys, what are we doing? Let's get it together. Like let's win one (smiling).

Yeah, I mean, we definitely talk about team stuff like that. Yeah, I don't know.

Q. It's going to maybe Sinner or Stan. Thoughts on both of those and what that challenge will be like for you.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, it's been a really long time since I've played Stan, so I can't speak too much about that. Obviously he's such a legend. I would look forward to that.

Sinner, he's a super strong baseliner. I feel like he's improved his serve a lot recently. We played here two years ago. I guess not a whole two years ago because the tournament in October or whatever it was. Yeah, we have always had good matches. I'd say we both play kind of similar.

Yeah, whichever one it is, it's going to be fun.

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