

Davis Cup Finals

Saturday, 23 November 2024

Team Australia

Thanasi Kokkinakis

Press Conference

M. BERRETTINI/T. Kokkinakis

6-7, 6-3, 7-5

Team Italy - 1

Team Australia - 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Thanasi.

Q. I understand you must be disappointed, but don't you think you played pretty well? I mean, if there is anything that you really regret? Was it maybe shocking that point that he made on 5-All when you were up 15-Love and he made something unbelievable, you know, spin, serving an incredible ball? Because after that you missed immediately two shots. Is that the reason? What can you say?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: One question (smiling).

Yeah, I mean, it was a tough match. He served incredible. 89% in the third set. Didn't give me much of a chance to look in.

I regret a game I played in the second set where I lost a little bit of focus to get broken. I lost my concentration for a little bit in the third set. We were going at it back and forth, very close match.

Yeah, he hit that incredible shot at 15-Love to me. I think he makes that maybe 1 in 100 times. Incredible shot. Yeah, the crowd got behind him. I got a little bit passive, made a couple of errors.

Yeah, he didn't give me a chance on serve. He served incredible in that third set, especially.

Q. Did you expect this level from you in this week in Davis Cup?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah. I know how I can play. I have beaten good players before. I'm not the most consistent player. I don't love playing every single week,



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which is what it requires to have a good ranking unless you win a Grand Slam or massive tournaments. But I know what I can do when I'm focused and when I'm intense.

You know, had a good match the other day. Close one today. That's tennis. It's tough. I knew it was going to be a tough match. I expected Matteo to play. Yeah, good player, been top 10. I knew it was going to be tough. There wasn't going to be much in it.

Q. Congratulations on your performance. What did Lleyton say to you throughout the match because --

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: I lost.

Q. Yeah, that's the impression that he gave, but what was the pep talk? There were many difficult situations. You almost always managed to bounce back.

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: In the match?

Q. Yeah.

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: I don't know. The main thing was just to try and stay focused. That's always been the thing I struggle with. I lost my focus in the second set.

The court's playing very quick, so it was very hard to handle his slice. His first serve and his slice were the most difficult parts. Usually I love it when people slice to me, but on this court it was very tough to attack. It was skidding and not bouncing very high.

So just to try and stay focused, be sharp with my feet. Yeah, I was just trying to give myself chances on return and try and mix up some looks. Yeah, didn't obviously work. 89% in the third set is tough. It didn't give me much of a chance.

Q. Is this the most gutted you have felt for a little while?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: It's up there. I'm probably more gutted in matches where I felt like I could have given a bit more or could have been a little bit more effort, then I'm not



true to myself. This is part of tennis.

I'm flat. I knew it was an important match. There's no secret how well Jannik is playing. I needed to try and give us a chance to see what we can do. I'm hoping Alex plays an incredible match here.

But, yeah, it's a massive, massive ask against Jannik who is playing incredible. I knew it was important, which is kind of why I was playing and I thought about that. I felt like I really needed that one for Australia. Not that I don't have confidence in Alex, but the way Jannik is playing, it's tough at the moment.

Yeah, I'm flat. You know, you always feel like you've let the team down a little bit, but at the same time, I gave it my all. The only thing I can usually regret is if I didn't give my best effort. I gave that. So that's sport. You win and you lose.

Yeah, disappointed I couldn't come away with the result. But I won a tight one the other day. I lost this one. I have been on both ends now. I'm old enough to accept that this is how it is. But, yeah, it's tough when you get to the semifinals. You want to play your best tennis, and I didn't quite find that today.

Q. You mentioned the break in the second and the way he served in the third set. If you had to pick or make a point about one specific thing that maybe changed things around, would it be that break in the second?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, definitely. I think the break in the second, I had a little breakpoint first game or second game of the second set, but he hit a great serve. I couldn't regret that too much.

I just wish I could have been a little bit sharper, played a little bit better. But again, that's part of his job is to not make that easy on me.

Yeah, the third set was tit for tat. He served incredible. Didn't give me much of a look. I tried. I had a little Love-30, he had a 15-40 first game, but yeah, I wish his slice forehand didn't go in. That's probably a regret.

Mostly from my end, yeah, the second set where I kind of could feel myself drifting and got broken there, so I probably got what I deserved.

Q. You mentioned that you think you lost focus in that game. He made some slice, one a slice attack, that I don't know if you remember. Did the slice on your forehand sometimes create some problems, or...

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, I mean, I said that before. Usually I love it when people slice to my forehand. It's my best shot, and I love when I have time on that ball, but this court is very slick. It makes it tough.

He's got a very good slice. Just lost a little bit of focus. You don't want to be too passive, and then you go a little bit too aggressive and sometimes you can mishit the ball on these courts.

Yeah, the slice made it tough. Felt like we were playing an away tie, as well, which was tough. We're in Spain, but it felt like we were in Italy. It's tough, tough on Australia there.

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