

Citi Open

Thursday, August 5, 2021

Washington D.C.

Jenson Brooksby

Press Conference



J. BROOKSBY/F. Auger-Aliassime

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. I asked Frances after you beat Frances just to describe your game, and he said you're super unorthodox. He said everything you do is pretty strange. You put him in awkward positions, made him play an extra ball. In your mind, like what do you do to kind of make it difficult for players?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Yeah, I mean, I think he described it solid. I definitely try to -- it depends. It changes for each opponent, but in general, I mean, I don't know. I don't know how I can really describe it without saying too much.

But, I mean, I think he said that well. I do try to put them in positions they don't like, and it's just part of how my game and how we train.

Q. You beat Felix, No. 2 seed. You beat Frances in front of his hometown crowd. Doesn't seem like you're fazed by the occasion, whether you're on the Stadium Court or playing a high seed. I know you said you have been practicing a lot, but where do you get that confidence, not being fazed by all that?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Yeah, I think it's really just I really feel my game keep getting better in practice, I really do. And also I have gotten definitely mentally tougher this year, and it's only kept improving. I just really love, truly love playing in these stages.

You know, no opponent will faze me. I can compete with anyone. This was a good, definitely a very good match today for me. I stayed real focused throughout. I didn't really have any lapses in my strategy or mental. I'm happy with that match.

Q. This is the first time or one of the first times you have seen someone with the pace of Felix, hits the ball back big off the serve, off the first forehand. What was

your approach to handling that pace and ultimately how would you assess your performance today?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I'd assess that it was a good performance I thought, for sure. Against him, it was just really being physical, being physical back myself. I mean, I know he's a very physical player, and I knew I couldn't afford the fade-back, go soft. Those things would not work at this level, especially against someone that plays like that, and I thought I did a great job.

I stayed, you know, on the baseline. I didn't get soft. I stayed physical, and it showed what my game can do.

Q. The energy in the crowd today, something about your unorthodox game style they seem to latch on to that, and of course it's easy to say I'm staying focused, locked in point by point, but do you feel that energy from the crowd? How does it help or hurt your performance on court?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I think, yeah, I think the crowd only helps my performance, for sure. It's pressure, but I love that. Wait. What did you start off with?

Q. No, the crowd again. Did you feel that energy from them? You're hearing them yelling into your ear.

JENSON BROOKSBY: I definitely do notice those things in the moment. I love it. They were there for me today. I'm the American. I love playing in front of an atmosphere like that, definitely. It just makes my level higher, I think.

Q. I have asked this of Daniil Medvedev before, you're different players, but he has an effect where he frustrates opponents and puts them into awkward positions a lot and he enjoys doing that and seeing them maybe get frustrated and maybe not play their best. Do you almost like enjoy like when you see it, like what you're doing working and players maybe not being at their best?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Yeah, I really do. I mean, I'm sure a lot of people may think of it as, oh, someone had a bad day or something, but in my mind, that's the result of my



game doing the right things, exposing their weaknesses.

And it shows, like someone like him, like you said, or that's how my game works, and I think it did great today at showing that.

Q. At the start of the match when he came out and he wasn't necessarily firing on all cylinders, did you just sort of lock in right away and know that you were going to force him to keep playing and keep him from gaining any rhythm?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I did. Yeah, my coach definitely helped me with my mindset going into the match and I was very confident going in.

I handled the nerves well. I thought I could see he had a few nerves. It's expected, though. Just part of it. Everyone does. I handled them well from the start. I just pounced right away, and I stayed focused from start to finish.

Q. Anything about this week-in, week-out success you have been having this year, any aspect of this surprise you at all, or does it all feel like a natural progression to you and the sort of thing you figured once you got past the injury issues in 2020 that this is where you were headed?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Yeah, I really believe this is my level, and it's not too surprising for me. Obviously I'm happy that I have been able to do it consistently most weeks, and that's more to my mental toughness that has improved than anything consistently, mentally focused on the right things.

But I know, I mean, people say it might be out of nowhere or something, but I disagree. In 2019 I showed my level, and since then I have only gotten physically better. Sure, I had injuries in 2020, but I was pushing hard and I have only improved my game: mental, physical, all-around sense. And I hope to keep building. It's not too surprising, but I'm still happy with the progress I have been making.

Q. Looking ahead to your quarterfinal, today you're playing someone your age, kind of similar, young, up-and-coming player. Next up is John Millman, 32 years old, much more experienced on the tour. What are your thoughts on that upcoming match? Anticipating a lot of long kind of grueling rallies? He's known as one of the very fit guys on the tour.

JENSON BROOKSBY: I'm really excited to play against him. He's had a good year. I know he's a very solid, very good player. But I'm very confident going in with my level

and my mental state.

I played him actually a few years ago in my first-ever, actually my first-ever ATP event and also US Open main draw.

But anyway, yeah, I'll rest up today, recover, talk with my coach, and I'll be as ready as I can going into tomorrow.

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