

Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters

Principality of Monaco

Friday, 16 April 2021

Stefanos Tsitsipas

Press Conference



S. TSITSIPAS/A. Davidovich Fokina

7-5 (ret.)

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. (Question regarding the ranking.)

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I don't think about rankings. Plus I heard half of what you said, so... I think it was like this last time, too.

I don't think about rankings. There is no reason for me to think about rankings. If I perform well, I'm going to get good results. It's like school. You go to school, you study, do your homework. When it's a test day, when you're supposed to give a test, you've done all your research, homework, everything combined to write a good grade.

I would probably characterize it that way. That's how it is here, as well.

Q. Are you worried you have played so little here in Monte-Carlo before the semifinal or it's okay for you?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Yeah, I'm playing well. I'm playing well. There's nothing wrong with that. I can play better. I'm playing well. I have potential for better.

I take every opportunity I have to play with magnitude and respect. Looking forward on the next matches that I have to play here. So far so good. I feel like the bigger tournaments, the more tougher the opponents get. That is also due to the form they've been in to reach that level and to reach that round in the tournament.

Yeah, I'm expecting more difficult battles and much more consistency from my opponents.

Q. Were you greatly surprised about Djokovic's defeat versus Evans? Did you give yourself an explanation, two months without tennis, the strain muscle? In your part of the draw, Zverev lost. Your draw is better than you expected.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I don't see it that way. I think every opponent deserves to be where they are if they perform and play well. There are seeded players that get an advantage of, like, skipping the first round. If someone is playing well, they're playing well, and they deserve to be where they are.

Djokovic, you said he was injured, right? That's what he said? I don't know if that was the case. It was a bit surprising. Not only me, but everyone was surprised. Good game from Evans. He did everything possible to get him out.

Back to that, Djokovic has played with an injury before, the Australian Open earlier this year, and he seemed to be doing all right. Actually better than all right, to be honest. He went away from Melbourne with a title.

That was also very surprising to see considering that he claimed to be injured, claimed to have a serious injury. I don't even remember, somewhere in the legs, abdominal, wherever. That was a great performance for him to come back from that and win the title.

Speaking of which, I've been playing well. It's great. Monte-Carlo feels kind of like home to me. There are a lot of things that happened here in the past. I was here to witness them. Being part of it myself as a player, yeah, getting closer to it every single day. It's important to be in this kind of position.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Bad connection. Maybe something with the audio. I couldn't hear it. Same like yesterday.

Q. Anything you can take away from the set you just played?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Well, the level of tennis was high at the beginning of the set. We had a lot of exchanges, long rallies that we played. There was a lot of intensity in every single one of them. I knew it is going to be very



demanding and I will have to put a lot of work in to get that break, to seek for that opportunity to take the lead, which eventually came.

But late into that set I kind of saw he was injured. He was struggling a little bit with his foot. I didn't want this to get into my head. I tried to face the situation as if he wasn't injured, and played the same way I did before.

Somehow I got broken. Didn't panic. I think I stayed calm, broke him back with all of the effort that I put in, all of the concentration. The rest is just history. I had to do what I had to do: move him around the court, make him work for every single point.

Eventually he wasn't able to face me. That led to a withdrawal which I like to believe that I made him injured with the quality of tennis that I was putting out there. No one knows how he got injured. Putting it that way, that would be better.

Q. What do you miss the most from the tennis tour in pre-COVID times? Is this new normal affecting you in any way in terms of game or mentally as time goes by?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: I miss being able to move freely without having to get permission or special verifications for me to travel. It's been a real pain having to go through all that process. Traveling is not easy these days. Makes it very difficult to see people, relatives and family. Honestly, it just makes it mentally draining.

Also to be able to bring people and gather with other people, have meetings and stuff that we had access to before, without second thoughts, having to think over how, why, whatever. These are the type of things that I really miss.

The fans are great. I always love the fans. That's the difference in an ITF pro circuit tour and the ATP Tour. The fans that come in to watch and support their favorite players. This is something we have been lacking for a long time now. It has been going back and forth. Australian Open we had the fans, then they got excluded, then they came back, which is kind of strange.

Just a little bit more consistency in our everyday life. Life seems uncertain now. I don't really know what to say. I feel like there is light at the end of the tunnel. I see the situation getting better every single day. I see some sort of hope for all of us people globally.

I wouldn't say that things are going to get worse. I have faith in humanity getting better, finding solutions to these problems.