

BNP Paribas Open

Friday, March 6, 2026

Learner Tien

Press Conference



L. TIEN/A. Walton

7-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Congrats, Learner. Talk us through your match today.

LEARNER TIEN: Yeah, obviously I felt a little bit of the nerves probably going out there. I was pretty riled up to play. I was really excited to come out to play today, so yeah, just happy to get a win.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. How different does it feel this year compared to last year? Last year you maybe were a bit of an unknown quantity. This year, highly ranked, does it feel like a different dynamic coming to events like this?

LEARNER TIEN: For sure. This is my first Masters being seeded. It's a big difference. I don't play until a little later. I get a bye.

But still, I think, you know, all these matches are tough. It's never easy to play, you know, I guess at home in a sense, just because there is a little extra pressure. You want to win, want to do well, obviously.

But on the other hand, you obviously like to play with, you know, with the crowd, with home support. So on the other hand, very motivated to go out and play.

Part of it was a little nervy today. I think that just coming in with experience, I'm sure it will kind of fade away.

Q. Obviously being a Southern California guy, what's it mean for you to do well here?

LEARNER TIEN: It means a lot. This is a tournament I really want to win, and just being an American, especially being from California, this is a very important tournament for me, a tournament I always want to perform well at.

So, you know, obviously it's early in the tournament. Still, just getting my first win here means a lot.

Q. Do you have like a lot of friends, family coming from Orange County, LA, to support you throughout this week? If so, does that make this experience a little bit different? You can sometimes have to juggle a little bit more sometimes when you're playing at a home tournament.

LEARNER TIEN: Yeah, I mean, a little bit. But I don't mind it. It's always special to have friends, family come to these tournaments because it's not super often that happens.

You know, I enjoy it. You know, things are a little busier, but at the same time, it's, like, a familiar place, so it's not overwhelming most of the time.

I kind of know my way around the area, and everything is, you know, pretty comfortable for me. So it's nice to have everyone.

Q. Obviously it wasn't your highest level, but you squeaked it out, played big points, got broke back early in the second set. You had also a match in Australia where you were first round down. Talk about managing those expectations coming into these bigger events when the first rounds bring up more nerves than maybe you want to feel?

LEARNER TIEN: Yeah, I think it's something I'm still getting used to. I think I have done a pretty good job of kind of clawing my way through some of these matches where I don't feel particularly 100% or, you know, playing at my best level, I would say.

I think I do a good job of, you know, of finding my way through these matches, problem-solving when I'm not playing my absolute best. I think it's really good for me, because I get to play through these matches where I could be down, could be losing, and I'm not playing phenomenal, but just problem-solving and trying to find a way through these matches I think is great for me in the long run.

Q. To that extent, you made two adjustments, I thought, during the match which seemed to help you.



You came in from the baseline, you started out way behind it early, and then you came in. Then you started coming to the net more. Can you just maybe talk about those two adjustments you made and how much it did help you?

LEARNER TIEN: Yeah, I mean, I didn't really notice that, honestly. If I did that, that was probably a bit more subconscious.

It was a little windy out there, so I was trying to adjust with that too. I thought he was serving very well. Especially in the wind, I thought he was serving great for the conditions.

It was just a tricky match. You know, it was kind of back and forth. I was able to snag the second but still could have gone either way in the second. I was just trying to give him different looks, especially on return. I know he was serving well, hitting his spots very well.

I tried to maybe give him a different look, throw him off a bit. It did sometimes, but I still think he did a pretty good job of serving and hitting his spots.

Q. Following up, with every match you play, I'm sure you're taking away something that helps you down the road. What do you take away from today that you think helps you maybe not even in your next match but further along in the season? Was it tenacity? Was it just, you know, finding a way to stay in it?

LEARNER TIEN: Yeah, I think every match that I come through that I don't feel like I'm playing, you know, like a 10-out-of-10 match, I think is always good for me.

You know, it just builds my confidence that I can make it through these matches, you know, when I'm not feeling my best. I think, in general, it just gives me a lot of confidence moving forward into this match and throughout the rest of the year that a lot of these matches I have played this year I have been down and I have been able to come back, and just feeling like no matter how I feel when I step out on the court I can, most of the time, find a way to come through.

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