

# Australian Open

Sunday, 14 January 2024

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/F. Diaz Acosta

4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: First of all, congratulations, Taylor. You got through this four-hour, three minutes battle. How do you feel after all of the struggles and still got the win in the end?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I feel pretty good, honestly. It's fortunate that it's a Sunday match, so I'll get two days now to recover. I think I'll be back to 100% for the match on Wednesday it would be.

Yeah, it was a really tough match. Myself and my team worked me really hard following the loss at our team being out of United Cup. We had this extended amount of time to be here and train. We pushed it really, really hard. So I felt confident during the match today just in my fitness and feeling fit, strong in the fifth set. I think ultimately that made the difference in the end.

I think he started to get a little more tired. Obviously he was doing a lot more running than I was. But I definitely felt good coming through. Even now after such a long match, I honestly feel pretty good.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. On your ankle, we can't tell obviously how you're feeling with it. There was a lot of tape. We could see that from watching. Was that a concern? Obviously you won the second set still. So did you shake it off right away, or was it a lingering concern for you the rest of the match?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Look, I think I'm going to have to tape my ankle the rest of the week for sure. But after I got just a couple of minutes to just sit down and, like, when she was taping it, it already started to start feeling better.

I'm lucky when ankles go that way. My ankles are pretty flexible. I did fully roll it. I heard it pop, and I knew I rolled it. But luckily for me, I'm a little bit more flexible on that side.

It at first felt pretty bad. I tried to kind of walk to the towel box to see if it would get a little bit better then, and then it

didn't. So I was, like, I need to get this taped and sit down.

Unfortunate timing. I feel bad for him being that it was right before a break point. I don't know, there's not really anything I could do, but I feel a little bit bad about that.

**Q. Same ankle as Indian Wells?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: No. No, the one at Indian Wells, I didn't even roll it. It was like a pinch. Hard to explain. But what happened to me at Indian Wells, I've never had happen to me before. This is just like a roll.

**Q. But also, John Cain, low-ranked player playing out of his mind, was there flashbacks to last year?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I was thinking I don't want to play on John Cain anymore.

Look, I think the first set was the lowest level of the match. I didn't play well in the first set. Honestly, he played his worst set in the first set I think.

The rest of the match I raised my level. And I know people are going to -- that didn't watch the match are going to look at the score and think that I'm maybe out of form or not playing great, but there needs to be some respect given to this guy. He's really good, honestly. So I told him at net. I shook his hand, and I said, You're really F'ing good.

It is tough. He was returning serves that I feel like nobody returns unless they full guess on it. He wasn't even picking sides. I'm hitting bombs and spots on the lines, and he is putting the returns on the baseline. Honestly, I've never seen anything like that.

Yeah, if I played average level today, I wouldn't have won the match. That's a lot. I had to play really well in the fourth and fifth set. The fourth and fifth set I played very well. And even in the third set I played pretty well too. Missed some opportunities on break points and 15-30s and stuff like that, but he was always extra aggressive with the second serves, and he would make good serves. He played a lot of his points well. A lot of points I lost where I wouldn't really change anything that I did.

So honestly a lot of credit to him. He was very, very

good.

**Q. I'll take you out of the moment a little bit. I think you had those recent comments about ranking points at the Olympics making the point that this is a bona fide event that should have ranking points.**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah.

**Q. Aside from that, the women too, but the U.S. men, you have five in the top 30. Should you choose to make that effort to try to qualify, what's that race like among the American guys this year?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, it's tight. I don't want to really, like, put out information that's not already out there, but I know some in the race might not be planning on playing. But I'm not really thinking about that too much, I guess.

I know that I'm in a decent position, I believe, because the points, I think I had some decent results following the qualification. I don't know. If everyone wanted to play, then you've got five or six guys that it could be between. It can go either way.

I hope I qualify. I want to play. I've opted out of the last two. I think I really want to get one in before the one that's going to be in L.A.

**Q. The surface switching, in terms of surface switching going hard, clay, grass, clay, hard for big events and all those things too?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: It's pretty inconvenient. It goes back to what I said before. I do truly think with the Olympics and the whole points thing, if there is no tournaments during the Olympics, then sure, you don't need points at the Olympics. But it's tough.

You're taking a bit of a hit to play, especially as an American. I'll be defending a title that week, which I just won't defend. It is what it is.

But for me, the way I look at it is I think you go to try to win a medal. I think my best opportunity to win a medal will probably be when it's in the States in four years. I think my chances will be better if I have already played an Olympics before and kind of have that experience under my belt and I'm not just showing up for the first time to play the Olympics when I'm 30. That's kind of my thought process.

**Q. Another thing that sort of has been hit and miss is changing tennis balls so frequently. I know that there's plans to change it in 2025, if possible. How do you feel about that? Do you think the constantly changing balls has an effect on people's injuries or contributes?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Absolutely, yeah. I feel like I'm someone who is normally - I mean, when I was younger anyways - like, didn't get injured too easily. I've been really feeling it.

It's not so much like the specific ball that injures us. In some cases it is. But it's more just you get used to one, and then when you change to something that's a bit heavier, your wrist or your elbow or whatever is taking the force. Everyone is different. Everyone hits the ball different, grips, all that stuff.

Whatever is taking the force is now not trained to take that. It's been trained to take maybe a lighter ball. So it's just all the switching, it causes problems. When we fill out our forms at the end of the year to assess ATP, what we think can be improved on, all that stuff, that's something I've put in the comments every single year since I've started on tour, is that tournament swings have to have the same balls.

**Q. Have you provided a suggestion to them?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, I have lots of suggestions, but they're all logistical nightmares with how deals are done and brands pay tournaments and stuff.

Personally I think we should have one ball that's just agreed on, and we play with it. Whatever ball company is a sponsor, you just brand it. They put their branding on the ball for that week.

I think, again, that's a logistical nightmare, but it makes too much sense.

**Q. Was it as much switching when you first came on tour or is it more drastic week to week ball-type switches?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: It feels like it's more, but it might just be because the more time you spend on tour you become a bit more receptive to these little changes because you've been around for so long.

I mean, I say last year at the US Open Series was a little ridiculous. Atlanta Dunlap to Tecnifibre Washington to US Open Wilsons, US Open Wilson in Toronto, US Open Wilson in Cincinnati that were 100% not the same ball, and everyone will agree with me on that. It's just, like, three different balls or I guess four different balls in four weeks. It's just crazy.

**Q. You said you hit it pretty hard the since the United Cup. What did that look like? What was involved?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I was going about two hours on court every day. I think we would have actually wanted to go more on court, but just dealing with some minor injuries

we wanted to make sure were better.

And then gym, lifting and then some kind of sick cardio that Mike would cook up and make me do. It was some pretty brutal stuff.

**Q. Is "Break Point" still filming?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think kind of how they're doing it now is if there's a story there, maybe later on in the tournament, then the filming will start. I think they improved a lot after the first season of a lot of the tedious filming that never gets used, the hours of me on probably the massage table that just never get used.

Yeah, I wouldn't be surprised that they're not here covering my first-round match. I think it's going to be a large group of people. If there's a story, someone performs, then I think then, yeah, you'll see them.

**Q. You're all set to participate again with them?**

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, yeah, I don't see why not.

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