

National Bank Open

Friday, August 13, 2021

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Stefanos Tsitsipas

Press Conference



S. TSITSIPAS/C. Ruud

6-1, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Great match today. I thought you looked super comfortable out there and he looked kind of rushed all day. How were you able to do that to him and get the win today?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, you know, I was close from the baseline. I was trying to come in as much as possible, take the balls early, approach most of my shots. You know, I guess that was his initial reaction, to start rushing and go for more.

I saw that, and, you know, obviously I feel like he would realize that and would switch up his game and change a few things, which he eventually did in the second set.

It also took some time for me to get back into the game after leaving the court for a few minutes. Yeah, it was very close to being an excellent game. My intentions were clear from the very beginning. I was not doubting myself in any way and kept things simple. Just played clean, aggressive tennis.

Q. The break you took after the first set, like you obviously won that first set pretty quickly and cleanly, do you feel like broke your momentum at all a little bit? I guess, why did you take that break?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I had to go take that break. There is a lot of humidity out on the court, and my clothes were soaking wet. It's always more rejuvenating and you feel fresher when you come back when you have a set of new clothes.

That's what I did. You know, it was good for me, and I took the chance to go and change the shirt and my head band and wristband.

Q. You had a great serving performance today. Won

86% of your first serves. You have talked about how you have been a lot more daring this year with your serve, particularly with the serve and volley. Just how confident are you with the serve right now?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, that's the way to go. I have to be more daring and more confident and learn from my previous encounters and matches that I had against players like him and players in my age caliber.

So I feel like, you know, there are certain things that you have to follow and proceed to in order to get better when it comes to serving, when it comes to returning, when it comes to mixing up the game. It all comes experience, it all comes with matches in your pocket, it all comes with eventually getting to play more and more on the tour.

You know, I'm able to provide sometimes some sort of comfort in my game, and that's great to see, and give myself a lift-up.

Q. You seemed really expressive in the second set, particularly in the direction of your box, and after every big point punctuating that with a fist pump. Is that something you were consciously doing, or is it something that came naturally to you because you were so focused on putting on a good show today?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, fist pumps come naturally, and that's something that expresses me when I'm out on the court. I like being pumped. I like being energized after good points that I have won or put much effort into.

Yeah, it's what makes our sport so unique and makes you stand out from the rest of the sports. You get to be so expressive, and you can always show emotion after the point.

There are other sports that do that too. Sometimes you need that to get all of the emotional tension on the outside, letting things flow better afterwards.

Q. You are a player who had to deal with pressure and high expectations from a very young age. How this was decisive in terms of being the player you are today?



STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Can you repeat the question, please?

Q. Yes. You are a player who had to deal with the pressure and very high expectations at a very young age. So how it was decisive in terms of be the player you are today?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I cannot hear the second part of the question. I cannot hear the second part of the question very clearly. What was the reason of something, to be what?

THE MODERATOR: I think he's asking how are you dealing with the pressure and expectation today.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Today?

Q. Being the player that you are today.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: To be the player that I am today?

Q. Yes.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Oh, okay, okay.

It comes, it's absolutely obvious that you're going to get that when you're aiming high and you want to be in that -- you want to be among the best of the sport. It's part of the job. You can't ignore it. It's there.

It's a different challenge on its own. You know, certain things come with character, with willingness to have that in your daily life and daily routine.

Well, myself, I guess I was prepared for it, and I was sort of experiencing from a young age playing juniors, transitioning to the pros. It is something that you build something, something that you, I guess, know how to deal better over time.

In the beginning it comes as a kind of something that you're not really expecting at that level, but eventually you pick up and, you know, it becomes your new habitual life.

Q. I'm wondering, you have made it to the finals of this tournament before. I'm wondering if you can compare this run this year to that run back in 2018.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, I still have, you know, a few more matches to go, so not much to compare there, honestly (smiling).

I'm happy where my game is right now, and every single

opponent that I had to face is someone that has played good in the past and has a level to face me straight.

I have dealt with these situations really well. Obviously I'm excited for what's to come, and I'm always, every single day, try to come up with solutions and ways that this is going to be easier and more efficient for me.

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