

Brisbane International

Sunday, 4 January 2026

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Nick Kyrgios

Thanasi Kokkinakis

Press Conference

KOKKINAKIS-KYRGIOS/Ebden-Ram

5-7, 6-4, 10-8

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Fellas, congratulations. Thanasi, you almost teared up there, you said on court. Tell us a little bit about the operation. I understand a few doctors, surgeons, didn't want to do it. Just how complicated was it? What's the recovery been like? I think you've got an Achilles tendon attaching to there?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, I've never really teared up from a doubles match, even when we won. It wasn't, like it was excitement, but it wasn't like crazy.

I don't know. What I have kind of gone through the last 12 months is crazy, speaking to a lot of surgeons, a lot of doctors, spoke to Rafa's doctor and he wasn't quite sure what was going on. It was pretty crazy.

No physio or doctor that I saw was really comfortable and confident of which was the right way to go. But I said I didn't want to keep doing what I was doing. In the past I'd play one match and maybe have a big win, and my arm was shot for the next couple of rounds. I was almost like I don't care if I don't play again, like I'm not doing that again, because it's almost like a tease of what I can do and then I just have to pull out.

Yeah, I essentially cut half my pec off. I had a bald scar tissue that I was playing with for five or so years. Saw a bunch of surgeons that didn't want to operate on it. They thought it's risky. Never been done in tennis. Yeah, essentially have an Achilles allograft or a dead person's Achilles in my arm trying to attach my pec to my shoulder.

It's really hard kind of coming back from that process, because you don't really have anyone to speak to because no one's done it. A lot of people do ACLs and Achilles ruptures, which are brutal, terrible injuries, but with those, a lot of people have had them, so you kind of know who to speak to and what to do.



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This one, I'm kind of gauging how we go. There's been days where it's okay and other days where I'm, like, There's no chance I'm playing again.

Yeah, to be on the court, especially with Nick, was a special feeling, and yeah, it's been a very rocky road this year, and I'm trying to take it one day at a time.

Q. How long before you kind of knew you could come back and be at this level? Do you still not really know?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: There's a lot of unknowns, but I kind of just -- I have done a lot of training to try and get myself in a position where I can even play a doubles match.

It's been very stop/start. I don't know how my future is going to go, what it holds, but I've done everything I can to give myself at least a chance. Yeah, I'm taking it day by day.

Yeah, I kind of knew after I pulled out of Adelaide, before I played my Aussie Open, I knew I'd probably have to have surgery after the tournament. Yeah, my arm is kind of done. I'm just giving it a crack, and hopefully I've got a bit left in me.

Q. Nick, you have spoken about your injuries issues, as well. How kind of impressed or in awe are you of Thanasi? You've spoken a bit about it before.

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, I understand how emotional it can be. I think people underestimate how much work actually, just because we are not playing full schedules, they underestimate how much work actually goes into it. I think arguably you're on top of your load management more, getting more physio, you don't really know how to train and prepare. As he said, there's no one you can really go to for advice on certain injuries.

It's been something he's had to deal with his whole career pretty much, and, like, the fact of seeing him out there, we were really surprised with our level, to be honest. It didn't look like we had been away from the game for -- it's been a year, pretty much, for Thanasi. We have gone through and we're playing two guys who are probably some of the best doubles players still out there.

So I'm really happy with the level that we produced today. Who knows? If his body still pulls up and my body feels good, who knows what this year could look like for us doubles-wise.

But again, we are not jumping the gun. We're taking it day by day, and we'll just do the right things. Yeah, I think just going out there and feeling that energy again and proving to ourselves we can come back from injuries and still entertain the crowd and win, it is a good feeling.

Q. Thanasi, you were out so long. Did you start sort of forgetting how much fun tennis was or why you played?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, I was so sick of training, and just being in Melbourne in the winter with no one to really train with and trying to motivate myself for the Aussie summer, that was always the carrot at the end, just trying to look forward to that moment, not knowing if I can actually play.

Just doing everything I can. Endless injections, cortisones, trying to get myself to a spot where I can take the court. It's a feeling that it's very hard to replicate, and I know -- I'm not taking it for granted, and I know that's what I will miss the most when eventually I stop playing.

All my rehab and everything I was doing was focused to try to get back in front of a crowd in Australia and being competitive. So yeah, I'm really, really happy.

Q. Tonight it looked like you took a little bit of time to maybe get into your groove but finished really well. Are you happy with...

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, it went as good as I could have hoped for what I've done. I can't remember the last doubles match I've played. I'm not counting our last one in Australia. I don't remember my last doubles match before that. Yeah, I reckon I can almost count them on one hand the last three years.

So to come there and to not be serving at full capacity just yet, I think it's going to take a few months until I'm back to hopefully normal. I know I'm a long way from my best, but to be able to produce that after not playing probably surprised us, surprised us both.

Q. A question, bigger picture, how much, especially when you go through these injuries in the last few years, everything you have gone through, do you think about the journey since that 2013 boys final? How often do you think about all the water that's gone under the bridge?

NICK KYRGIOS: I don't know if I think about that moment all that often. For me especially, I feel like my tennis journey has been so interesting. Any time I'm able

to add a little match like this to the résumé or just to get out there and play, it's special.

I don't know. I don't really know what my plan is this year. I don't know what my future, like, holds either. I'm literally taking it day by day. Just to be a part of these events is special. I think, you know, when me and Thanasi play doubles together, we remember that this walk can be pretty fun.

It's not always just injuries and competing and grinding. It is something, you know, every good thing that's come in my life has come from this sport. We really do, at the end of the day, it's gone in a flash. I feel like we look at that 2013, and it's like that didn't feel that long ago, and now I'm [expletive] -- I'm 30 (laughing).

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: He's 30; I'm nearly 30. It's crazy. You never listen to people when they say it goes by quick.

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, it went really quick.

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, walking around as vets. Mentally, we still feel probably pretty young, but physically it's a different story.

NICK KYRGIOS: I'm definitely, mentally, I'm [expletive].

Q. Why do you keep going through all these heartaches? Is it because you're chasing that fun feeling again? Is that part of why you keep fighting back from these injuries and setbacks?

NICK KYRGIOS: I am a sicko. I just love it all. I love everything that comes with it (smiling).

I don't know. I don't know what else to do with myself, to be honest. What else do I do?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: I think for me, I can't speak for Nick, but it's memories like this, and playing in front of the crowd and seeing the joy it gives people. We love it.

When we're healthy and being able to actually just play tennis and only worry about that, it's a fun feeling, it's exciting, we have done it our whole lives.

I think, for my instances, trying to do everything I can and tick every box, because as I said, it goes so quick, I don't want to go five years and be like, I wish I gave it a little bit more of a crack or I could have done something else a little bit.

So while we're somewhat able to keep going, I think we will. That's why you see guys like Stan play for so long. I think they just love the feeling and being out there. I think that's probably why a lot of them get into coaches, as well, because they feel that feeling through their

player eventually. So that's probably it.

Q. Congratulations, guys. Nick, you have spoken a lot about entertaining and being that entertainer now. There was a real degree of theatricality today. Do you feel like doubles gives you that vehicle to be that entertainer a bit more than singles maybe?

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, definitely. I feel like at this point in my career, even on the singles court, I do stupid things, and I kind of do whatever I feel like doing.

Yeah, doubles court kind of gives me a bit more of a show to put on, and I feel like when we play our best doubles is when we actually find our balance. Not taking it too seriously, but also just locking in in certain moments. We are enjoying it. We had so much fun. I had so much fun out there tonight, and it was at incredibly high level.

I don't know. I feel like -- yeah, I just feel like no one else does as stupid things as me on the court. So that's what I add, really.

Q. Do you feel like you feed off that a little bit, Thanasi?

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, we're very different. Sometimes I don't know what he's going to do, and that's a balance you have to find from my position. I have to focus on myself and know when to reign him in a little bit, but that's what makes him so good is when he has that flair and has that little bit of fun. The opponents don't know what's coming.

I think the crowd feeds off that. My energy gets better. When we go on a roll, sort of the back end of the second set and super-tiebreak, that's when we play our best. We were maybe a little bit flat at the start, didn't know what to expect, I didn't know what to expect, but as it got going, we found that momentum. That's the fun we have always had on court.

NICK KYRGIOS: We didn't even remember the score at one point.

THANASI KOKKINAKIS: Yeah, I thought it was 4-All. I had no idea. If we just get this game, we can probably win the set. That was the conversation. We broke that game.

NICK KYRGIOS: It's 4-All, maybe we break this game. (Laughter.)

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