

Davis Cup Finals

Friday, 25 November 2022

Team Australia

Thanasi Kokkinakis

Press Conference

B. CORIC/T. Kokkinakis

6-4, 6-3

Team Croatia - 1

Team Australia - 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Tough one. Explain how you're feeling now. Obviously it's an annoyance, but how are you getting through it?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, it's obviously a bit flat but okay. Borna's obviously playing some good tennis right now. He's really sharp. You can tell he's had matches and in sync and he's confident and playing well.

I'm a little bit off the pace right now. I thought I played okay a couple points here or there in the second set, but even first set I had a 15-30 with the ball pretty close to over the net. I get that point, two breakpoints at 4-All, and had a good look early in the second set, but you don't take those chances against good players. That's the difference sometimes.

Yeah, he was too good today. I've got to get a bit better.

Q. He was getting a lot of advantages on your serve. Were you feeling that pressure through the two sets?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, it was tricky. He obviously served very well. And then on my serve, I felt like it was an ace or he was putting it back on my toes. I think he was guessing a lot on my serve.

When he connected with it, it paid off. I served a fair few aces, but the times, especially in that second set, I served not bad serves but he kind of gets them early and hit good returns, I felt. It's those differences in that little instant that makes a difference.

Q. What was the thinking behind pushing you into this



game today? Was it that your power might be a discomfort to...

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, I think so. I mean, I had a pretty close match with him in Tokyo not too long ago. I thought I wasn't far off there.

Yeah, I think that was the play. I have been battling a little ab thing. It was all good today. That's why Lleyton put me in.

Q. Disappointment for Jordan, obviously, having won that. But was he okay to play today? Three-hour, three days ago, I suppose.

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, no, physically he was fine. Hopefully we make it to the doubles and he'll be playing maybe in that. We'll see. I don't know. I don't know. I can't know at the moment, so we'll see what happens.

Q. I was curious when Team Australia decided that you were going to play over Jordan. It was a last-minute call, something decided beforehand?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: No. I was healthy. I wasn't quite ready to go day one. I needed a bit more training and a bit more confidence in my body to make sure I was good to go in the match, and my body felt fine on this one so Lleyton put me in.

I played every time I have been available to play or physically able to play, and that was no different today. I just got a bit outplayed.

Q. Also was curious to know whether these days you have some chat with Nick since you were playing in Turin and it was so close with Turin on the calendar, whether you had maybe some talk maybe also next year if he could join back the team?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Are you saying to try and get Nick to play Davis Cup?

Q. Yes.

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, well, we tried him this time. Unfortunately he wasn't available, but obviously we'd love to have him. He's a big asset to the team. Yeah, I

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don't think -- he wasn't available this time.

Q. When you are in a situation where your opponent is serving first and he's up 5-4 in that first set, does that really make a difference? Do you feel there is a difference that it puts another bit of pressure onto you to have to hold over there, or it's not an issue?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: A little bit, but you'd rather obviously be up 5-4 with him to serve than down 4-5, but my thought process is I always prepare returning first just to get comfortable. Hadn't played in the conditions, as well.

The last thing you want is to be uncomfortable first game and not get used to the conditions a lot or anything like that and get broken and start down Love-1.

My thing is I kind of try and use that first service game to find a bit of rhythm and hopefully get used to the conditions a little bit, because I haven't had too much court time on that court.

Yeah, didn't quite pay off in the first set, but again, that 15-30 point with the ball pretty close to over the net to get two breakpoints in the first, I'm kind of replaying that one a bit in my head.

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