KINOSHITA GROUP JAPAN OPEN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS – ATP MEDIA NOTES

DAY 4 – THURSDAY 19 OCTOBER 2023

Ariake Tennis Forest Park | Tokyo, Japan | 16-22 October 2023

ATP Tour	***Tournament***	***Media***
ATPTour.com	japanopentennis.com	Interview Queries: zhensu.xiao@atptour.com
@ATPTour	@japanopentennis	Facts & Stats Queries: mediainfo@atptour.com
#ThisIsTennis	#kinoshitajotennis	Press Officer: Nao Nozawa (nozawa@jta-tennis.or.jp)

KINOSHITA GROUP JAPAN OPEN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS TALKING POINTS

- Defending champion and No. 1 seed **Taylor Fritz** aims to extend his 5-match winning streak at the **Kinoshita Group Japan Open Tennis Championships** after arriving to the Ariake Tennis Forest Park last season with a 0-3 record at the event. He meets the lone Japanese man left in the field, **Shintaro Mochizuki**, who seeks his first Top 10 win after earning first ATP Tour win of career over **Tomas Martin Etcheverry** in the first round.

- No. 4 seed **Alex de Minaur** takes on **Diego Schwartzman** in their second **Lexus ATP Head2Head** meeting this season. The No. 1 Australian looks to make his 1st quarter-final in fourth appearance at the event, while Schwartzman aims to record 2nd Top 20 win this season (1-9) to reach his first ATP Tour QF of 2023.

- **Zhang Zhizhen** and **Aslan Karatsev** meet for the third time, with the pair splitting their previous two encounters (1-1). Zhang is bidding to become the first Chinese quarter-finalist in tournament history (since 1973), while Karatsev aims to reach his third ATP 500 quarter-final after winning the title at 2021 Dubai on hard courts and reaching the quarter-finals at 2022 Hamburg on clay.

- Another former ATP 500 champion **Cristian Garin** (2020 Rio de Janeiro) faces Australian **Alexei Popyrin**, who upset the No. 7 seed **Karen Khachanov** in his opening round. Garin aims to become the 3rd Chilean to reach Tokyo quarter-finals after Rios in 2001 and Gonzalez in 2008, while Popyrin is looking for his second ATP Tour quarter-final in Asia, after winning his 1st ATP Tour title at 2021 Singapore.

PEPPERSTONE ATP LIVE RACE TO TURIN

Race	Player	Points	Scenario
1	**Novak Djokovic (SRB)**	8,945	----
2	**Carlos Alcaraz (ESP)**	8,445	----
3	**Daniil Medvedev**	6,935	----
4	**Jannik Sinner (ITA)**	4,945	----
5	Andrey Rublev	4,275	----
6	Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE)	3,615	Antwerp – +45 for 2R win vs. van de Zandschulp on Thursday
7	Alexander Zverev (GER)	3,415	*Tokyo – Lost to Thompson in 1R*
8	Holger Rune (DEN)	3,110	*Stockholm – Lost to Kecmanovic in 2R*
9	Taylor Fritz (USA)	2,965	Tokyo – +0 for 2R win vs. Mochizuki on Thursday
10	Casper Ruud (NOR)	2,815	*Tokyo – Lost to Giron in 2R*
11	Hubert Hurkacz (POL)	2,775	*Tokyo – Lost to Zhang in 1R*
12	Tommy Paul (USA)	2,595	Tokyo – +90 for QF win vs. Shelton on Friday
13	Alex de Minaur (AUS)	2,515	Tokyo – +45 for 2R win vs. Schwartzman on Thursday
14	Karen Khachanov	2,205	*Tokyo – Lost to Popyrin in 1R*
15	Frances Tiafoe (USA)	2,175	*Tokyo – Lost to Karatsev in 1R*
16	Grigor Dimitrov (BUL)	1,970	----

BOLD: Qualified for 2023 Nitto ATP Finals in Turin (12-19 November)

LEXUS ATP HEAD2HEAD: THURSDAY SECOND-ROUND SINGLES MATCHES

COLOSSEUM

[Q] Cristian Garin (CHI) vs Alexei Popyrin (AUS) First Meeting

Cristian Garin | Age: 27 | World No. 94 | Career-High No. 17 | 2023: 21-17 (2 times in QF) | Tokyo: 1-0 (2023 2R)
> Won biggest title of career at 2020 Rio de Janeiro to rise to No. 18, then ended 2021 season at career-high No. 17.
> Five-time ATP Tour champion saved 5 MPs vs. Chardy en route to 2019 Houston title and 2 MPs vs. No. 3 A. Zverev en route to 2019 Munich title.
> Advanced to 1st Grand Slam QF at 2022 Wimbledon after reaching ATP Masters 1000 QFs at 2019 Paris, 2021 Madrid and 2022 Rome.
> Earned 1st ATP Tour win at 2013 Vina del Mar as 16-year-old WC (d. Lajovic) and 2nd ATP Tour win at 2019 Buenos Aires (d. Auger-Aliassime).
> Former World No. 4 junior defeated A. Zverev for 2013 Roland Garros boys' singles title and reached boys' doubles final with countryman Jarry.

NOTE: Garin is searching for his 21st tour-level quarter-final (8-12), third of the season (Houston, Munich) and first on hard courts since 2019 ATP Masters 1000 Paris (l. to Dimitrov).

Alexei Popyrin | Age: 24 | World No. 41 | Career-High No. 40 | 2023: 21-19 (Umag Title) | Tokyo: 1-2 (2023 2R)
> Achieved career-high No. 40 in August 2023 after earning 2nd ATP Tour title at 2023 Umag and 1st ATP Masters QF as LL at 2023 Cincinnati in three-week span.
> Earned personal-best 22 victories in 2021, highlighted by biggest win of career over No. 3 Tsitsipas via RET at ATP Masters 1000 Paris.
> Reached 1st ATP Tour SF, advanced to 1st final and won 1st title at 2021 Singapore.
> Qualified 10 times at tour-level events in 2019, tying single-season record set by M. Zverev in 2016.
> Defeated No. 6 Auger-Aliassime en route to 2023 Adelaide-1 QF as Q, No. 9 Fritz to reach 2023 Australian Open 3R as WC and No. 10 Auger-Aliassime en route to 2023 ATP Masters 1000 Rome 4R as Q.
> Peaked at No. 2 in junior rankings after ending career with 17 straight wins and 2017 Roland Garros boys' singles title.

NOTE: Popyrin aims to equal personal best 22 wins in a single season (2021) to reach his 6th career ATP Tour QF, fourth of the season. He is 7-2 vs. players ranked outside Top 50 since the start of July (both losses to Stricker).

[4] Alex de Minaur (AUS) vs Diego Schwartzman (ARG) de Minaur Leads 1-0

23 London / Queen's Club (Great Britain) Grass R16 Alex de Minaur 6-2 6-2

Alex de Minaur | Age: 24 | World No. 13 | Career-High No. 11 | 2023: 40-22 (Acapulco Title) | Tokyo: 2-3 ('18, '23 2R)
> Two-time Next Gen ATP Finals runner-up achieved career-high No. 11 in October 2023 soon after reaching 1st ATP Masters 1000 QF, SF and final at 2023 Toronto (l. to Sinner).
> Earned personal-best 47 victories in 2022, then defeated No. 2 Nadal at 2023 United Cup for biggest win of career and captured biggest of 7 ATP Tour titles at 2023 Acapulco.
> Reached 1st Grand Slam QF at 2020 US Open immediately after winning 1st ATP Tour doubles title at 2020 ATP Masters 1000 Cincinnati w/Carreno Busta in team debut and at same venue.
> Defeated Murray to help Team World win 2022 Laver Cup and went 6-1 in Davis Cup play during the season, leading Australia to its 1st final since 2003.
> Son to a Uruguayan father and Spanish mother, splits time between Australia and Spain, and speaks English, Spanish and French.

NOTE: de Minaur seeks 34th tour-level quarter-final (20-12 + 1 W/O win), 10th of the season, aiming to become the first Australian man to reach 10 tour-level quarter-finals in a single year since Hewitt (12) in 2004.

Australian Tour-Level Quarter-final Leaders in a Single Season since 2004:

	Year	# of QFs
1. Lleyton Hewitt	2004	12
2T. Alex de Minaur	**2023**	**9**
2T. Nick Kyrgios	2022	9
2T. Bernard Tomic	2015	9
2T. Lleyton Hewitt	2005	9

Diego Schwartzman | Age: 31 | World No. 113 | Career-High No. 8 | 2023: 13-23 (Shanghai 4R) | Tokyo: 4-2 (2017 SF)
> More than 2 years after rising to No. 11, broke into Top 10 at career-high No. 8 in 2020 and qualified for Nitto ATP Finals.
> Advanced to Grand Slam QF-or-better on 5 occasions, highlighted by win over No. 3 Thiem in 5:08 to reach 2020 Roland Garros SF.
> Earned biggest win of career over No. 2 Nadal en route to 1st ATP Masters 1000 final at 2020 Rome, having entered 0-9 vs. Nadal and 0-22 vs. Top 5.
> Shortest Top-8 player at 1.70m (5'7") since Solomon in 1981 at 1.68m (5'6"), Grand Slam semi-finalist since Solomon at 1980 Roland Garros, and ATP Masters 1000 finalist in series history (since 1990).
> Snapped 5-match losing streak with 5 straight wins at 2016 Istanbul, rallying from a set and 5-2 down vs. Dimitrov to capture 1st of 4 ATP Tour titles in 1st of 14 finals.

NOTE: Schwartzman became the 10th Argentinian in Open Era to record 250 wins with 1R win over compatriot F. Cerundolo and now aims to reach his 50th tour-level quarter-final (24-25), first since 2022 Bastad (l. to Carreno Busta) and first on hard courts since 2021 Vienna (l. to Tiafoe).

[1] Taylor Fritz (USA) vs [WC] Shintaro Mochizuki (JPN) First Meeting

Taylor Fritz | Age: 25 | World No. 10 | Career-High No. 5 | 2023: 52-21 (2 Titles) | Tokyo: 5-3 (2022 Title)
> Former World No. 1 junior won 5th ATP Tour title at 2023 Delray Beach to achieve career-high No. 5 and become 1st American in Top 5 since Roddick in September 2009.
> In July 2023, held serve 47 of 48 games in the tournament en route to Atlanta title (d. Vukic).
> Defeated No. 2 Nadal en route 2022 Nitto ATP Finals SF after beating him in 2022 ATP Masters 1000 Indian Wells final to become that event's 1st American men's champion since Agassi in 2001.
> Advanced to 1st Grand Slam 4R at 2022 Australian Open and 1st Grand Slam QF at 2022 Wimbledon after entering season with 0-7 record in Grand Slam 3R matches.
> Reached 1st ATP Tour final at 2016 Memphis (l. to Nishikori) as 18-year-old WC, becoming youngest American finalist since start of ATP Tour in 1990.
> Clinched inaugural United Cup for Team USA in 2023 after helping Team World capture 2022 Laver Cup.

NOTE: Fritz is on a 4-match winning streak vs. Japanese players on tour-level after 1-7 start (5-7 overall), seeking his 14th quarter-final of the season, most by an American since Roddick in 2004. The No. 1 American would overtake Rune on No. 8 spot on the Pepperstone ATP Race to Turin with a final in Tokyo.

Shintaro Mochizuki | Age: 28 | World No. 215 | Career-High No. 192 | 2023: 1-5 (Tokyo 2R) | Tokyo: 1-1 (2023 2R)
> Former World No. 1 junior earned a career-high No. 192 on the Pepperstone ATP Rankings in July 2023 after qualifying to make Grand Slam main draw debut at 2023 Wimbledon.
> Made his ATP Tour debut at 2021 Singapore as a wildcard and after 0-11 start, recorded 1st win at 2023 Tokyo.
> Ended his junior career with a 119-45 record on ITF Junior Circuit, highlighted by 2019 Wimbledon boys' singles title, becoming the 1st Japanese player to win a Grand Slam boys' singles title.
> Owns 30-40 record on ATP Challenger Tour, winning 1st title at 2023 Barletta and 49-36 record on ITF World Tennis Tour, reaching his first pro final at M25 Grodzisk Mazowiecki in August 2021.
> Considered quitting tennis and pursuing baseball at age 9 before moving to USA as a 12-year-old to further develop in tennis at IMG Academy.

NOTE: After 0-11 start, Mochizuki earned first ATP Tour win of his career over Etcheverry in 1R. The No. 26 on the Pepperstone ATP Race to Jeddah now seeks biggest win of career to become the 2nd Japanese to earn a Top 10 win this season (Taro Daniel def. No. 4 Ruud at Acapulco 2R).

Last 5 Japanese Players to Defeat a Top 10 Opponent:

	Year	Tournament/Round	Opponent	Score
Taro Daniel	2023	Acapulco 2R	No. 4 Casper Ruud	7-5 2-6 7-6(5)
Yoshihito Nishioka	2022	Seoul QF	No. 2 Casper Ruud	6-2 3-6 6-2
Yoshihito Nishioka	2022	Washington SF	No. 8 Andrey Rublev	6-3 6-4
Kei Nishikori	2021	Tokyo Olympics 1R	No. 7 Andrey Rublev	6-3 6-4
Yoshihito Nishioka	2019	Davis Cup Finals RR	No. 10 Gael Monfils	7-5 6-2

Zhang Zhizhen (CHN) vs Aslan Karatsev

Series Tied 1-1

22 Astana (Kazakhstan)	Hard	R32	Zhang Zhizhen	4-6 6-4 6-1
23 ATP Masters 1000 Madrid (Spain)	Clay	QF	Aslan Karatsev	7-6(3) 6-4

Zhang Zhizhen | Age: 27 | World No. 57 | Career-High No. 52 | 2023: 19-16 (Hamburg SF) | Tokyo: 1-0 (2023 2R)
> Became the first Chinese player in Pepperstone ATP Rankings history to break into Top 100 in October 2022 before achieving career-high No. 52 in July 2023 and reached his 1st ATP Tour SF at Hamburg later that month.
> Won 3 consecutive matches (d. No. 27 Shapovalov, No. 13 Norrie and No. 10 Fritz) in the final set tie-break to become the first Chinese player in ATP Masters 1000 quarter-final at 2023 Madrid (l. to Karatsev).
> Qualified at 2021 Wimbledon, becoming 1st Chinese man to compete in main draw of that event in Open Era.
> Became 1st Chinese man to defeat a Top-5 opponent, beating No. 5 Ruud en route to 2023 US Open 3R.
> Also qualified at 2022 US Open, joining fellow qualifier Wu as 1st Chinese men to compete in main draw of that event in Open Era.
> Advanced to ATP Tour QFs at 2017 Shenzhen as Q, 2022 Naples as Q and 2023 Eastbourne to become the first Chinese player in Open Era to reach ATP Tour QF on all three surfaces.

NOTE: Zhang seeks 6th ATP Tour QF of career (1-4), first on hard court since 2022 Naples (l. to McDonald). No. 1 Chinese is 9-5 vs. Top 50 opponents this season, 4-1 on hard courts, losing to Hurkacz is a final set tiebreak at ATP Masters 1000 Shanghai 4R last week for lone loss.

Aslan Karatsev | Age: 30 | World No. 50 | Career-High No. 14 | 2023: 19-17 (3 SFs) | Tokyo: 1-0 (2023 2R)
> Broke into Top 20 after winning 2nd ATP Tour title at 2021 Moscow, then achieved career-high No. 14 following 3rd title at 2022 Sydney.
> Ended 23-match ATP 500 win streak of countryman Rublev en route to 1st ATP Tour title at 2021 Dubai.
> Qualified to reach 1st ATP Masters 1000 SF at 2023 Madrid as World No. 121, losing to LL Struff in SF after beating him in qualifying.
> Reached 2021 Australian Open SF as World No. 114, becoming 1st men's semi-finalist making Grand Slam debut in Open Era, 1st men's qualifier to reach Grand Slam SF since Voltchkov at 2000 Wimbledon, and lowest-ranked Grand Slam men's semi-finalist since No. 125 Ivanisevic at 2001 Wimbledon.
> Upset No. 1 Djokovic in Belgrade-1 SF and No. 2 Medvedev in Rome 2R over course of 19 days in spring 2021.
> In mixed doubles w/Vesnina, finished as 2021 Roland Garros runner-up and 2020 Tokyo Olympics silver medallist in All-ROC final (held in 2021).

NOTE: Karatsev aims to reach 13th tour-level quarter-final (8-4), fourth of the season (Pune SF, ATP Masters 1000 Madrid SF, Zhuhai SF). He aims to record 20 wins in a single season for the second time in his career (2021 – 34).