

# National Bank Open

Monday, August 7, 2023

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Stefanos Tsitsipas

### Press Conference



An interview with:

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS

THE MODERATOR: Stefanos, congrats for winning your 10th title in Los Cabos over the weekend. How do you feel going into the National Bank Open?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: It's always a great feeling coming back from a tournament, starting a new tournament, having the confidence of a title under your belt.

I'm definitely taking only positives from last week's performance. And it was a successful one with good matches, and also instilling that mindset of trying to get as many matches during the US Open swing.

This is a new challenge for me now that awaits. And it's fair to say that the conditions here are very different to what they were in Los Cabos. So we are acclimatizing every single day as a team to get the best possible tennis ahead of us, and to perform at an even higher scale with players now of a much higher caliber and a much more demanding draw day by day.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Welcome back to Toronto. This event is where you had your big breakout in 2018. Then in '21, it was kind of a weird event with the bubble. How does it feel being back in Toronto in a more normal year, more like it was five years ago?**

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I am always waiting for the Toronto tournament. I know it's switching every single year and it changes from women and men.

But for me, Toronto is the place that I was kind of introduced to the game at a professional level at a very high stage. And, you know, I had at the time some success in Barcelona, which was a 500 event, but nothing of that caliber yet at the time. So that was my first proper introduction to the tennis world, and it will always stay very

memorable.

So whenever I come back here, I know I have some good memories behind me that I will always cherish and remember. Being surprised of how many Greeks came that year to support me on Center Court, it kind of felt like I was playing in my hometown. These type of things you don't find very often on the tour, and you don't get to experience them at such a grand scale.

And I really hope it can be the same this year. I really hope I can start on this journey from the very first round and, hopefully, end up as one of the last players to compete here.

**Q. You had ups and downs this year. How will you judge your season so far?**

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: My season has been good. I think I played my best tennis at the Australian Open swing. I regret certain things that I did and proceeded into after that, and I hope I can just learn from that.

My season, honestly, after the Australian Open swing, after having collected so many points and being ahead in the rankings, and not having much to defend at the early U.S. swing at the time in Miami and Indian Wells, it was kind disappointing due to my injury that occurred.

And my clay court swing, in my opinion, could have been better. I wish I could have collected much more points there. But now it's part of the past. I need to keep moving forward, and I need to keep building on what I have now on the present moment and take those opportunities and then maximize on them.

I'm getting back into the rankings that I want to be seeing myself be at. I'm happy that I've been collecting some good, beneficial points for me in the last few weeks, and I hope I can keep going.

You know, I have big standards in terms of finishing the year strong, and I want to deliver to that promise of mine. I want to finish the year and go on a nice vacation and say that I've tried my best these last few months to maximize as much as I can and have a big impact on the tour at the end of the year.



**Q. If you allow me the question. Two days ago, you said that your goal was surpassing the best ranking of Paula Badosa. My question is have you ever played against her and, in case not, if you play, who would win?**

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, unofficially, I'm undefeated in an exhibition match in Indian Wells. So technically, it's 1-0 for me.

Don't promote it too much. I don't want this to reach her too much because she will get very competitive, which is not the best thing to do right now, especially under her own circumstances that she has to deal with.

I bring the best out of my tennis with her when I practice. I had the chance to practice with her recently, and I really enjoy practicing with her. We have great hits.

And I honestly don't even mind if she beats me. I want her to beat me. That means she's getting better, and I want her to have an incredible career and reach World No. 1.

And my biggest dream of all is for us to do it together. To be World No. 1 one day together, I think I can truly say that I have fulfilled my biggest, deepest desire in tennis to not just have done it myself but to have done it with a person who will be there for me for the rest of my life.

So I really hope for this to keep on growing the way it keeps on growing monthly and for us to keep building memories on and off court and aim for big -- sometimes people might think unachievable goals, but we are world dreamers, and that's what makes us us.

**Q. Can you tell us a little bit how everything is going now with your quote-unquote new team? You know, what is suiting you well now? Because you have just had a victory.**

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I think there's one thing that I did pay attention to between the dynamic, is there's much more tranquility and calmness in the air when I'm competing.

You know, parents can get emotional sometimes, and I completely understand that. I'm not a parent myself, but I can imagine how difficult it can be at times seeing your child give it their all and to be going through so much during a match.

Mark is a parent himself. He's not my father, but he's been through a lot of moments in his own personal career that he can identify and capture better in certain ways.

He is an incredible human being. He has helped me a lot. He has been there for me. Even when people didn't see him around, he has been there behind closed doors on private. And he's a big addition to our team.

My father right now, you know, I give him some time off. He hasn't had time off since I'm 12 years old. So I think for him, I think it's very healthy to take some time away from the court and feel refreshed again.

And, of course, I love him and I want him to be part of that journey that we have built together, and he's not going anywhere. He's still with us, and he's still there following our path and journey.

But for me, it's a time, you know, to keep exploring new things. And I'm open-minded and I want to learn as much as I can and, as I mentioned earlier, to maximize on my career because I have felt at times stagnant.

I have felt, you know, it's a constant repetitive procedure that I'm going after every single time, and I really want to get to a new level where it kind of delivers a breath of fresh air to me.

**Q. Unfortunately, you were on the wrong end of the thrilling five-set match against Chris Eubanks at Wimbledon. He kind of took the tennis world by storm. Curious what stood out about his performance that kind of made him a tricky opponent.**

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: He had a very good 5th set. He played a great match. He played better than me. He won. He deserved to win.

He was on a good streak on the grass courts. Didn't start very well but picked up pretty fast.

I think -- I don't remember, but I think he won Mallorca or something like that; right? Yeah. So he had a good confidence level when entering Wimbledon.

I was close. You know, I wish I could have gone deeper in that tournament. But when you have such a good opponent on the other side of the court, you just have to congratulate him and move on with your life.

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