

Rolex Shanghai Masters

Tuesday, 8 October 2024

Shanghai, China

Stefanos Tsitsipas

Mixed Zone



S. TSITSIPAS/A. Muller

6-3, 7-5

Q. Another solid win here for you. Maybe you could talk about the finish of the match, it was kind of unusual, but then you finished strong in the end.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: It was not that great for me, I would say, for I lost concentration, and I was able to play well during the entire match. I guess it brought a bit of frustration into me because, well, I had two nets that jumped off the net court and landed out, one on my serve, one on my forehand. It was a question of millimeters to get it over.

Yeah, I don't know, like a few unforced errors here and there caused the break. I did get frustrated because I didn't feel like I deserved that particular break. I felt like perhaps my opponent should have played way better for me to receive the break back.

Regardless of that, I continued. I know that I've been faced with moments like this before, and my, let's say, biggest asset has been removing those negative thoughts, and getting back into the match, and making things work again.

Q. This sets up a match with Daniil Medvedev. What are your thoughts ahead of that one?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, he's someone that, you know, he likes courts like this. I feel like I'm getting better with time. I feel like I've developed some good shots over the last few weeks. So far I'm happy with the way my tennis is showing.

What is missing is trying to get a good win under my belt, and that for sure will ensure and will redeem my efforts for so far of trying to get better. My whole goal is to get out there, play the best tennis that I can, and let the rest be done on their own.

Q. Do you have a goal kind of for the rest of the season, that you set between now and the end of the

year?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I mean, look, all I want is to finish healthy. I don't want any unpredictable injuries again. I've had those before, where my season ended in a very negative and traumatic way because those injuries. Some of the injuries that I had at the end of the season were quite bad and took a lot of time for me to rehabilitate. I wasn't really able to take time off because I spent the majority of my time trying to go to all these doctors and physiotherapists and fix my body again. I'm just hoping to stay injury-free for the remaining of the season.

What I would for sure like is maybe a good Masters 1000 appearance, where I can create a good story around my appearance at that Masters 1000. I don't know if that's winning or getting to the finals, but I want something that's going to really remain big and victorious for me in terms of like getting back into the tour strong again.

Q. You arrived here early, you have your mom and brother here. Does this feel like a special tournament for you?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: They usually follow me more in Europe and some of the tournaments in the States. My mother, she, obviously, raised me with tennis. She's the reason I play tennis today. She enjoys a lot watching me and coming to support me in all these tournaments. I appreciate that she's here, and the best thing about her, I guess, is that she has big knowledge of tennis. She doesn't get too much heavily involved like perhaps my dad did in the past, but she has a good eye for certain things.

I don't get to spend as much time with her when I'm on the tour. As we all know, it's very demanding out there, and you have to play tournaments week after week. But these are our ways of reconnecting and making sure we are in touch, and making sure we have something that we have in common, which is tennis. She had a career, now I have a career, I feel like it's wonderful for her to see what I'm going through.

Q. We saw some picture of you and Daniil, you guys have some interesting interactions during the lunch or

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meal, so what's your relationship with Daniil now after many years?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: What would you consider a relationship exactly?

Q. I mean, you and him, do you consider yourselves friends?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I consider him someone that I respect on the tour, much more than I did before. We've had some heated things on the court in the past, but I think those things have resolved themselves over time, and obviously we also had the time to speak about those things and have a common understanding of why these things happen.

I always want to resolve things like that, I don't want to leave them. It took awhile, obviously, a pretty long time, but it's good to kind of get it out of the way, and making sure our tennis brings peace instead of a war. It's a war zone when you're out there on the court trying to, obviously, fight your best and obviously try to get the win, but I feel like tennis should unite instead of separate.

I think there are a lot of perhaps things that he has brought into the game that are, I would consider, quite unorthodox, because you haven't seen a lot of players in the past, you know, play the way that he does. Which is, in fact, after thinking about it, in the past I might have said some mean stuff about his game, but after actually thinking about those things, I think I was completely wrong in that. There's a lot of interesting things in his game that he brings that are very different from other players. I think that's what makes him unique as a player, because you don't see players like him very often, and it gives tennis another dimension in terms of how it can be played and how differently it can be crafted. So, this is definitely something that he has offered so far to the game, and I think a lot of generations are going to remember that.

Q. Medvedev's complained about the balls at the tournament quite a lot. I wondered if you had any thoughts on that.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: The balls? Well, they tend to get a little bit, let's say, slow, once they get some time on the court, I have noticed that. They get, I guess, heavier and don't fly as much.

I guess it's the same for everyone, I don't know. I mean, you're suddenly expecting less winners, less big shots, I guess that's what happens when balls become like this. It certainly does become more physical.

I understand him though, I understand how that can be frustrating, but it hasn't been something that has been, let's say, occupying too much of my head space when I'm out there on the court. I'm just trying to make it work for me, regardless of what the ball shall feel like. Definitely understand that some players might be frustrated with that, and that has been, maybe, an issue for me in the past in some other tournaments, so I'm on the same page with that.

Q. There's been a lot of talk this year about backhands on tour. Just wondering, how proud are you of your beautiful single-handed backhand?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: We've had discussions with the single-handed backhand boys on the tour, and we haven't been a lot left on this tour that choose to play it. In fact, I've counted the amount of players that do play single-handed backhand, and I think it's down to eight so far, so, yeah, we try and keep it in the game.

I was just thinking, imagine if those players hadn't chosen a single-handed backhand, it would have probably already disappeared by now. So our decision to take that initiative, take that, let's call it small risk to go and pursue a single-handed backhand, which is very different to anyone else's backhand, definitely makes us, I guess, stand out a little bit more in our own ways.

There are some single-handed backhands out there that I really enjoy watching, and some of those single-handed backhands I have been tremendously inspired by to try and build a single-handed backhand as good as theirs.

Q. Who is your favorite, besides yourself?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Besides myself? It would definitely be Stan Wawrinka. He has got one of the most beautiful, harmonious, powerful single-handed backhands that I can think of. Very clean, very good rhythm on it. He's a player that I do enjoy a lot.

Grigor is someone that probably, he's probably got one of the best single-handed, I mean, it's a single hand, but, yeah, single-handed slices on the tour, so these two.

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