

BNP Paribas Open

Thursday, March 16, 2023

Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



J. SINNER/T. Fritz

6-4, 4-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: First of all, not the result you wanted, Taylor. Anything positive you can take from this match?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Not really (smiling). No, it's a tough match. You know, I found a way to get back in it and go into the third set, went down a break in the third and got it back. I don't know. I put myself in a decent chance to win the match, but in the end, I just couldn't make it happen.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What do you think Jannik did really well in the third set that allowed him to kind of snap it open at the end?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think the wind played a really big part in how the match was decided. I'm not sure, I mean, what it feels like for people watching, but on the court, it was making a big difference. I think that he played the side when he had the wind at his back, when he was with the wind, I thought he played that side a lot better than I did.

He was able to have a lot better controlled aggression on that side, I feel like. On that side it was much easier to dictate play and attack, but it's also much easier to miss balls on that side. Because the wind is blowing the ball with you, it's easy to miss it long, it's easy to make more mistakes on that side.

So on that side I felt like I was a little bit too passive. I felt like if I kind of took a cut, the wind would just take it long. I felt like when I was against the wind, I was swinging as hard as I could on every ball and the wind was just absolutely killing it, and it wasn't going anywhere. I kind of just had to rely on him to miss.

I thought when I was against the wind doing that and I couldn't really hurt him, he was doing a really good job on the side with the wind of just attacking me and not giving me free points.

I'd say the two games that I got broken in the third, I just

didn't really feel like I could do much in the points. I had to just kind of like hope that he'd get a miss, just because of how strong the wind was in my face.

Q. The wind was the side you were on, that was the tough side for you the last game of the match?

TAYLOR FRITZ: The last game of the match was the better side.

Q. For you?

TAYLOR FRITZ: For both of us. He broke my serve. Every game he broke my serve on was when he was with and I was against. It was much harder against. I mean, we started the third set with I was against the wind, he broke me, and then we switched and then he was against the wind and I broke him back.

On that side it was just very hard to just do anything with the ball, like every shot you hit, the wind kills it. So it was just tougher to like penetrate through the court, get free points.

So I thought whoever was on the side with the wind helping them, they kind of just kind of held the power to win the game if they played it well.

Q. You started the match with the court in the sun and then it got to shade. Did it play a part? Did it make any difference?

TAYLOR FRITZ: To be honest, I'm usually the first to complain about shadows on the court. I absolutely hate it, but I didn't think it really made a difference. I barely even noticed it today.

Q. It's not easy to come in and talk with us just a short while after a loss. A lot of emotions going on in terms of defending sort of on your home court. Can you just talk about your feelings right now and your feelings about your loss.

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, it is what it is. Obviously I wanted to keep going. I obviously wanted to defend, but I



just wanted to keep taking it one match at a time. I felt like I put myself in a good, decent position to be able to win the match today.

Like I said, he was the better player and he played a lot of the situations in the match better than I did. He deserves to win. I don't know, I guess it's a little bit easier to take a loss when you feel like the other person did, you know, did play well and did deserve it.

I feel like I didn't perform bad, but quarterfinals, whatever, it's a decent result. I hate losing in quarterfinals and semifinals probably more than I hate losing in like the first and second round of tournaments. But it happens. Just gotta move on.

You know, back to keep it going in Miami, because what really matters is the race and how I'm going to finish this year.

Q. How far has Jannik come since the last time you faced him?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, I think both of us have improved quite a bit, but the general parts of our game are the same. You know, I've practiced with Jannik quite a bit, so it's not like this is the first time that I'm seeing his game since we played two years ago.

But I've known his serve has improved a lot. As far as his groundstrokes go, they've always been really good. So I can't say I see much of a change there. I think that's the only thing that he ever really needed to improve from when we played two years ago was the serve, and it seems to be a lot better. Like I said, I've known that. We've practiced quite a bit.

ATP, you know, we did like a thing, they asked us who I thought was going to have a good year this year, and I said Jannik because he still finished where he finished last year, I want to say it's like 12 or -- he still finished where he finished, and he pulled out of so many tournaments where he was already like deep in, just felt like when he was healthy and playing he's had great results.

You know, he's a really good player.

Q. Talking of the race and the rankings, you might actually stay in the top 10 in the rankings, even though you lost some of last year's points. Do you feel you're an established top-10 player and somebody who can collect results on most surfaces all year round?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Well, I mean, we'll see how I handle the clay court season this year. I think last year I didn't really

get a chance to see, I felt like I started strong, quarterfinals Monte-Carlo, and then I had a stress fracture in my foot and I was out the whole clay court season, so it was tough to tell.

I think hopefully using a decent seeding at tournaments, getting slightly better draws, I can produce some good clay court results.

I do think that my level is, consistent level is of that of a top-10 player, but there's also so many guys, there's like 15 guys that I also think should be in the top 10. So it's a fight between a lot of us for the spots.

Yeah, it's not a bad sign if I drop my points here and I'm still in the top 10. That means I must have been doing something right the rest of the year. Hopefully I can kind of keep it going.

Q. You touched on the aspect of emotions of losing this match. The fact that you're defending champion, does it actually hurt a little bit more? Will it sit with you a little bit more than maybe any other loss?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm not sure. Honestly, probably not, because I wasn't putting those kind of expectations on myself to start the week, that like I had to defend my title or anything like that.

I think that would have been unhealthy. I probably would have lost my first match if I was thinking like that, just with all that, like, pressure of like I need to win this tournament again.

But, I mean, like I said, it hurts more being in a position where I feel like I could have won. I felt like if I can get that hold at 4-All, then we switch sides, I go to the side where I'm with the wind, he's against it and he's serving against the wind, 4-5 down. I feel like that would have put a lot of pressure on him and I feel like I would have had a decent chance maybe to break that game.

So I do feel like if I could have gotten that hold at 4-All, it potentially could have been different. It is what it is. A loss is a loss.

Like I said, I hate more than anything losing in quarterfinals and semifinals of tournaments. You do all the work, and then do all the work of winning like three, four matches, and then don't really get the payoff or like the points and the ranking.

Q. Just to amplify that, you're more upset losing at this stage than earlier rounds? Because?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Because you put all the work in. Like I don't know, the way the rankings, the system works is it rewards better for, you know, lose first round three weeks in a row then just win a title than consistently win a couple of matches and lose in the quarterfinals and semifinals like a couple weeks in a row. It's way better to just go big and win the tournament.

So I feel like when I put the work in to win three matches, fight through a couple matches and get myself to the quarters and semis, it's really frustrating to not go all the way.

That's one thing that I've done really well the last like year and a half, is I think I'm four for five on winning the tournament when I make it to the semifinals. That's the biggest difference in why I was able to get my ranking to where I got my ranking. If I don't win those matches, then I don't think I ever even break the top 15.

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