

Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters

Principality of Monaco

Sunday, 14 April 2024

Stefanos Tsitsipas

Press Conference



S. TSITSIPAS/C. Ruud

6-1, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Stef.

Q. How much did you need a week like this week?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: A lot. I did need a week like this a lot, especially the rough months that I have been through the last half of 2023 until now.

It hasn't been the best of times in terms of where I wanted to be, so getting back here and winning the title is something that I was definitely not aiming for and it came naturally.

Winning this tournament three times is something I would have never imagined. Even when I first got it the first time, I obviously thought it was a great feeling and that place is special towards me.

But getting the Holy Trinity, as I call it, is something that I will fully cherish it and take the most out of this moment (smiling).

Q. Do you feel you're the same player as the first two times you won here in terms of the tennis you develop on court?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: If I have to compare my level of tennis with the last two times that I have won here, I would probably say this time has been the best that I have come up with some incredible tennis. I say that because, well, you can easily say, Stef, you won the first time here without dropping a set, wouldn't that be the best performance that you have had in Monte-Carlo? I would tell you not exactly. I had an opponent in the semifinal that is a world-class tennis player right now who refused to lose to anyone, and he's been on a very good streak. So overcoming that obstacle, it's definitely a sign that my tennis is progressing and I'm able to push those players.

Topping it off, the win today with prevailing and coming

victorious towards the end against Casper, who is a very good clay court player, he has shown that by playing multiple Roland Garros finals, it's definitely a sign that I'm there and the consistency's showing, and definitely I'm capable of big things.

I just need to keep an open mind, keep improving, because if you don't improve, things tend to fluctuate and not quite go towards the same path that I'm building towards.

I saw a few things today I feel like I can improve on. You know, I usually say that perhaps after losses, but even after wins there is plenty to learn from. What I can take from that is there are a few bits and pieces that I can add to my game that can help me even better.

Q. Congratulations. Did you find today's match easier than yesterday in a way? Because the first set you dominate especially. The second he had five breakpoints.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, I wouldn't say that it was an easy match today. The first set might have shown that it was easy, but in my mind, I knew that there was a battle there. Perhaps when the set finished, I was, like, okay, the score is different to what I feel on court. It was 6-1, which is a good set for me, but at the same time, I knew that this opponent is not going to play any worse than he did in the first set, or it's not easy as well to maintain my level at that level that I maintained it in the first set, so I have to be careful, I have to be going through the motions and the tactical changes that my opponent might impose.

So there is a lot of things that to be careful of and not to revert to certain things. These kind of situations can be tricky. You start a first set, you're feeling amazing, but then of course opponents adjust, they want to try something different, and tennis players, especially top-class tennis players, you know, we have a mental state that we try and adapt to things. Things can very fast change, so you have to be careful and to maintain an open mindedness and to adjusting and trying new things again.

Q. Before this tournament, some people was doubting about the quality of tennis of Sinner on clay, because

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he had lost last year second round Roland Garros, lost third round in Rome. Everybody was thinking, oh, he's great on hard surface or indoor, but on clay, I'd like to know what is your feeling about the way that Sinner plays on clay now? Is he capable, in your opinion, to win Rome or Roland Garros or it's very difficult?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: He is a very good tennis player in all surfaces. I think he has the game to play everywhere well.

The last time that we played that was here, I see his level in a much different level than the last times that I think I played him in Rome, twice in Rome, actually, on clay. I wouldn't count the hard courts because these are different, but I'm only comparing against a particular surface.

So since the last two times that we played each other in those instances, he's much better player now than he was back then. And I saw it the other day, he was pushing me to my limits, and I had to reach a level of physicality that I haven't felt myself before in a long time.

So it was very small margins that played an important role in the development of that match. I do believe he's one of the favorites during the entire clay court swing.

Q. Stefanos, how curious are you to see the comeback of Rafa Nadal on Tuesday in Barcelona? Do you think it's good for the tour, or it's a difficult rival for the French, can take Rafa the first round?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, I would say that Rafa, regardless of whether he hasn't played at all or if that's his first tournament, we all know what Rafa is capable of and how quickly he can adjust to one of his favorite surfaces, which is a clay court. I would not be surprised if we saw Rafa be in the finals of Barcelona, because that is something that he has done over and over again for years and years and years.

What he does have is this competitiveness and this fierce tennis when he gets into the momentum that sometimes feels like on the outside perspective like unstoppable.

On court, things feel different, because you get the feeling of his ball. When you're watching, you just get a visual sensation, but I have all six sensations enabled and activated when I have to face him. I think he's the ultimate challenge on clay.

Whether he's playing now at let's say later stages of his career or the ones before, I think what he has now that he didn't before is experience, and he for sure knows ways to win points and to prevail in more economy mode than he

was before.

Q. Congratulations for this week. You have many goals on clay. Your level is already very high. Three days ago Maria Sakkari said that her dream was to play in the Olympic Games with you in the doubles, and that maybe you don't have the same dream than her. We have to ask you. So do you know already what you want to do on the Olympic Games?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: What I want to do is clear. If I manage to get in the Olympic Games with my brother Petros, I would want to play singles and doubles with him.

I would say that playing three events in a single tournament is a bit too much for me, physically taxing, and I would want to avoid that. I'm know that it's the Olympics and it's a great opportunity to play with Maria, and I completely agree she's one of the best partners to have in the mixed doubles field. I have had great moments with her.

But at the same time, I have a dream with my brother I'd like to share and be one of the very few brothers that have ever played together in the Olympics, especially in tennis. Nothing is stronger than that dream, and I really want to make this possible for the both of us.

It's family, and combining it with such a large event that dates back to ancient Greece, for us, it's bigger than anything else.

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