

# Mubadala Citi DC Open

Saturday, July 27, 2024

Washington D.C.

## Sebastian Korda

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'll start with questions for Sebastian.

**Q. Four years in a row for you here in Washington. Your comfortability here, and what went into the decision to return here this year when other opportunities may have presented themselves?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, it's pretty easy coming back here. It's definitely one of the most comfortable tournaments on tour. I've been coming here since I was 14 years old. It's been a long time since I've been coming here.

Really enjoy it. It's super comfortable. Great ownership of the tournament. They try to do everything they possibly can to make us feel comfortable. We really appreciate it.

**Q. As far as the week ahead, what are you looking forward to as far as an opportunity for yourself, where your game is, trying to rebound from Wimbledon, move forward towards the hard court season here?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, it's one of the best places to start the hard court season. Hopefully get a lot of good matches in. Hopefully we'll get some momentum going into the US Open and the rest of the tournaments for the rest of the year.

I really like coming here. It's great. It's hot, humid, just like in Florida where I'm from. It's always a good time here.

**Q. On the Olympics, second time in a row you would have qualified for the U.S. team but chose not to play. Do you plan on playing in L.A., if you make it? Is it a stateside thing? Your sister, or sisters, having been on the team, was that at all a consideration?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, Tokyo was I think difficult just because, I mean, it was COVID. You didn't really know what was going to happen there. I just didn't really feel comfortable going. My sisters both went and they had an amazing time.

I felt this year that I just needed to, yeah, just play on the hard courts. It's an important time of the year for me. I don't have a lot of points also to defend. Just wanted to be home.

I was in Europe for close to three months, I think over three months. Yeah, just wanted to be home, play a tournament in the United States, just try and play better for the rest of the year.

**Q. L.A. a goal for you?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Oh, for sure. I would love to make the L.A. team. If that opportunity presents itself, I'm definitely there.

**Q. How do you process the first round at Wimbledon, given it was a match that was so dominated by serve? You didn't really get that much of a chance to play points or play your game. How do you move past that?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: I mean, obviously you're pretty disappointed that you couldn't go further. Again, he played unbelievable. He has an amazing serve, probably the best serve on tour right now. A lot of speed. Most aces I think I've ever seen go by me.

Yeah, it was definitely a difficult match. Not the easiest of first rounds. Kind of get used to the conditions, used to the different grass from Queen's to Wimbledon.

That's tennis. You got another opportunity the next week. You try and go back and stay positive and keep going again.

**Q. On that match, I feel like people were feeling bad for you. You maybe got the worst lucky loser draw anyone's ever gotten. He's a guy with game that you'd want to have a lot of time to prep for. You got very little.**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: I'd say I got a decent amount of time. I think Fokina, the guy I was supposed to play in the first round, he pulled out Saturday. I had Saturday,



Sunday, Monday, played Tuesday. A decent amount of time.

I've obviously watched a lot of his stuff. He won the tournament in Lyon the week before the French. I watched a little bit of his match at the French.

Not the easiest person to play on grass, especially with having a good serve. It makes your job a little bit easier on the grass court.

Yeah, definitely a lot of things I can work on. A lot of things I could have done different during the match. That's history. Just have to move on and come back better next year.

**Q. Your dad won here back in the early '90s. Does he give you any pointers, tips coming in here?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, I think my dad told me one story. He lost to I think it was Andre Agassi in the finals here one year. I think every match he played, first on at 11. Andre played every match at night. When he came into the finals, he was completely toast.

Yeah, it's definitely very hot, very humid here. If you're used to that, I feel like it's an advantage. It's definitely a very tricky tournament to kind of get used to and to play well.

**Q. As a Floridian hockey fan, I think you are more of a Lightning fan, but what are your thoughts on the Panthers?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Bruins fan. I know you're a Philly fan.

**Q. What are your thoughts on the Panthers winning?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, I'm really good friends with their captain, Aleksander Barkov. It's pretty special to see how well they've done. Last year, they beat my Bruins in the first or second round. They made the finals.

Cool to see them bounce back and go one step further this year. Especially winning the first three games, losing the next three games, I can't imagine how difficult it is. Then come back and clutching up and winning Game 7. That's probably one of the best Stanley Cup stories you can possibly have, is winning one in Game 7. Really cool to see them do that.

**Q. Your dad and sisters are amazing athletes. I feel like people don't ask about your mom, her career. What did you learn about her growing up, your**

**scouting report on her game? What do you take from her?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: I'd say my mom basically shaped my technique and the way that I play tennis in a way. Growing up, when I switched to tennis from ice hockey, my oldest sister was just on the LPGA Tour, and my dad was her caddie for the first two or three years. He traveled most of the year with my older sister. I would spend a bunch of time with my mom on the tennis court.

She definitely shaped the way I play tennis. Grateful for spending a lot of time with her on a tennis court. She's incredible. She's kind of the rock of our family. She keeps us all grounded. She knows how special it is to play a professional sport.

Just really grateful to have spent all that time growing up together.

**Q. You played hockey as a little guy?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah.

**Q. Where was that?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: I played for the Tampa Bay Junior Lightning growing up (smiling).

**Q. Opelka is coming back two years off. Ridiculous amount of time. When you experienced just a few months off due to injury, what are the first few tournaments like? When you ease your way back into tour after a lengthy time away, what's that like?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Well, it's definitely not easy at all. At least speaking for myself, I don't know Reilly's story and how he was feeling for the last year or so, but I felt like I jumped in way too quick after my injury. I still had a lot of pain in my wrist throughout the whole year basically.

Yeah, it's definitely different just going back to a tournament, seeing everyone. He's done an unbelievable job coming back. I feel like he's playing some pretty good tennis. He's only going to get better. It's cool to see him back. I wish him all the best going forward.

**Q. You're excited, amped up, know what you can do, but physically maybe not quite there yet.**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, I mean, I don't know how he's feeling. He's played a lot of good matches. Yeah, your body's kind of adjusting back to play tennis again. Your body is going to be sore. You're going to be feeling different things.

That's where having good recovery, just trying to enjoy it... It's pretty special to see him back. He was gone for two years. I remember here two years ago, we were talking in the locker room how his hip was bothering him, then all the struggles he went through.

Pretty special to see him back here and doing so well.

**Q. Do you have any particular goals that you've set for yourself over the course of this U.S. hard court swing?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, I'd say I think probably the biggest thing is honestly just staying injury-free. Last year I didn't have the best U.S. hard court swing. I was dealing with little things here and there.

Just staying positive, happy, and injury-free I think is the biggest thing. A big part of that is staying hydrated, eating good food, having good people around you. The rest is easy (smiling).

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