

Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Taylor is coming off his first ATP Masters 1000 title in Indian Wells on Sunday where he defeated Rafael Nadal, broke his 20-match winning streak in the final. Taylor is ranked a career-high No. 13 this week in the ATP rankings.

Welcome back to Miami and just talk about your win in Indian Wells.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I mean, it's crazy. Obviously I didn't go into Indian Wells thinking that I was going to win the tournament obviously. I kind of just took it one match at a time, played who was in front of me.

Obviously, the last day of the tournament just was a lot with my ankle, thinking that I wasn't going to be able to play the final, then playing the final and feeling really good in it. Obviously with Rafa being injured as well. I mean, just a lot of stuff.

Obviously just really, really happy to get the first Masters 1000 title. Then to be here thinking there's probably a good chance I'll be able to play here.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What is your favorite food before a final game?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm very superstitious. I like to kind of keep the same routines all the time. What I eat before almost every single match is just, like, steak and mashed potatoes.

Q. Yesterday the buzz was Rafa, today it's Ash Barty. You're just about the same age. Can you talk about your sense when you heard the news?

TAYLOR FRITZ: It's crazy. She previously, early on in her career, did retire as well. Now it's obviously a lot different this time with her being No. 1 in the world. She still is very young.

I don't have any kind of inside information. I'm sure she's thought a lot about the decision. I guess she thinks that's what's best for her. Happy for her. I'd still hold out hope if

I was a fan that she might miss it and come back later on because there's plenty of time for that.

Q. Some people said tennis is a brutal sport, and at 25 it's easy to be done, to be burned out. Can you talk about how hard it is to be playing this sport.

TAYLOR FRITZ: My mom was a top-10 player. I believe she retired when she was 24 or maybe even 25.

This is such a stressful sport. Having to worry about defending your points, your ranking, your sponsor, it's so stressful, especially if you are someone who expects a lot of yourself, puts a lot of pressure on yourself.

It's definitely very mentally draining and wearing to play the sport. I can definitely understand someone who's accomplished a lot, done everything they probably wanted to do, being happy to call it.

Q. The French Open last week announced they were going to a six-all super tiebreak. Is it time for all of the tournaments to get rid of the fifth set and play two-out-of-three?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I don't think so. I think what makes the Grand Slams somewhat special in a way is you really dig into that physical aspect of three-out-of-five. I'm at the point where I think when you play a two-out-of-three set match, fitness-wise, three sets is fine, it's not going to affect me. If I can play, like, five brutal sets, that's a whole 'nother thing. I think it makes it even tougher to beat better players in three-out-of-five because it's extended.

I actually kind of like the fact it's just a whole different thing, beating a top player at one of those tournaments. It's just a longer match. Like I said, I think the better player wins more often. I think it's something special about the Grand Slams.

I'd personally keep it because I think it's one of the biggest challenges in sports, playing a three-out-of-five setter in tough conditions. Obviously I'd just love to not have to play some four-hour matches, but I think it's kind of tradition and an important part of the sport.



Q. How did you celebrate Sunday night? Also wondering if you caught a glimpse of the ATP ranking where they briefly put you at No. 8?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I don't think I'm allowed to say I was top 10, unfortunately. But, no, I was following the live ranking. I knew that I wasn't No. 8. I knew I was going to 13.

After the tournament, obviously I did a lot of media stuff for a couple hours. It was getting pretty late. First stop was to In-N-Out. When I won my first challengers in California when I was 17, that's also where I went, when I won my first-ever pro tournament. Had to go to In-and-Out.

Drove back to L.A. I wanted to go out that night, it's a Sunday night, but I wanted to go out and celebrate. Champaign, all that.

Got there pretty late, so had kind of like a half celebration. Had to wake up early the next morning to get my ankle MRI'ed. I couldn't go all out. Maybe I'll find a time for it.

Q. And the ankle?

TAYLOR FRITZ: You know, it's really tough to tell. The MRI was really positive or else I wouldn't be here. We were worried about a lot of things before the final because obviously the doctors at the tournament inspected it, physios inspected it. We were worried about a potential stress fracture. I don't know the actual name of the bone, but one of the back bones in the ankle. Couple other things we were worried about.

Luckily the end result of the MRI, I don't know all the technical terms, I wish my physio was here to explain it, the way I pinched my ankle in the semis, it got extremely inflamed, a lot of fluid filled up in the joint. It made it almost impossible for me to move it in certain ways and push off because it was just so inflamed and full of, like, fluid.

The process now is just trying to get the inflammation down. I'll have a hit. It feels right now a lot like it felt before the finals, where I can walk and I think it's fine. The day of the final match I wasn't really sure how I was going to feel until I actually stepped on the warmup court. I took a hard push-off step that I didn't think I was going to be able to play.

That's kind of how it feels right now. I'll see if that's the same case when I go on the court to practice. I'm hoping that it's not, that it will feel a little better. Definitely still not there yet.

Q. You talked about being superstitious. Besides mashed potatoes and steak, do you have any other

things that you like to do, how to dress? How do you see American male tennis?

TAYLOR FRITZ: First off, the superstition stuff. It's more like routines almost. Like I believe in you don't change a winning strategy. Something is working for me, I don't want to change it.

I kind of have a whole process I go through. I think it gives me a lot of, like, I don't know, relief. Keeps me calm before a match if I'm always doing the same thing.

I always warm up two and a half hours before I play, finish two hours before. I immediately eat, shower, change my clothes. I have a whole process of stuff I go through before my match. I think it keeps me distracted, not thinking too much about the match.

The night-before stuff, I try to eat the same meal, go to sleep early. I typically like to read a little bit and fall asleep watching something on my computer. That's my whole routine.

Q. And American tennis?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think right now we have so many young guys. We probably have one of the strongest groups of a lot of people that we have in a long time. We have so many guys in the top 40, 50 right now.

I think I said recently what we're kind of missing is the guys in the top 10. Hopefully I can keep having good results and I'll be there soon. But we have so many guys with the potential to be in the top 20, 15, top 10. There's a lot of really good players all over the place.

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