

Citi Open

Friday, August 6, 2021

Washington D.C.

Jenson Brooksby

Press Conference



J. BROOKSBY/J. Millman

6-1, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Before we start, do you prefer Jenson or JT?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I don't really care. Maybe Jenson. Yeah, either way.

Q. We'll go with Jenson. Congrats. You haven't dropped a set this tournament. Where would you rank today's match this week?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I'd say possibly the best match. It's definitely a good one. I mean, I had a very good, I think I had a very good first set, start to finish.

Second set was a little bit streakier in my focus and in my mind how I thought it went. I still stayed more positive through it, so that was good.

Q. You hit a dropshot on match point. Is that like planned or based on how the point unfolds? How improvised are those dropshots?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Dropshots in general?

Q. That one on match point, and the fact that you use it so effectively and so often.

JENSON BROOKSBY: Yeah, I just try to, you know, move the ball and just see where they are located at the time, and then just, you know, try to make them move. Yeah, I just try to base it on how I think the point is going and how I'm feeling with the shots.

Q. One phrase I have heard a bunch describing you this week, including Andy Murray who tweeted about you in the last hour -- he had nice things to say about you -- is that you have a really high tennis IQ. For you, when you're out there -- I'd say the same watching you -- how much of that comes from prematch or tactical

planning, and how much is just instinct and reading things midpoint that you're able to figure things out the way you are?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I think it's both. Honestly, I think I do both well. My coach, definitely how we train, how we train in general and how we go into each match is definitely like a tactical IQ thing.

Then also I feel confident in my decisions midpoint as well come match time often. I think I succeed at both those factors.

Q. Do you feel like you're surprising guys who maybe haven't seen much of you on tour?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Possibly. I don't know exactly what goes through their minds. I'm not surprising myself, but I think -- I mean, I think they, by now, people know what to expect in general, but, I mean, I think I still am surprising them. But, I mean, within myself, I know it's very doable, and I'm glad that I have been doing it so far.

Q. Do you mind sharing, do you have like a clothing deal, a racquet deal? Along those lines, would you mind sharing any general thoughts? Has the pandemic represented a challenge for you in simply making the math work, you know, in terms of expenses, travel, income, to keeping your career going?

JENSON BROOKSBY: COVID definitely didn't make it easy, and also I was coming out of college. In December, before actually this year started, before I had played any, I signed with Uomo for clothes and then Solinco for strings. Both of them, they have been a big help for me, and they have really supported me every step along the way, and I'm happy with how we have teamed up.

Q. That's a relationship just since this last December?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Solinco I have been with actually longer, even in my junior days, and they have always been giving clothes. They're great guys. So I have had a long relationship with them. Now that I turned pro, back in

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December I signed with them, Solinco and Uomo.

Q. Can you think back to when you played John before, a few years ago in New York, how would you say you're different as a player, as a person? Presumably improved? What's your take on what the biggest changes might be from the Jenson Brooksby of that match and now?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Mostly I think -- I mean, I'm a late grower, so I think mostly I think I have just physically improved a lot. My coach showed me a little, just a couple points just like I was surprised how small I was. I was 17. I was just a small guy. Couldn't be that physical.

Now I think my game has just gotten better. I have gotten mentally stronger and definitely more physical. So it's definitely a way different ballgame for me in general now than a couple years ago.

Q. When was that that he showed you that? On the phone or iPad or laptop?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Actually, he didn't show me. He told me about it, actually. Maybe I'll go look now for fun, but I didn't actually like see the video, but I also remember myself and he told me about it, to be exact, yeah.

Q. You have done a lot of winning at the lower levels and challengers. I'm curious if it's easy for you to translate that to this stage. Quarters of a 500. Didn't look at all daunted by this occasion. Is that easy for you seeing your matches the same, or are you thinking, wow, this is one of the bigger moments of my career so far?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I think I keep it pretty simple. I mean, it's different for each player. It's how they approach -- how I approach each match and each situation will decide whether you're going to be like overwhelmed or not, and I think I have done the right things to truly believe that I do approach each one the same.

Obviously in the back of my mind I know what each situation is, of course. Yeah, I prepare the same way, and, I mean, no match at a challenger is easy either, whether it's there or here, you know, a slam or anything. So you have to approach each one the same way and prepare the same way. I do.

Q. A factual or background here, I'm curious, with the wildcard, how that came together, how close to the tournament you knew you were coming here? Did you think you maybe were going to have to go through quallies? How did that come along and now that

you're in the semis?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I didn't get in, and actually (indiscernible), but originally (indiscernible) a few people pulled out, so I got the wildcard after, like later on in Lexington I found out. I came motivated and ready to compete my butt off here and show my level consistently, as always.

So, I mean, I found out later on I was playing this one, and I'm excited to keep proving my level and keep going out there and competing.

Q. You went from standby wildcard into the semifinals?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Yeah, exactly (smiling). Yep.

Q. Do you recall when would that have been? Was it just last week?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I mean, I think it was -- it was maybe like, it was after I finished in Lexington, the quarters, something like a couple days before. It was like literally found out and flew the next day to come down here.

Q. What would you have been doing this week? Was there a challenger on your itinerary? What were you doing this week if you weren't doing this?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I think there wasn't a U.S. challenger. I think I would have gone back home. Yeah, I'm pretty sure. I don't know exactly, but I think I would have been back home this week.

Q. I believe you said you hadn't had a chance to see Andy Murray's tweet, which I would totally understand, in the last hour. If I could just quickly read it to you, I wanted your reaction. Within minutes of you finishing, he said, Jenson Brooksby is the sort of player I love to watch. Lots of variety, high tennis IQ, great in defense, with a little fire logo. His slice and backhand volley are almost identical to Florian Mayer. Any thoughts on that? Any reaction?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I mean, I think that's very accurate. Obviously that's great words to hear from Andy. I mean, he's been one of the best in the sport and a great guy to look up to. That means a lot. That's great words coming from him.

I think he is right with that, because he plays a similar style, as well. It's funny, I always laugh at that, it is Florian Mayer that had the two-handed slice and volley on the guys' side.

Yeah, that's funny.

Q. It registers with you?

JENSON BROOKSBY: Yeah, that's great to hear from him.

Q. Who do you like to watch? I'm guessing, just judging from your tennis, you like to watch tennis? I'm wondering who you like to see, what sort of players have resonated with you in the past.

JENSON BROOKSBY: I don't really watch too much, honestly. But if it is, it's just the consistency of the top guys. I mean, when I was younger, especially, you know, when I was younger, even somewhat recently, it would be just the consistency they bring, definitely challenging, and they have done a great job.

That's definitely the toughest part to stay at the top. That's probably who I would have watched the most back then especially.

Q. Thoughts on your next match with Sinner or Johnson?

JENSON BROOKSBY: I'm excited either way. Obviously it's the semis. I'm really looking forward to it. I will recover later today.

The atmosphere, the crowd here has been great. I think they have been on my side, and I love that. I'm just looking forward to being in this atmosphere and enjoying it again.

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