

# Brisbane International

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Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

## Nick Kyrgios

Press Conference

G. MPETSHI PERRICARD/N. Kyrgios

7-6, 6-7, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Hey, Nick, how do you think you played? What do you get out of a match like that, considering the kind of player that he is?**

NICK KYRGIOS: What do you mean, "kind of player"?

**Q. With his big serves and...**

NICK KYRGIOS: I mean, look, he probably had the best year of his career last year. Obviously he won Most Improved Player, obviously feeling very confident, won some big titles last year. The Basel event is always stacked. He beat some amazing players there.

I obviously went into the match understanding how he played. I already knew that he liked to hit two first serves, but props to him, he's found what works for his game style and he's committed to that. He's going to do some damage, for sure. He's going to have a long career. He's got an easy action on his serve. There were no real dips in speed or anything like that.

For me, honestly, it was a great match, considering I hadn't played in 18 months. And to put myself in a winning position was exciting. It was just good to be back out there and to say that, you know, I can still play a level against someone like that who is coming off the best year of their career and only getting better and confident, and I'm coming back and I asked the question, and he just played a couple big points better than I did.

Yeah, I felt relatively pretty good physically. My legs, my body felt really good. I felt fit and I'm in great shape. Obviously felt some discomfort with the wrist, but he does serve and hit the ball a lot bigger than probably some of the people that I have practiced with in the last year.

But, you know, there is no hiding. Once you commit to playing like that, you've got to be ready. I'm relatively really happy with how it went. You know, if I had to win that match, I'm honestly not sure if I'd be able to play my



second round (smiling).

So there is positives, but there is a lot more work to do. But, yeah, props to him. He's a hell of a player. I have played, you know, Karlovic, Isner, Raonic, all the big servers, and he's got the biggest serve by far. Yeah, that was interesting. And it sucked.

**Q. Your serve was on too, though, particularly the third set. Have you had to change your technique at all with your wrist to sort of protect it, or...**

NICK KYRGIOS: No, I haven't really changed my technique. I change my forehand a little bit from time to time, depending on how my wrist feels.

Yeah, and I think my serve, if I didn't feel like I could serve at a high level and as well as I did today, I probably wouldn't even bother trying to come back. My serve is such a big part of my game and it revolves around it.

I thought I hit my groundstrokes amazing today, as well. I definitely feel like I'm a lot more comfortable at the back of the court and complete player than the big fella that I played today, but he just served remarkably on big points.

Yeah, props to him. Only a couple points in it. Could have easily been me in the second round, but that's just tennis. I'm not going to let it bother my mood over two or three points with someone that's so confident and me coming back. It was overall a pretty good performance.

**Q. You needed a little bit of treatment at the end of that first set on the arm. Is that just sort of just getting used to playing at that level again?**

NICK KYRGIOS: Well, I mean, look, I've got six holes in my hand, like I've got six holes in my hand and one in my arm. Yeah, not one tennis player has ever had this surgery and come back and tried to play again.

It's all really an experimental kind of -- the surgeon, like, yeah, if you ever go back and play at this level again, it's on you guys. I don't really have any protocol of how it's going to be or how it's going to pull up. So me and my physio, we are taking it as it comes. If we can get through a match, we get through a match. How it pulls up tomorrow, I have no idea. It's throbbing like shit right now.



We'll see. But yeah, look, I tried to, I had a lot of adrenaline going through my body. The crowd was amazing today. I really appreciate everyone coming out, full crowd, sold out for two days straight now. I definitely feel the love.

Yeah, I didn't take it for granted. I don't know if I'll ever be back on that court again. Obviously maybe for doubles. When I was leaving today, I could definitely feel like it was, yeah, it was special.

**Q. It really did look like you were enjoying it, even when the ball are whizzing past you at 220, there was just a grin on your face, just thinking, this is a battle. This is what you enjoy doing, right?**

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, definitely. I did miss the competition. You know, I compete every day, whether it's a game on my phone or... I love the competition. Look, I have given a lot to this sport, and everything that's come good in my life has come basically from this sport.

Yeah, like, going out there again, playing a top player like that, super confident, even getting aced, I was 4-2 down in the third-set tiebreak, change of ends, and I was still smiling to myself and just, like, we're right in the heat of the battle, where 18 months ago, if you asked me and my physio and my coach that's here this week, he was feeding me fluffy balls on my wrist. We were not expecting to be here playing again and at such a high level. We were literally a couple of points from winning.

But there is a lot of positives. But again, it's how much do I want to take of the trauma on the body, the pain. I guess, you know, when I played the majority of my career, I was playing pretty much pain-free. You go out there for two, three hours, you'd enjoy the battle and you would just focus. Where now, there's just constant pain in that wrist.

Look, I'll definitely keep battling for a little bit, but yeah, it was definitely cool to be back out there.

**Q. Looking at the year ahead, yesterday Jordy Thompson was speaking just how demanding a year on the circuit can be for players if you really push for your ranking and you get a three-week offseason. Now you're back, do you see yourself pushing beyond the mandatory requirements for a player to really push up as high as you can, or is work/life balance going to be a big priority for you?**

NICK KYRGIOS: Look, I'm not playing for ranking points. I have never played for ranking points, as well. You know, I made the Wimbledon final being unseeded.

For me, there is no ranking goal for me personally. I'm

sure people are going to be telling me you've got to get your ranking up. For me, I don't think anything about that at all. It's more about just getting healthy, getting back playing and enjoying the competition and coming back from the injury I had.

Back to what Thommo said, the tour is ridiculous compared to any other sport. It's absurd, really, the amount of travel we do, considering we don't even get paid what we are supposed to get paid, as well, which is a joke.

Yeah, it's a tough sport. Especially if you're from Australia, you don't see your family or friends for six, seven, eight months if you're playing a full schedule.

You look at guys like Medvedev towards the end of last season, returning with the other side of his racquet. You've got guys like that that are starting to lose their mind a little bit because the season is just too long. And he's super-disciplined.

Yeah, I mean, I don't know. The season is just way too long. I'm sure everyone can agree with that one.

**Q. You're saying that your wrist was throbbing after the match today. Did you feel any strain after yesterday's match?**

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah.

**Q. Or is it just different today because of the pace?**

NICK KYRGIOS: No, yesterday's match definitely, I mean, I felt like I had been hit by a bus yesterday after doubles, to be honest. I was on the treatment table for an hour and a half before bed.

But we know that's how it's going to be. Even doubles, you just can't replicate the match pressure, the nervous energy. You're returning, like these guys are professionals. The doubles guys yesterday, they were serving massive. It's still reflex and volleys.

For my wrist, it's all new ground now. Today is another building block I think in the journey. I went from literally practicing with people unranked in Canberra to facing the biggest server in the world in a week.

So there was no gradual, maybe I'll play Rinky Hijikata, have a couple rallies, and get into it. It's like he's the biggest server on the planet. Let's just see how your wrist goes.

I think tomorrow it's going to be a bit of a rough day for my wrist, to be honest. It's very sore at the moment. We were expecting that. I'm going to do all the right things, and I'll be playing doubles, for sure.

**Q. Does it feel for you like adjusting to a new reality in the way you have to play and recover now compared to how you used to play?**

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, for sure. I used to abuse being youthful in this sport and not doing any cooldown or anything like that, so I guess it's biting me in the ass right now. I wouldn't change it. I had a lot of fun when I was a young one.

**Q. (Off mic.)**

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, we laughed about it. We literally do three to four hours of physiotherapy a day. I wouldn't have had the career without Will. Like, he was in my team, like he's been in my team for 8 to 10 years now, and it's just been gradually getting more and more.

Towards the start of my career, we played, we'd do 45 minutes, wake up, be all right, anything that's niggling. But now it's an hour beforehand, hour and a half after, and then it's -- it's just a constant, yeah, it's a constant, just we have to do it, otherwise I just won't be able to play. My entire body now will need physio like every other player, but this wrist alone will probably need an hour, two hours a day on it.

That's just what it is. He's here for the journey and he's been part of the ride, as well. He's been such a big part of me. He's been coming into the gym with me, conditioning, you know, coming to on-court. He's barely missed a session. He's seen the progression, but he also understands. It's laughable in the sense of how much my wrist needs now just to go out there and play a first round. Yeah, it's a lot.

**Q. (Off mic.)**

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah. I guess, like, I mean, I'm commentating the French Open, so I'll have to be there. Yeah, I don't know. I think I was, like, really excited for the Oz Open, but after today -- obviously I'm super excited. If I'm able to play, I'm able to play. But the reality kind of set in to me. That's a best-of-three match with my wrist. If I'm able to -- not only is a Grand Slam mentally, like, really draining, like you're there for two-and-a-half, three weeks, it's like physically a grind. It's one of the hardest thing to do in any sport is win a Grand Slam in men's tennis.

I think I almost need a miracle, and I need, like, the stars to align for my wrist to hold up in a Grand Slam for sure. Today, if this was a Grand Slam, we may still be out on court, and I don't know how I'd pull up the next day or the day after. Yeah, that's kind of the reality setting in.

But look, I'm just so happy to be part of the Australian summer again, and hopefully my partner, you know, continues to play the doubles here, it would be fun. But I

completely understand if he wants to prioritize the singles. Yeah, I'm keen to see what happens around the Open.

**Q. What does the next week and a half look like? Let's say the doubles, you finish up tomorrow, for example.**

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah.

**Q. What do you do in the week and a half to get ready?**

NICK KYRGIOS: Probably go home to Canberra for a couple of days. I will see my dog. That's the first thing I want to do. Then I'll just, yeah, see how my wrist pulls up from the load of this week. First of all, that's the priority. If it feels good, we start building back up on the tennis courts, start going back to work. Yeah, we go, head to Melbourne, I have a couple of things to do there.

Then, yeah, I really -- yeah, that's it. I don't have any plan after the Australian Open tennis-wise, to be honest. You know, I'm really confident I could play the Australian Open. It's just depending on how my body is, how much tennis I can play. Yeah, I guess that's what I will do. Go home for a couple of days and get ready for the Open.

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