

BNP Paribas Open

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

Nick Kyrgios

Press Conference

N. KYRGIOS/A. Zverev

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. It was pretty hot out there, but you made it look pretty comfortable. Straight sets. Didn't face a break point on your serve.

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, I don't think I served that well today, actually. I felt -- I wasn't serving my best, so I thought I just competed well. It was always going to be a tough match. He's been playing great tennis and on the rise ever since juniors. I knew it was going to be tough.

It was hot, but it wasn't scorching. I think that suits my game style. I can get more bounce off my forehand.

But, yeah, it was a tough battle. I'm just really glad to get through.

Q. Did you ever feel really threatened out there? Looked like you were in control pretty much the whole match.

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, I don't know if I felt threatened. But I was well aware he could hit some great, great shots at great moments. He's a great player.

So I don't know if I felt threatened, but I felt comfortable. Obviously there was a line call early in the second set that sort of threw me off a little bit. But I thought I re-gathered pretty well, and I just kept playing, kept competing. He's got a big game. I was happy with my performance.

Q. This was a match that was quite hyped up by the media and the fans. Do you, as players, feel that hype around the match, as well? Or is it just something that we construct?

NICK KYRGIOS: I mean, I don't really -- I don't really go into it thinking, this is a really big match. I think I've played a lot of big matches in my short career so far, so I'm used to having that type of hype.

He's young and will have a great career, and we will play each other many more times. So I'm well aware of that, but I don't go into that match thinking, I must win this. I don't add stupid pressure on myself. I'm only



human. If I make a mistake, I make a mistake.

I was well aware this was a big match, but no real added pressure.

Q. First time obviously meeting at a tour level and all the talk around it. Were you able to enjoy playing that match? Also the fact he's a pretty good friend of yours.

NICK KYRGIOS: Yeah, I think I enjoyed it. Yeah, I think there were some points where everyone enjoyed it. I thought he was playing some great shots. The crowd enjoyed. You know, I was enjoying it.

There was obviously a lot of pressure. I thought at times we both looked a bit nervous, fair enough, with everything going on, a lot of expectations.

Ultimately, it was a good match. He's going to beat me plenty of times in his career, I think. I'm going to beat him. It's going to -- that's how it's going to be.

Q. A possible matchup with Novak brings to mind the incredible record you have of beating him and Roger and Rafa on the first time. If you had to say -- tough question, but if you had to say who was toughest of the three, who would you say?

NICK KYRGIOS: I mean, it's tough, isn't it?

You know, I think -- you know, the first time I played Rafa was on grass court. That's definitely his least favorite surface. I played Federer on clay, probably his least favorite surface.

I mean, it's tough. They're all great champions and three of the greatest of all time.

I don't know. The toughest. Jesus, I don't want to give an answer, because I know it's going to blow up the next day that I said something.

I don't know. It was all tough. I mean, out of the three that I liked the best, I mean, I obviously liked Roger. He's greatest of all time. I'm not going to answer that question.

All those matches were tough. I mean, 7-6 in the third with Roger could have gone either way. Rafa beat me, as well, in Rome. So, yeah.

Q. Let's take it a different way. If you could get one aspect of each of their games, in a word, what would you pull out and learn from those three great players?

NICK KYRGIOS: I would just like to ask Rafa how he can, you know, play every point as if his life is on the line. I think that's one thing that gets overlooked. He's so good at tennis that you sort of don't really appreciate how he lines up for every point and he plays it, whether he's 40-Love down or 40-Love up. I think that's the most incredible thing about his game. That's something I don't have.

Q. You seem to have a real fondness for this tournament. Why is that?

NICK KYRGIOS: Oh, jeez. I don't know about that, actually. I had some bad experiences here. First time here I tore a ligament in my foot. Last year I was sick. I lost early. This tournament, to me, hasn't been very nice to me in the past.

Coming here this year, I knew that, you know, I felt a lot better. I'm fit. You know, I'm in a good head space.

Hopefully this tournament can be nice to me in the future. Last couple years it's been tough coming here.

Q. Checking your Instagram, it seems like you like being out here in the desert and California and that sort of thing.

NICK KYRGIOS: I mean, to be fair, the last couple of days have been tough. My girlfriend left.

Yeah, it's a great place. It's hot. The weather is good. The mountains and surroundings, it's very nice. I like the place.

Q. You had one incredible sequence where there was -- you ran to the back, hit a tweener and kind of a casual squash shot and then a great dropshot. Just an incredible sequence. Talk about artistry in tennis. Do you consider yourself an athletic artist? Does that please you?

NICK KYRGIOS: Not really, to be honest. I think, you know, what we do is such a small thing in the world. We all just hit a tennis ball over the net.

I'm not going to call us artists, or special people, you know. We just play. It's just a game. That's all I'm going to say to that.

Q. Have you got a short list for a coach yet? Lleyton Hewitt on that short list?

NICK KYRGIOS: No, I don't think Lleyton is on that short list. But, you know, he helps me whenever I need. He helps all the Australian tennis players. I

think we need a guy like that.

Everyone, you know, loves, you know, even if it's Sam Groth asking if he can hit or -- you know, he's just that guy we all can go to. I would never ask him to coach. He's got a family. He's had a great career. I'm not going to put that on him, like, Do you want to travel with me? I'm not ever going to put that on him.

I think me and Lleyton's relationship is -- we are good mates. I can't really see him as my coach. Our kind of relationship is not like that.

Q. Do you have a short list yet, or...

NICK KYRGIOS: It's a tough -- I don't know. I don't know if I have a short list. Like, it's hard to have a list of people and just to pick one. I don't know if I have a short list. There is a couple of people who put their hand up, of course. I don't know if I'm making my decision soon. I'm not sure.

Q. Looking ahead to the next one, if it is Novak, you know he's going to come out with all guns blazing after a couple weeks ago. If it's Delpo, what are your thoughts? Look at both of those separately, please.

NICK KYRGIOS: You know Delpo will come out swinging, that's his game style. He plays aggressive. Big serve, big game. He's had most of his success playing big tennis. We all know what he's going to bring.

Novak, he's an unbelievable athlete. He returns probably the greatest returns in the game. Probably the most all-around player we have.

It's a tough matchup for me either way. I like time. I like to dictate. Delpo takes that away from me. Against Novak, he neutralizes my serve. I have to play better than both of those guys if I play them. If I win, I win. If I lose, I lose. It's nothing different.