

Australian Open

Friday, 19 January 2024
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/F. Marozsan

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

THE MODERATOR: First of all, congrats, Taylor. Back to the last 16 at Australian Open facing Stef in the next round. Very familiar opponent. What's your thought?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm obviously excited to make it back to the round of 16 here. I'm excited for the next match. I feel confident. I'm playing well. I've played Stef a good amount, so I have an idea of what I have to expect and how I want to play it as well.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. So last year you were hugely frustrated with your performances in those first three slams. Obviously did much better at the US Open. How did you manage that? I realize matches can go either way, and they're close. As the person who is going through it, did you give yourself a talking to? How did you put it into a box and live with it and turned it around really?

TAYLOR FRITZ: There's a couple of different parts. It's going to sound like not taking a ton of accountability, but last year I felt like some of the losses, especially my Wimbledon loss and my loss here, I felt like my opponents played unbelievably well. I don't think I played bad in either one of those matches.

I felt like my opponents just played so well. That happens sometimes. You're a higher seed, and you have a target on your back in the first round or two when you're playing guys who aren't ranked as high, and they have nothing to lose. They just play like that sometimes.

I think that's kind of what happened in the first round here. I did a good job of raising my level above just average, you know. I think that's the biggest difference from last year was I was a little bit tight in those situations, and I couldn't really count on myself playing better than just average.

I don't think I should lose those matches when I'm playing at my average level, but I was losing them. So this year in my first round my opponent was playing really

well, and I raised my level above my average level. I played very well.

Today as well my opponent was playing very well in the beginning, and I raised my level a lot, and I played really, really well in the last sets.

At US Open I played pretty good, but kind of I got lucky. None of my opponents played unbelievable against me. I was able to get through just playing solid. Sometimes it goes like that, and sometimes you have to raise your level.

Q. Was that a realization you came to yourself, or was that Michael or Paul or your parents?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm extremely hard on myself. I felt like some of the opponents played really well against me. I think Paul doesn't like it so much when I'm so hard on myself. But he'd agree with me, and say, They played really well. You didn't play bad, but obviously you can play better.

It is what it is. Sometimes you can get through these draws when you're seeded just kind of playing solid, playing average. Sometimes these guys play really, really well, and you have to raise your level higher than you would expect to have to.

But, yeah, I've done a good job of that this week.

Q. Did Marozsan surprise you at the first set?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I wouldn't say surprised me because I watched some videos of his matches this week. I was pretty impressed. I thought he seemed like a very good player. In the beginning he was playing really well. He was hitting his forehand really well, hitting his backhand really well, returning solid.

Yeah, I mean, it was close from the beginning. I had several chances to break in the first set, and I didn't convert. He had his chance to break, and he converted, so he got it. Yeah, I felt like the first set was pretty even.

I thought that his level was high.

Q. Fucsovics, now against Marozsan, do you mind to compare the two Hungarians and which one has



the bigger potential?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I don't know about bigger potential, but I can compare the styles. Marozsan, his backhand is the better of the two for sure. He has a really solid backhand. I mean, his drop shots are great. His forehand is good when he has some time to play with it. He can be aggressive with it.

I think overall I would say their serves are pretty close, similar in level. Fucsovics has a better forehand. Way more dominant forehand. When he is in the backhand corner stepping around and ripping forehands, it's really dangerous playing him.

Q. My question is about Kei Nishikori. He is out of the tournament. His last match was his match against you. You won in straight sets. You played with him for four times. Can you talk about what kind of form he was, and can you talk about his style of tennis?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah. To be honest, it sucks to see that was his last match because I thought that he was definitely kind of coming up and playing a lot better. I believe he had just -- I'm pretty sure he had just won a challenger before that, and he beat some good people before that.

Did I play him in the second round or third? No, third round.

Q. Yes, third round.

TAYLOR FRITZ: He had already won two matches. Yeah, I thought he was definitely playing pretty solid, so it was sad to see that kind of the momentum gets stopped there. He hasn't been able to play since because I thought, yeah, he was on his way back.

Q. Looking forward to playing him again?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, of course. Maybe not looking forward to playing him when he's playing his best because for the first part of my career he owned me. He beat me every time.

Yeah, I would love to see him back. He's a great guy.

Q. At the Open also, even when you were winning, you were pretty critical of your serve and you said, I'm going to have to serve better if I want to go deep in this tournament. How is the serve feeling? I haven't looked at the graphs and seen the spots.

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm serving much better. I think the courts are a little bit faster, so it helps a bit. Just since the off-season, since I've come back from my oblique tear and just off-season coming back, United Cup, this

week I'm serving much better.

I've definitely found my rhythm on the serve and even when it's, I guess, not feeling great, it's still consistently better than I think it was at the Open. It's definitely been a lot better.

Q. A little easier when you're not getting a knife in your stomach every time you serve.

TAYLOR FRITZ: That's true, yeah.

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