

National Bank Open

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Learner Tien

Press Conference



L. TIEN/D. Shapovalov

7-6, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: First of all congrats, Learner, your first Masters 1000 third round coming in Toronto today. How does it feel now?

LEARNER TIEN: It's great. Yeah, this is my first time actually getting a hard court Masters win too, so it's been a great week so far.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Curious how, if at any point this season, as much as if each accomplishment that comes with each week seems like it's like a breakthrough for you sometimes, but at some point did it ever feel harder than you're making it kind of look, kind of just this progression this season?

LEARNER TIEN: Yeah, I think I've had a lot of firsts this season, just because it's kind of my first year out and about on tour, so naturally a lot of firsts in general. There have been a lot of ups and downs already so far, I would say. At least it feels like there's been.

I feel like I'm going new places, playing new tournaments, new players for the first time. There are good streaks and bad streaks. Fortunately, I can forget about the bad streaks and try and enjoy the good weeks as much as I can.

Q. How do you find Toronto, and how tough was it for you to play with the crowd tonight?

LEARNER TIEN: Toronto's been great, actually. Yeah, I'm staying in the city downtown, it's a very nice spot. There's lots of good food around. It's not super different from the U.S. from what I've seen. It's been great.

The crowd and everything was super fun. I like those kind of atmospheres where everyone gets into the match. It makes, it's an extra factor that adds to the match, so I think

it's really fun. I don't really mind who they were really cheering for, but it just makes the match a bit more exciting.

Q. In terms of following up on that, you mentioned I think in an ATP interview about how, yeah, first season, and a little bit of culture shock here and there, maybe going to countries where you don't speak the language, things like that. Curious, when did it feel the most foreign for you this year? Like, what was kind of the most culture shock you felt. And also, what do you miss about not being a full-time pro, kind of being more California-based and living that life instead?

LEARNER TIEN: I mean, I like being at home a lot. I like seeing my family, seeing my friends at home. It comes with the job, traveling week-in, week-out, and I know that, so I've accepted it awhile ago. I try to enjoy it as much as I can.

The Euro swing, yeah, was pretty long. It was pretty tough. It was the first year I've done that. I've obviously been there before for the junior slams, but I was there for like almost two months I think for the clay swing. That's the longest I've been gone for tournaments. So that was probably the biggest or the toughest thing I've faced so far, I would say. But I think year by year it will just get easier.

Q. What have you made of your interactions with the fans here? Have you been signing autographs, have you been meeting people, what have you made of that part of the tour?

LEARNER TIEN: I have. I've practiced here for, I don't know, I don't know what today is, since Saturday, I think. Everyone's really nice. Everyone seems like they like tennis. Everyone's pretty into it. It's been great. I feel like the fan engagement is very high, and there's a good energy around the grounds. It's been really cool.

Q. Curious about transitioning between the different surfaces, in particular from the grass to the hard, just how quickly it's been for you, just transitioning to the different surfaces.

LEARNER TIEN: Grass to hard wasn't that tough, just because I play on hard court so much. I don't think it's



ever tough for me to transition back to a hard court.

As of right now I would probably say it takes me a little while to kind of settle in from a hard court to clay or grass. I find myself transitioning pretty quick when I come back to hard courts.

Q. Tennis players want everything. They want to, you know, kind of get, like in terms of their game, well in life too maybe probably, but just wanting their peaks to be as high as possible, putting in the efforts for that, but then also wanting their kind of base game to be, to raise slowly. What is your kind of instinct as a player, even as a junior, when you were kind of getting practices and looking to improve your game? Was it like, I want to get my serve bigger, get faster, all that sort of stuff, improve in peaks, or were you more focused on your base level, raising the floor?

LEARNER TIEN: I think, yeah, I mean, you want to perfect everything as much as you can. Obviously some people are always more, things come, some things come more naturally to some than others. So obviously try and improve everything as I was kind of growing up. But certain things, like my serve and stuff like that, I'm not the biggest player on tour by any means, so stuff like that has always kind of been an area of focus for me ever since I was young.

I think I've always been good off the ground, I don't think that's really been an issue for me. Obviously everything can improve, but I would say stuff like transitioning and improving my serve have kind of always been there.

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