

# US OPEN

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## Taylor Townsend

### Press Conference

T. TOWNSEND/B. Haddad Maia

7-6, 7-5

**THE MODERATOR:** Taylor, two hard-fought sets, two hours. Assess your performance moving on now.

**TAYLOR TOWNSEND:** Yeah, I'm very happy with how things went today. I think that I fought really hard. I know that Bea, we've been playing against each other for many, many years, from juniors, like under-14s, representing the U.S., her representing her country. I'm very familiar with her.

She's a great person, first and foremost, a great competitor. I've really enjoyed seeing the way that she's been able to come back and be so committed. So it was an honor to share the court with her today.

I'm very proud of the way that I fought and I executed my game plan. Honestly, just kept my cool. Bea does a great job of keeping her opponents under pressure. I had some opportunities where I was up a break in the second, she broke back. We had some tough games back and forth where I had opportunities, and they kind of slipped.

I think mentally, I'm most proud of the way I managed myself mentally today.

**THE MODERATOR:** Questions, please.

**Q. The singles and doubles win, is this type of day what you work for?**

**TAYLOR TOWNSEND:** Absolutely. Someone after the match was like, How do you do this? How do you play?

I was like, Man, this is what I train for.

These type of days where I'm in the gym, I'm on the court, you're doing the hours, like, I'm really happy the way it shows up.

Yeah, I've worked really hard to be in the place where I am



today and be sitting in front of you guys. I never take a day for granted.

I felt great going into the doubles. I was more mentally tired than anything just from the emotions of the match from the singles.

Overall these are the times, and a day like this I would be proud to share with my son and say, Look, like, you put in the work, and you reap the rewards. Sometimes you don't know when that's going to happen, but just keep working and it will happen eventually.

**Q. You talked about how you were proud at how you kept your composure. I'm curious whether you have a different perspective since motherhood. Does that make it kind of easier to keep things in perspective, keep an even keel on the court?**

**TAYLOR TOWNSEND:** No, it's the exact opposite. I think like being a parent makes you want to pull your hair out (laughter).

I think it's more so, like, learning and understanding when to push. Basically to understand that most of the time, like, you want to be in control but you're not in control, so you can control what you can, and what you can't you got to let go.

I think that's like the basis of tennis all around. You have ups, you have downs, but it's how you manage.

But motherhood has given me a different perspective, more so towards the game. I really have fallen back in love not only with the sport but with the process. For the longest time I was like, I know I can, I know I can, I know I can. But really now I truly believe, like, I'm a top player. Being able to have matches like these and days like these, it shows me that I'm there.

I've continued to say to myself, to my team, It's going to happen, it's going to happen. I feel this in my gut and I know.

Just putting one foot in front of the other has been my goal. Days like this are really truly special to me because it just highlights kind of what I've been building in my mind and in myself and with the people that are around me, that belief.



That's the biggest thing I think it showed today.

**Q. Are you a Yankees fan?**

**TAYLOR TOWNSEND:** No, I just like the hat. And it matched my shirt. That's it.

But, hey, I'm in New York, so sure (smiling).

**Q. When coming back from being off for so long, it can be hard to maintain an elite doubles ranking while building your singles. Can you talk about the sacrifices you had to make, how you had to prioritize.**

**TAYLOR TOWNSEND:** I didn't have to prioritize. Every tournament I've played, I play singles in, so I'm a tennis player, end. I think that sometimes when you're having success in one area more than the other, it's very easy for people to try and box you in, say, Oh, she's doing great in doubles, and that overshadows anything.

But I'm out here working. I'm a tennis player, period. It's just that right now my doubles ranking is higher than my singles, but not for long (smiling).

We need to cut that. Not cut, but that was a great bit. I need that. Sorry.

I didn't have to prioritize. Like I said, every tournament I played, I played singles and doubles. I've always done this in my career because doubles has always helped me in my singles.

But the opportunities and the consistent going to the second week, going deep into these events, going deep into the slams, being the last one standing, whether it's singles or whether it's doubles, it gives you that feeling.

So even in Cincinnati, after making the finals of a Masters 1000 in Miami, I told my coach, I said, in Cincinnati, This feels different, but it was because I've been there before. It doesn't matter.

For me personally - it could be different for other players - but for me personally, it doesn't matter. Me being in those situations over and over is giving me the confidence and it's prepping me for the singles, in my opinion.

Yeah, I didn't have to prioritize. There was no sacrifice. I'm very proud of the successes that I've had in doubles. It's really helped my game tremendously. Coming off of winning Cincinnati, I'm playing really great tennis.

Even though I lost second round or whatever round in Cincinnati, I don't even know, with the singles, but I'm

carrying on the confidence of winning the doubles into my singles play. So it translates. That's all that matters.

**Q. Looking ahead, playing Karolina, it's going to be an exciting matchup because of the way you guys both play. What do you make of her tennis, the way that she plays? Is it fun to play against somebody who can kind of match you on the all-court game?**

**TAYLOR TOWNSEND:** That's a challenge. Yeah, I really respect her as a player. Again, she's one of the ones, such a nice person off the court, and I respect the journey. Everyone has their ups and downs.

I remember, like, talking to her at the French Open a few years ago when she hurt herself and she had to pull out. She's on crutches, couldn't walk basically. To see her take time off, come back, then see where she is, how she's been able to ascend to almost the top of the game has been really amazing.

So I'm excited. I'm excited because it's, like, she can do certain things different than other players. These are the type of matches that really get me going because it's a test and it's a challenge because she doesn't play like everybody else. Kind of strategically and tactically we'll have to make some adjustments to make sure that I'm able to execute and play my best tennis.

I'm looking forward to it. But when I play players who can do things like Bea, I'm like, Oh, yeah. I get excited. My mouth starts watering because it's fun, it really is.

I'm looking forward to the matchup. We've never played before. It's always tough when you haven't played someone because you're kind of figuring each other out. So, yeah, I'm excited for the matchup. Hope you guys enjoy.

**Q. In terms of the atmosphere this morning, a singles match on Court 17, you had a lot of crowd support. There were times where it felt like you were playing in Rio or something with the amount of Brazilian fans. Did that fire you up a little more, that the crowd was almost against you?**

**TAYLOR TOWNSEND:** No, Court 17 was lit. Oh, my gosh. Cut that one, too (smiling).

No, it was crazy. I literally came off the court, I was like, That was so fire. It was so fun. The energy. I've never been to, like, a professional soccer match, football - sorry, people might get mad - let me say soccer because we're in America, soccer match, game. I felt like that was the vibe.

It was like they were chanting, then they would start chanting, then people for me would start chanting, going back and forth. Then people would say stuff at random times.

Someone was talking to me behind the court, telling me what to do, giving me like the whole game plan. I was like, Oh, my God.

It was really cool. Like, honestly, this is probably one of the most fun, like, matches I played in terms of, like, crowd support. I really was feeding off of the energy. I did not care that it was a lot of support for her. I expect that pretty much anywhere that we go.

I kind of got a taste of it because I played with Luisa Stefani earlier this year in doubles in Adelaide. I gained almost like 3,000 followers just from us winning Adelaide. I was like, Dang, girl. I felt so popular. It was all Brazilian media outlets. It was cool.

I kind of got the feeling like they are so passionate. It was super lit. I had a great time. I had so much fun. This is probably the most that I've gotten the crowd involved. I was fired up. Cut that (smiling). Really, I had a great time.

So, no, I really didn't pay attention to that. I thought it was really cool. I thought that it created a really, really amazing atmosphere just for the spectators because our court was more loud than, like, the stadium courts honestly. It was really cool, so...

I was glad to have been a part of that.

**Q. You said before that you're playing with this belief now. Why do you think you lacked it before? What did it take for you to get this belief?**

**TAYLOR TOWNSEND:** I guess having a kid. I don't know.

Honestly, the belief has come, like it hasn't been an easy journey, but the belief has come from me putting in the work. Like, I really know that I'm not here by talent. Yes, I have talent, quote-unquote, whatever. But I'm here because I work my ass off to get here.

In my journey, I don't take anything for granted. I think that, like, knowing that, being able to refer and go back to your struggles and the hard times, it gives you the strength to know that you can get through it.

I know, like, the sacrifices that I have made, and not many people know, only a handful of people know what I was doing and going through in order to get back to be able to

sit in front of you guys and have this type of conversation.

For me the belief has come from putting in the work, putting in the hard yards, not only physically but mentally as well, really breaking down a lot of different barriers that I had in my mind. Kind of trying to figure out what was holding me back because I felt like everyone has always told me since being No. 1 junior that you have everything. But there was always something missing. I had to figure out what that thing was. But only I could do that.

Yeah, I mean, I really worked hard to be here. Every time that I step on the court, like, whether it's singles or doubles or mixed doubles, whether it's a Grand Slam or challenger, I don't take it for granted.

I'm really just trying to put my best foot forward every time I step on the court, learn something, and walk off the court knowing I gave it my all, but also figuring out what I learned, whether it's a win or loss, so I can apply it to the next thing that I do, the next match, training session, and that's my approach.

**Q. When you're doing your self-eval, what was it in your mind that you figured out was holding you back?**

**TAYLOR TOWNSEND:** I mean, kind of going to sound cliché, but like me, like my thought process towards myself. It's not just about me as a tennis player. It's actually the complete opposite.

I really had to dive into my personal self and try to figure out and break down, like, how do you feel about yourself, how is it that the experiences that you've had have affected you when it comes to the tennis world. People talking about my weight, people talking about very sensitive subjects, how I look. Physical appearance is always judged from the very time you step out on the court.

I really had to break down a lot of things and detach from that, really like say, Look, this is where you're at now, it's not where you want to be, set a goal. That was the start. I set a goal.

I said, Look, when I come back, I'm going to be better than I was when I left. I said it in my trophy ceremony last year here. I said, It's not an accident. I said, This is what I was going to do and I'm doing that.

I think everyone sees that, but I really had to break down myself and, like, just understand myself more as a person. It was so cool because, like, I embraced the environment today. Like, me showing the emotion and passion, pumped up, the crowd, like, doing little stuff after I hit certain shots. Like this is me. Like that's me.

So finally, like, accepting who I am and what all that means, letting it come out, letting it show and shine in stages and places like this.

Before sometimes I always feel like I had to act a certain way or be a certain thing or kind of measure, like, who I was. But now I'm just like, Hey, this is Taylor, take it, leave it, you like it, don't like it, whatever. Can't make everyone happy. That was another thing.

It was very deep. It was very personal. But I'm glad that you guys are able to see the true version of who I am. Not only me as a person. I think it comes out in, like, talking to you guys, but also my personality, but then also on court just seeing, like, the truth, like really the pure essence of me having a great time and enjoying and entertaining the crowd, enjoying the competition and the fight. I think that shows. That means a lot to me.

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