

# US OPEN

Sunday, September 3, 2023

New York, New York, USA

## Tommy Paul

### Press Conference

B. SHELTON/T. Paul

6-4, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4

**THE MODERATOR:** Congratulations on a great tournament. Obviously today didn't go exactly the way you wanted it to. Your thoughts on the match.

**TOMMY PAUL:** I think, you know, I came out pretty good. Then gave the break right back. Didn't serve as well as I would have liked to today. I haven't looked at the stats, but I feel like my first-serve percentage was pretty low and wasn't getting much pop on it. He has a pretty good serve and he's not easy to break. That was pretty much the difference in the match.

**THE MODERATOR:** Questions.

**Q. The effort in the third set had you bounce back with it. You started out 3-0 and had him in the rhythm, and then all of a sudden his level just increased. Can you just talk about the improvements he's made fitness-wise and dealing when you're on the offense against him?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** Yeah, I think when you have opportunities in a 3-0 game to get a double break, I think I had a few breakpoints there and one was, like, a short forehand.

You know, those kind of points are much bigger than they look. They're not just like, you saved that point and then you hold serve. I mean, it can swing sets, and that's kind of exactly what happened. He ended up holding serve and I got broken the next game. He picked up his level a ton.

He's got a super jumpy serve. He was going after his second serves really aggressive today, which wasn't fun. He gave me, like, no rhythm the whole match. You know, the normal stuff when you're playing a guy who is a server -- or, I mean, he's not just a server. He can obviously run down a lot of balls. Like you said, he's gotten a lot better there. He definitely earned the match today.

**Q. The embrace at the net, you are two of the classiest**



**guys on tour. What did you say to him and how much potential he has with how big his game can be?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** I don't remember what I said. I think I was just, like, I mean, Great playing. Good luck, keep going. Don't stop. Even though I think he might play 'Foe, so I mean, I'm not picking favorites or anything. Whoever wins that match, I want both of them to do really well.

But I think I was just, like, you know, Good job. In the gym, I just went and talked to him again. I mean, I think he's pretty excited, you know, second quarterfinals in one year. It's pretty cool, and it's, like, his first or second year on tour. I'm excited for him.

**Q. Any moment in the last, since Friday, I guess it was, or probably yesterday when the schedule came out, sort of looked at the schedule and you see fourth round of the US Open, you, Taylor, Frances, right there, where it's like a moment of reflection, given that you guys have been together for so long?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** Yeah, it's pretty cool. When I was on the court it, like, showed it up on the big screen, like Americans remaining in the tournament.

It is pretty cool to see that. Obviously, I mean, there is many more that I wish were still out here. I mean, Reilly could easily be here, I think. He's had a tough year, but Mmoh was close. There's a bunch of Americans right now that are coming up.

It's an exciting time. It's cool. Like you said, we grew up all together. That was Kalamazoo 16s, quarterfinals, the people that are here right now, so it's kind of cool.

**Q. In terms of Friday was your first time on that court and you were a little worried about people showing up. Today you're in the fourth set and you probably look up and there's 20,000-plus people there. You said it was not a normal place to play. Is it starting to feel more normal?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** Yeah, I mean, I would say, I needed that one match on the court and I felt pretty comfortable out there today.

It's definitely, like I said, it's an awesome court, but, yeah, I



... when all is said, we're done.®

felt a lot more comfortable on it today than the other day.

**Q. The first two sets, you had 10 breakpoints and only converted one. He had five and got four. How frustrating was that and was that sort of the difference you think in the first two sets?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** Yeah, absolutely (smiling).

I mean, when you have that many breakpoints and don't convert many, it's super frustrating and you feel like you're winning the whole match and nothing, you're not moving up in the scoreboard, it's super frustrating, yeah. Especially when you feel like you have a lot on your racquet. It wasn't like all aces or anything. It was in points.

It's frustrating. Like I said, he played a good match today.

**Q. You got it together in the third set. Something different you did on those breakpoints?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** I had a little bit more energy. I brought a little bit more energy in the third, I think. I think he maybe started thinking a little bit and gave me a few more second serves, gave me a few more -- I felt like a lot of times in the first two sets I'd return pretty well, and he would, like, pick up off the shoelaces, like two inches from the baseline. I'm like, That's pretty good. Then there in the third he gave me a few opportunities. That was nice.

**Q. What's different about Ben's serve compared to the other guys who serve huge out there?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** He's a lefty. That's pretty -- it's a pretty big advantage to be a lefty, especially on the serve. The spin is the opposite way, and he has a lot of spin.

Yeah, that's pretty big.

**Q. I think when he hit the 149 you kind of gave him a little golf clap. When your opponent is in that sort of rhythm, how difficult is it to sort of get them out of that rhythm?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** Well, you want to get them out of the rhythm but you don't want to be, like, disrespectful in any way. I try and be like overly respectful. Maybe it will get him out of his rhythm. Like on changeovers, like, Dude, you're serving great today, that sort of thing. Hit him with a couple of those today but he had no reaction to it. It wasn't really working (smiling).

**Q. I know Ben was awesome today and you wouldn't want to take anything away from that but just wanted to check, were you 100% physically today?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** Yeah, I'm fine.

**Q. You mentioned this earlier, but how impressed were you with his all-court game? We know about the serve and the big forehand, but did that really impress you compared to last time?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** Yeah, I think he played unbelievable at the net today. I mean, a lot of massive points, a lot of breakpoints, a lot of game points. He came to the net and, I mean, he volleyed really well. I thought that was one of the main differences in the match that changed stuff his way.

I think he's improved a ton there. I mean, he's obviously been playing pretty aggressive this week. I don't know, I haven't really watched a ton of his matches throughout the whole year, so I don't know if that's, like, something he's been doing. I would imagine that that would probably be his goal is to play super-aggressive.

I mean, I think he's probably been working on it a ton.

**Q. Obviously disappointed today, but can you look at the positives of first fourth round here, won your first match on Ashe. Can you talk about another step, another growth step here at the Open this week.**

**TOMMY PAUL:** Yeah, I mean, I would say I could have been out in the second round, for sure. Overall, it's a good thing that I'm here right now. Hopefully I can learn from today's loss and be in the same position next year and win that match.

I think, like you said, it was overall a good showing here, but I want to do better next year and better in Australia, better in French. Like, I always want to try and be better. That's the goal.

**Q. Eddy's coming to Australia with you?**

**TOMMY PAUL:** Maybe (smiling).

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