

US OPEN

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New York, New York, USA

Taylor Fritz

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Your thoughts preparing for this year's US Open.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, it's really nice to be back. I feel like I've been playing well, got a couple days of good practice. I got a couple I guess more days before the tournament starts. I'm excited to get started and I'm feeling good.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Your countryman John Isner, looks like he's wrapping his career. Might you reflect on what he's done, for so long he was carrying the U.S. torch.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, when I was a junior, then for a long time when I first started playing, started my pro career, he was the guy. He's been on top of American tennis for a really long time. He was always super just, like, nice, welcoming to all of the new younger guys like myself and Reilly and Tommy. He was always really welcoming to us as someone we looked up to.

Yeah, it's sad to see him go.

Q. Do you think his serve will go down as the best ever?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Could definitely like potentially be. Even if someone like I guess, I don't know, let's say Reilly were to do better, it's still John. John is John. He did it first. He's like the first person to really do it like that.

What we call him is the G.O.A.T. bot (smiling).

Q. Aryna Sabalenka, the bartending experience in Cincinnati, how did you enjoy that? Your thoughts on playing Stevie Johnson again.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, it's been fun. We're both partnered with Dobel. It's been great. I've really enjoyed the kind of activations we do with Dobel at these tournaments where we get to go to the bars and make some drinks for people. I think it's fun. I've gotten pretty



good actually at bartending, mixing up the drinks.

It's fun to actually go out and serve some of the fans. Doing it with Aryna, as well, it's been fun.

Then Stevie first round, we've played each other a lot. We know each other well. Yeah, it will be like a fun, fun match. We used to play each other a lot back in, like, I don't even know, a couple years ago. It's been a while.

It's going to be kind of like a throwback match almost.

Q. Favorite drink to make?

TAYLOR FRITZ: You know, I've been really enjoying making the Paloma. That's one of the signature drinks they like to do. It's really good.

Q. Playing Novak last week, what did you feel about his level? The way he was locked in in that match, the way it started, celebrated at the end after he won the title, did you sense how much it means to him to be back playing in the U.S. again?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Obviously he's back in the States for the first time in a bit. He definitely wants to prove himself and win the big titles. That final was crazy. I felt like his ball was coming off pretty big. I wished that I could have played a little bit better in that match. But I felt like his ball was really coming through the court.

Yeah, I mean, he's Novak. He's always performing well. He's always locked in. He's obviously the person to beat this week.

Q. It's 20 years since Andy Roddick won the championship here. What goes through your mind when you see the footage of Roddick winning and think about what his legacy is to the American players who followed?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, the biggest thing is what we all get I guess asked at every press conference for the last I guess since my career started, is that he's the last one to win it, he's the last one to win one. That's what we're all used to hearing.

I mean, Andy's, like, he's a great guy. We love him. Yeah,



we've all have just been trying to be the next one to win a slam because that's the legacy, really. He's the last person to win a slam. It's been 20 years.

Q. After you leave here, you're playing Laver Cup in Vancouver. You played last year. This is the first time those four guys, none of them will be playing only one other time. Is there a generational shift now for the Laver Cup? What are you looking forward to after last year?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, absolutely. I think times are definitely changing. Obviously there's no reason why Novak, like, couldn't play. Obviously Roger retired. Rafa is out, getting healthy. It's going to be a really different Laver Cup this year with how Team Europe is made up.

I'm excited. I think the teams are pretty even. I think this might be one of the first years that we're not going into it with everyone being like, Team Europe is so much better, Team World has no chance.

I think the teams look pretty even and it will be fun.

Q. What is your greatest memory of last year? Obviously Friday night stands out.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, like, being there for Roger's retirement, getting to talk to him, shake his hand, all that when he's retiring, that's something that I'll never forget.

Aside from that, obviously winning the whole event, being able to celebrate with the team. I think that's something that was so great because I was talking about it the other day actually. In tennis, when you win, which obviously every week everyone loses but one person, so when you do have those weeks where you win, you don't really have people to celebrate with because it's an individual sport.

It makes it so much better in the team events, you have a group of guys you can celebrate with and have fun with. I felt like that was one of, like, the top moments of just my tennis career because we were able to celebrate with such a group of my close friends.

Q. You mentioned a few years ago here that you embraced a lot of sports when you were growing up, but tennis was the sport you didn't embrace as much because of the tennis family that you grew up in. Now you've been the top American man for a few years, top-10 player, when you look back at young Taylor Fritz who wanted to be a baseball star, football star, is there even a greater appreciation for the sport of tennis?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Like, I don't know. I mean, if I were to go back, I think maybe I'd be burnt out of tennis if I embraced it like I did now from a really young age. I wouldn't go back and change anything.

I definitely don't feel the same way about tennis that I felt when I was a kid. When I was a kid, I was just like making up injuries, looking for excuses to get out of practicing and stuff like that.

I love tennis. I love the sport. I love talking about it, strategy, all that stuff. Everyone, all the players know to come to me when it comes to, like, advice playing somebody. I just love to talk tennis and break it down.

Separate from that, I also hate watching it when I'm not at tournaments (smiling). But when I'm playing it and when I'm at a tournament and I'm in it, yeah, I love it.

So definitely have changed a lot over the years.

Q. I think it's the first time since 2004 there's been five male seeds from America in the US Open. What do you think is behind that rise? Are you convinced one of this generation will break the drought we spoke about earlier?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, as far as the stats, it's the men's side, right? I'm sure we've had the seeds on the women's side.

Yeah, as far as it goes with the men's side, things like we have depth that we haven't had in an extremely long time. We've been talking about this for a while. With this depth, we have a lot of guys that are pushing even higher, ranked even higher.

Frances and I are in the top 10. We have Tommy, who is right outside. Several other guys that are in that, like, 30 to 40 range with the potential to 100% be top-20 guys. It's awesome to see. We're all going to keep kind of pushing each other.

There's definitely a lot more people with opportunities to go really deep in the tournament, hopefully do something big.

Q. What do you think is behind the rise?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think it's just having, like, this group of guys that are all kind of around the same age, like myself, Tommy, Frances, Sebi, Banks, all these guys. I think we all push each other.

When someone has a big result, all the other guys are, if he did it, then I can do it, too. It gives us all that belief

when someone kind of just has a big result, does something big, everyone else wants to, first of all, one-up them and do what they did, and then also, yeah, it's the belief they can do it.

I think we've all been pushing each other really well.

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