

Miami Open presented by Itaú

Friday, March 28, 2025

Miami, Florida, USA

Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



J. MENSİK/T. Fritz

7-6, 4-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. When is the last time you lost a match without losing your serve?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I can't remember. I don't even know if that's... I'm not sure if it's happened to me or not. Maybe. I can't remember.

Q. This kid has a big serve. Was that the difference?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, yeah, he definitely got more, like, especially in the tiebreakers. I had to work harder for my points on my serve than he did. He got some freebies, then he made me play a bit more on some of my service points. That made the difference. Just like one or two. I mean, the first set it was one mini break, then this one was two points at the end.

Yeah, I mean, I needed to really just play some of those tight points just a little bit better. I think that in some of those, especially at the end, I saw how, like, tight he was hitting some of his shots. I think it almost made me think like, Okay, let's not take a risk, let's out-solid him. I've won so many matches in my life. Just kind of responding to someone being a little nervous, then kind of buckling down, taking zero chances, telling myself, I'm not going to miss, I'm going to out-solid him.

There's no point in me trying to pull the trigger on something and potentially giving him a freebie. Let's just play.

I almost got, like, faked out a little bit after the return he hit at 4-All. I didn't hit a good return. His first ball was, like, he hit back so tight. I thought, Okay, I can just rally, no real problem here. Then he just drilled a backhand line. I almost got faked out. After the first ball that he hit, I didn't think there was any chance he was going to pull the trigger on the next one.

It happens.

Q. When you're playing someone like him, there's a big difference between his first serve and second serve speed, can that sometimes be almost tricky when you have a second serve coming at you a lot slower and you have more time think about it?

TAYLOR FRITZ: No. I wouldn't say so. I think it was more just it slowed down when he got a little bit tight. I felt like the majority of the match, the second serve, he was sometimes hitting some pretty big seconds.

Yeah, I mean, first point of the tiebreaker I had zero hesitation on. I saw the ball. I was like, I can kill this. I'm surprised I missed it. Normally when I just, like, make a really quick decision, I see a ball, know exactly what I want to do with it, I normally don't miss it. I normally miss when I start overthinking things.

That ball, first point in the tiebreaker, I'm going to kill this cross. Kind of sucks I missed it.

Q. I was going to ask you if there are any shots you regret. I'm sure there are over the course of a long match. Other than that one there, is there anything else you wish you could have back?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I felt like the majority of the match I was just having a hard time, like, turning on my forehand, which I've been doing that really well lately. I think, yeah, I don't know. I was really struggling to just pull some of these forehands cross hard.

That was a key shot in this match for me, is to drill my forehand into his forehand. Too often it was just getting too handsy. I was missing some. I was lifting it too much. When you lift it up to his forehand, that's when he can actually flatten it and do more with it.

Just a lot of shots on the forehand. I was just struggling to really, like, get through it and generate the power.

My 4-All return was a return that if I'm feeling solid about how I'm hitting the forehand, I would never hit the return



like that. I played it so safe. Yeah, I feel like I could have just... I just wish my forehand was 5% better.

Q. The fact that this was so close and you didn't lose your serve, does that take a bit away of the pain of this loss? How special is this kid?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, I'd say it doesn't really take the pain away too much. Between the two breakers, like, I have to win one of them. I have to play a little bit better.

I think when I'm playing well, when I'm winning matches, it's kind of just what I do. I pull through these situations. So to just kind of get out-toughed in two breakers, it sucks. I did my job. I didn't get broken. I didn't face a break point until the third set, so... It sucks.

I mean, he's really good. I played him on his 18th birthday at the Open. Obviously he's improved a lot since then. I think he's improved naturally, like almost everything in his game has improved. When you're young like that, you're just going to get better.

The serve is a massive improvement. I played him at the US Open in '23. He had a big serve, but he didn't place it that well. I was able to just be on his serve all the time. It was big, but he didn't hit the spots.

Yeah, the spot serving today was insane. I really should have just started guessing and picking side more often instead of trying to react and use my reach like I normally do. I felt like either he missed the serve or he hit it within an inch or two of the line. I really should have just started guessing.

Q. So how would you rate Mensik's chances in the final against Novak?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, obviously I'm a little bit biased as someone who has lost to him 10 times. I kind of always take him as the favorite, no matter what.

It's going to be interesting to see. I'm not quite sure. I guess they'll be playing during the day?

Q. Yes.

TAYLOR FRITZ: I mean, I'd say that is in favor of Mensik. It's going to help him stay on top of his serve, get more free points on the serve.

Honestly, I'm not sure. It's a question of how well he's going to serve. I think if Novak can return his serve and get balls in play, then I think it's going to be really tough to beat him.

If the conditions are fast enough and he's serving well enough, he's always going to be in the match. It's going to be tight. He's going to have a solid chance.

I'm not sure because I couldn't return a serve, that doesn't mean that Novak is not going to be able to return a serve. It's going to depend on that.

Q. I think you mentioned the other night you were going to have a different return strategy. Why doesn't the strategy that you used against Matteo work against someone like Mensik?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Potentially it could have. I think that Mensik would be much more comfortable with that first ball after I return, if I return the way I returned the other night. A lot of it with Matteo is getting that ball on him really fast so he doesn't have that time to I guess find a forehand, pull the trigger if I return from far back.

I feel like in this situation if I can stand far back and make the return, because I'm further back in the court with the court positioning, I feel like I have a very good play on that second ball.

I feel like he's not the type of person who is going to crush a winner off the first ball, whereas if I'm standing really close on the deuce side especially, let's say he serves slider, I chip my forehand line, I'm at the baseline, I think Mensik is just ripping a backhand cross, ripping it line. He can do whatever he wants with that one. I think he's going to feel way more comfortable off the return in that situation.

Even that being said, I think on the ad side I could have played around with it. The main issue was I felt like in my match with Berrettini, returning how I was returning, I kind of reinjured the injury I'd been dealing with. Think of it like this. When it's like an ab injury, it's a lot of force through it when I'm catching the ball. Think of it like this. How much faster is the ball hitting my racquet? How much more force is against me when I'm hitting the ball on the baseline versus 10 feet behind the baseline?

I felt like towards the end of the match with Berrettini, end of the second set, I felt like I kind of reinjured that thing that I've been dealing with. I tried a bit in the warm-up trying to return like that. It was bugging me. I felt like injury-wise it wasn't a good idea to do it. I felt like it was hurting me.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports