

Davis Cup Finals

Wednesday, 14 September 2022

Team USA

Tommy Paul

Press Conference

T. PAUL/D. Evans

6-4, 4-6, 6-4

USA - 1

Great Britain - 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Can you tell me a little bit about how maybe experiences like playing against Cam at Wimbledon or playing against Dan, somehow that might have played into the result today?

TOMMY PAUL: Yeah, I mean, playing against Cam at Wimbledon was pretty similar. Without the drums, but... The whole crowd cheering for him.

It was a super exciting match there and super exciting match here. I think the level on both sides of the court was higher today. In Wimbledon I felt like Cam just fully outplayed me. I didn't play bad, but he played a really good match and obviously had a really good Wimbledon.

But today, like I said, I think it was a really high-level match. I played Dan, like, a few times. I don't think I've ever gotten him in a match before. But I played him not too long ago, a month or two ago, in Canada. We had a war there, really high level. Very similar to today. He got the best of me there.

I was happy to get my first win over him, especially at Davis Cup.

Q. What does that mean to you to have that Davis Cup win?

TOMMY PAUL: I'm super pumped. I'd love to stay undefeated. I don't know if that's super realistic. Any time I can win for my country, it's a big deal for me. Hopefully for our fans, too.

Obviously at some point I'd love for it to be a bigger deal to



Americans, to get American fans out there more. I think Frances is probably making waves right now in the States with fans. I think that's great. Any time an American is doing well, we're all excited because it's just going to make tennis bigger in the States.

Q. A quick turnaround to tomorrow. You'll be back out on court.

TOMMY PAUL: Yeah.

Q. Obviously the focus has been on GB today. How much have you had a chance to think about facing Kazakhstan and Netherlands?

TOMMY PAUL: Zero, not at all. Just been focused on Great Britain right now. We're still going on. As soon as we're done, if we win, we'll be happy. If we lose, we'll talk about it for a second and then move on to the next one.

Q. Curious about the conditions. They seemed pretty slow. How did it feel to play?

TOMMY PAUL: Yeah, conditions were very slow. Some of the slowest I've probably played in. I don't know if it's just the court or the balls or the combination of the two. Definitely very slow conditions out there. Points get extended. Hard to hit winners. Frustrating at times, but also probably more fun for the fans to watch.

I mean, at the end of the day that's probably what it's all about. I'm having fun, no matter what. Yeah, it's just different.

Q. In general over the past year and a bit more, you've gradually improved, rising up the rankings. What do you make of your recent success, it seems it's been very steady, bit by bit?

TOMMY PAUL: Yeah, I mean, it has been. There hasn't been, like, one jump at all. It's kind of just been like super steady on the way up.

I feel like it's been that way in practice, too. Like if you ask my coach, I think he would tell you that. We work on one thing, we get that down, we work on another thing, try to get that down. That translates to matches.



It hasn't been like a semifinal of a slam run or anything. That's ultimately the goal, to go really, really deep in the slams, try and win big tournaments.

I mean, it's exciting. I've been playing well. It's good to be playing well here. I think it's pretty important for us to do well this year. Last year was a tough one.

I mean, I'm having a lot of fun on court. I think that has a lot to do with it. If you're enjoying it, you're going to enjoy going out and practicing things that you need to work on. That makes a huge difference.

Q. You talk about having fun on court. How do you actually do that?

TOMMY PAUL: I get pissed (smiling).

No, I'm really competitive. I'm not, like, super up or down. I try to stay pretty levelheaded. But I'm super competitive. I mean, it's all a game, you know? If you are practicing something, you feel like you perfected something in practice, you're excited, man.

You know you're going to go to the match and be able to execute on that, and that's going to win you matches, important points, and that will win you matches.

If you love the game, it's exciting. Obviously I think you could ask every tennis player, they'll have like a love-hate relationship with tennis because it's not always, like, the most fun being away from home, traveling all the time.

I mean, I've been really enjoying my time on court. I think I've kind of figured out like a pretty good system to keep myself there.

Q. You mentioned Frances earlier. I'm sure you've been asked this before, but how does the success of your generation of players, at the forefront of U.S. men's tennis, how does your different successes push you forward and what do you take from seeing other players being successful?

TOMMY PAUL: Yeah, I mean, we're all really close friends. I think we all feel like we can beat each other. We all feel like maybe we're better than the other one, but we're all super supportive of each other.

When we see one person do well, all it does is motivate us and tell us we can do that, too, we can do a little bit better than that. It just pushes each other.

Frances, like I said, making a deep run in the Open is super exciting for all of us. I mean, in no way are any of us

jealous. We want him to do well. We're also like, I can do that now. It's also bringing so many new fans into tennis in the States. That's huge. That's what we need.

Q. I wanted to ask you about it being Bob's first time on the bench and how did he do as a captain? Could you give us insights how different are him and Mardy?

TOMMY PAUL: I mean, he's 1-0. Hasn't lost yet, so he's doing a good job (smiling).

I think everyone on the team, like, loves Bob. He's obviously played a lot of Davis Cup. He played college tennis. He knows how to work in a team. His whole career he was pretty much on a team, just him and his brother.

He has good energy all the time, a lot of fun. He's fun to play for.

Q. Are you a team guy in general? At heart are you a team guy or...

TOMMY PAUL: Yeah, I would say so. There's things I love about tennis being an individual sport, but then also I step back and I look at it as a fan. If I'm a fan of tennis, I'm like I would love to watch my favorite players get on the same team or get on teams against each other and watch that. I think that's so cool. I'm a big supporter of it.

Q. In the closing stages of the match, I think you were up 5-3, got broken when you were serving for it. Considering your record against Dan Evans, were you getting concerned at that stage? What were your thoughts right there?

TOMMY PAUL: Yeah, I mean, I don't think 'concerned' is the right word. I wouldn't say I got concerned at all. Obviously you want to serve out the match, especially in a situation where you're playing away. The whole crowd is going nuts for him.

But, I mean, I knew, I don't know how many times I'd broken him in the match, like four or something, and I knew it wasn't going to be easy for him to hold at 4-5 there. I was going to put my body on the line in that game.

I couldn't be really too disappointed with myself. I had a double in that game. He played an unbelievable game. The break point that we had for him to break me was unreal.

It makes it easier when you lose the game like that. Obviously it makes it harder, can be a little deflating. I think if you have the right mindset it can make it a little bit easier because I feel like I'm in really good shape. I was

going to go back out there at 5-4 and play another point just like it. I was looking forward to it. I don't know if he was or not.

I played a good game there. I think the mindset was right.

Q. You've touched on having Bob as the fill-in captain. As far as the group is concerned, what have you been doing, the high points, the amusing points so far when you've been together?

TOMMY PAUL: Between me and Bob or...

Q. Just the whole group, having Bob there as well.

TOMMY PAUL: I mean, Bob is a funny guy. There's a lot of times where we're cracking jokes, having fun. But we've been having pretty much every meal together, spending time, like team time. Last night we were playing cards all together.

There's just constant banter. It's a good time. I can't really give you one example. I mean, we've all been happy here.

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