

# US OPEN

Monday, August 28, 2023

New York, New York, USA

## Frances Tiafoe

### Press Conference

F. TIAFOE/L. Tien

6-2, 7-5, 6-1

**THE MODERATOR:** Very impressive three-set win. Could you assess your performance.

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** I thought it was pretty good overall. Obviously first round, never opened up on Arthur Ashe before, so that was an honor in itself. Obviously it's a testament to how I've been playing and obviously with the run last year. So it's fun.

Obviously playing someone you don't know, is so young, and they're coming after you. Ultimately good.

I would like to hopefully take as many chances as I had today, I mean, when you're 8 for 25 on breakpoints, that's not too good, but ultimately it's done in straights, so that's all that matters.

**THE MODERATOR:** Questions.

**Q. Wanted to ask you, first it was Isner announcing his retirement. Now Jack Sock. Wanted to ask you about those guys and what that group meant to you.**

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** Yeah, I heard that a little bit before obviously the world knew about it.

It's crazy, man. Grew up watching John obviously. Watching him play the Legg Mason back in the day, as it used to be called in D.C., how solid he was. He was a hell of a player for so many years, top 20 a lot of his career, winning 250s for fun. He was a great leader for American tennis.

Jack obviously had a great career. You know, the last couple of years he really struggled. It was tough. I'm happy he's being able to wash his hands with it and being okay with it.

Get along with both of those guys really well, especially Jack. Happy he's moving on and he's happy ultimately.



**Q. I saw the video with Kevin Garnett, and other players joke about it, but you obviously had a massive impact on the way people are coming to see you.**

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** I didn't know there was a video, bro. I need to see that.

**Q. Has it surprised you the amount of impact and amount of people coming to see you and want to see you?**

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** Yeah, cool. Want to see me, want to meet me, it's cool. Some of that is super humbling. Obviously Big Ticket is a legend, so seeing him was super cool. He sent me a funny voicemail before the tournament. It's cool he's able to come out here.

Yeah, again, diversity in sport speaks volumes. Obviously it has people tune into the game that usually wouldn't. He's one of them, and many others. I have to keep winning so they stay interested. Obviously I want to impact a lot of people of color to want to pursue the game of tennis. It's big shoes to fill but a great seat to be in.

**Q. When you're coming out, daytime match, little different than the last time you were playing out there. Any worries to come back? I'm sure you practiced on there in the last couple of days. How do you experience the atmosphere there today versus your memories of it?**

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** Yeah, no, it was obviously good. When we had some good points the crowd really erupted obviously. It's different dynamic. I'm playing a young kid, an American kid, as well. You know, there's a little favoritism for both sides.

Yeah, it's different. I mean, it's the first match I played where I'm supposed to win on Ashe. I've never played a match before where I was supposed to win on Ashe. Usually they have boxes for the higher seed on the left and the other, second-highest player on the right. My team has never even been on the left. Things like that was just funny to me.

I mean, I've never sat in the seat I sat today on Ashe. I'm always the first person to get on the court so I always take



the far seat. There was a bunch of new experiences today, and ultimately it was fun to be out there.

**Q. I talked with Thanasi the other day and asked him his thoughts about pickleball, and he can't stand pickleball. What's your thoughts of this whole phenomenon? As well as Noah Lyles, his whole comments about world champion and all of the responses from KD.**

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** Yeah, that's so funny you brought that up about Noah Lyles. I was literally talking about that all car ride coming here, because it's crazy, bro. Funny.

The pickleball is what it is. The hype around it is crazy. I don't quite understand it. I just don't. But a lot of people invest in it. Obviously from a business side, that part is great. It's grown so much in the States. I mean, as a businessman, people are getting into it for a reason.

But the actual play, I think, I mean, I don't think it's a very difficult sport or great sport at all. If we're casually playing and having drinks and whatever, having fun, but to call it a sport, sport, it's crazy to me.

It is what it is. To each their own. People are enjoying it. That's ultimately what matters, you want to enjoy it and pick up something you like. So hats off to all those guys.

To Noah Lyles, Jesus Christ. He had, like, I get what he was saying but I don't get what he was saying. You know what I'm saying? What he said made sense but what he said also did not make sense. You know what I'm saying? Because it's the best league in the world, NBA. You can argue the three, four best players in the NBA are not American at the moment.

I mean, so what do you say to that, you know what I'm saying? The best foreign players are playing in the NBA. But then on the flip side, yeah, it's played in the States. So I get both sides but I'm definitely probably leaning more to all the hoopsters' responses, for sure.

**Q. When you got an individual fan yelling, "Go Frances" or something like that and you're on Ashe, can you hear it?**

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** Oh, for sure, for sure. There was a lady going nuts for me pretty much the whole match today. Let's go, 'Foe. You would have thought we were family members or something. She was going nuts, enjoying it. It's probably not the best thing but I'm very aware of who's in the crowd, who's there, especially if they're in, like, close proximity to where I'm at.

So it's just funny, I look up laughing and whatever. It's cool. I mean, that's what you want, right? You want people to take their hard-earned money to watch you and enjoy and genuinely enjoying. She had a great time today, and that's what matters, right? She saw me win. We spoke afterwards. I signed her daughter's ball. Her daughter was super excited, cried when I gave it. That stuff matters, it counts. It's cool. It's cool to have moments like that.

**Q. I'm curious, when you say you're aware of it, meaning you're aware of what's being said or meaning you're literally aware, oh, that person is there? And if it's the latter, who's been in the crowd that you have actually noticed and get a little shook, Oh, that's so-and-so, that's that person?**

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** I mean, obviously Michelle. It's not going to get much better than that. Maybe it will; probably not. Maybe if her husband is sitting next to her. I don't know. It's pretty tough to beat that. A tennis match, I mean it's nuts.

Yeah, but, I mean, a lot of cool people have been able to come and take the time out to watch lately. Yeah, probably both. I know especially if they're loud enough and getting really into it.

You know, friends are there. I know friends come out to watch, I like to know where they're sitting at. Usually I seek them out and say "Come on" to them and see them enjoying. That's what counts, what matters.

**Q. You have a very fiery personality and get very excited on court. I'm sure every player does. You really show it. What tools do you use to then calm yourself down and get ready to play the next point?**

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** Everyday process, my brother. Just trying to figure that out.

Nah, just experience, man. I've been playing at a high level for a while. Obviously understanding myself, understanding the highs and lows. Time where I need to pick it up and use the crowd, time where I just need to kind of dial it in and just worry about the task at hand, and kind of freestyle that a little bit.

I mean, I just know myself, play better, understand the moment and kind of let it rock that way. I think I'm using it with the perfect balance right now. Obviously, you know, here as the tournament develops and gets going, more and more hype and more and more excitement. Just being smart because it is three out of five, you want to save your energy. I don't want to gas out in the first set. Got a lot of

tennis being played. Good to be smart about it.

**Q. To me, tennis is an incredible game. It just teaches so much about sports and life. You have been playing it your whole life. If you had to step way back and say the one or two things that this sport has taught you in your life or about life, could you respond to that very general question?**

**FRANCES TIAFOE:** Well, I think in anything, obviously this sport, but I think in anything, if you want to do anything high level, you've got to have a certain amount of discipline, certain amount of sacrifice, right? Certain level of obsession. I think those are the three biggest things to be really successful in whatever your craft is, so to speak.

But the game of tennis, I mean, it's just you. You can't lean on anybody. You've got to have a level of discipline. You've got to do it the days you don't want to do it. You've got to sacrifice. You can't do what everybody else is doing. You can't hang out with your friends maybe all the time. You know what I mean?

You've got to be obsessed with it. You've got to eat, sleep, breathe -- I mean, it's got to mean that much to you. Otherwise, I mean, these other dudes, Euro dudes or North American dudes, love it and they'll pass you.

So, I mean, I think that's the three biggest things to anything but for sure with tennis.

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