

United Cup

Sunday, 29 December 2024
Perth, Western Australia, Australia

Team Greece

Maria Sakkari

Stefanos Tsitsipas

Press Conference

Greece - 2

Spain - 1

THE MODERATOR: Can each of you give an assessment of your performance individually and as a team.

MARIA SAKKARI: My individual performance? I have no comment (smiling). My doubles performance? I mean, I'm very, very happy with how we managed to bounce back after losing that first set, just get some good momentum back, just feel good on the court. I think it was an important win moving forward. I'm just very happy we managed to win the tie.

Thanks, Stef, for winning your singles, too. Good job.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. (No microphone.)

MARIA SAKKARI: Well, as I said to Stef and the rest of the team, there's always been a point like this every time we play mixed doubles and we win. There's always like a crazy point that basically leads us to a dramatic win.

I don't know. It felt a little bit bizarre the way it went, that backhand at the end. As I said, super happy that we managed to win that point. Obviously match point was also very helpful.

Q. Stef, can you comment on your first singles match of the year, also to get the win in the mixed.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: That's a lot of questions.

Well, look, I mean, I had a solid match against Carreno Busta. I played him before. I know what his capacities are as a tennis player. I was just trying to impose my game. I have a big attacking game that I can really get open top of if I'm consistent, if I can follow it with discipline. That's what I was trying to do.

It went well towards the end. He did come up with some



good solutions on the third set. I think my level peaked there. That's where I really started finding my shots, aligning with my footwork. From that point onwards I felt I was really locked in, getting in the zone as they say. Felt that was unbreakable.

I felt that the win was definitely I do owe it to that feeling that I got, getting in the zone. That's when I peaked in terms of my level.

Q. The mixed doubles?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Look, it's tricky playing doubles guys, especially when they're on both ends, woman and a man. They play, like, doubles players. They play very different to what we are used to, singles players, especially when we get to play singles guys that team up together that go out and play doubles.

That is one thing that you have to figure out from the beginning because it can really get into your head, the patterns, the way they play the points, the way they try to win points. This is something that takes a little bit of adjusting.

We cleared our minds I feel like when we lost the first set. We recalibrated. I felt like we saw our way through, which was actually not as complicated as we initially thought.

It kind of worked out pretty well I think. We started coming to the net much more. I think one of the mistakes we did was stay back on the beginning of the match, trying to out-rally them from the baseline. Once we started getting out on the court with more of an offensive mindset, things switched around. That's where we saw our game flourish and reach its biggest and highest level.

Q. Maria, what would you like to do better in your next match?

MARIA SAKKARI: Well, basically everything. Obviously I shouldn't have high expectations because I haven't played a singles match since the Olympics. I'm not going to count US Open. It's been a long time.

I've been practicing really well for a long time and my level has been better than ever in practice. I do believe that at some point it's just going to come. I just have to keep trusting myself, keep going for my shots. In the beginning of the match I was very hesitant, a little bit stiff and tight I would say.



I do believe that I can get to where I was before. I want to show myself that I can do it once again.

Q. Is it good to have had a tough game to start with?

MARIA SAKKARI: I think whenever it is 1-1, it's always going to be a very tricky mixed doubles because both teams have the pressure. Especially as Stef mentioned before, playing two doubles players, it's tough for us. It took us a little bit more time to adjust.

But it's part of the game to have those tricky nights.

Q. Tricky conditions with the serve or a bit of rust or rhythm?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Look, it can't be perfect at all times. I'm still adjusting. Maria is still adjusting. It takes time to get acclimatized and used to these conditions.

I have to say I'm proud of Maria today. I got to acknowledge that she hasn't played since Olympics and it's definitely very tough to be back and expect someone to play at their highest level. This is definitely something I was observing today in the match. It happened to me as well in the past. I can really relate to that feeling of not having had enough under your belt, having to wait for so long to get back on court.

Me personally, I try and improve in all aspects of my game. It's disappointing today because I felt I could have served a little bit better. There were times I felt my percentages could have been better in singles but also in doubles, especially when I was serving on the ad side. A few instances, moments where I was perhaps missing a bit too much, especially when I'm used to having a different outcome.

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