

Western & Southern Open

Tuesday, August 17, 2021

Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

John Isner

Press Conference



J. ISNER/C. Norrie

4-6, 7-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. A tough match. A good, tough opponent. Do you want to talk about the match?

JOHN ISNER: Yeah, I do think the rain delay might have helped me a little bit. It was a match that I have played, you know, a bunch before, scenario, where I eke out a second set and maybe just play one decent game in the third set and hold on with my serve from there.

I will certainly take it. That's the type of match that you find yourself winning when you're confident. Things just sort of go your way. That's what I have going for me right now.

Q. You had a four-hour rain delay. What did you end up doing to pass the time?

JOHN ISNER: Yeah, it's not easy. I mean, tennis is just brutal. We deal with this stuff, and you try to find a nice place to sit down that's comfortable.

Of course you eat some food. Next thing you know, it's not before 6:45. Then, oh, crap, you have 30, 45 minutes to warm up. You just have to try to keep yourself ready, try to eat the proper amount of food, not overeat but eat enough. It's not easy to do, really. But all of us deal with it just the same.

Waking up today, second after 11:00, I was thinking, oh, maybe I'll be done by 3:00 or 4:00, and I will be having a nice dinner by 6:30, but not the case today.

Q. You had your 13,000th ace today. Nobody has had 14,000. How cool is that achievement?

JOHN ISNER: Oh, wow. Very cool, actually, Andrew, thank you for bringing that up. I do know that I'm within, I guess, shouting distance of Ivo and of maybe getting that record. We'll see.

I also saw he might be retiring, I don't know, but if he does retire soon, that's certainly a milestone that seems attainable, the all-time record milestone, what I'm talking about.

I would like to hold that record. I'm not going to shy away from that. We'll see if I can get there.

Q. The second set, like the tiebreaker, can you just elaborate a little bit like when you get to that tiebreaker how confident you feel that you're gonna win? You have a complete game, but tiebreakers are also your specialty.

JOHN ISNER: For sure. Yeah, that's a great question. I was telling myself out there, I very easily could have lost that match. I realize that. If I did lose, it was going to be fine. I was going to fly home and be home with my family and take my kids to school and be happy with that, but I'm also happy winning, as well.

I played a pretty good tiebreaker. I played a really good point at 5-4 in the tiebreaker, which allowed me to ultimately win it, and, you know, he didn't play a good game to start the third set. That cost him, and I was able to hold on with my serve.

Q. It's like you're 11-1, your last 12 matches. If someone would have told you that two, three months ago you'd be 11-1, North American hard court, what would you have told him?

JOHN ISNER: I don't really feel like it's that far-fetched for me. It's definitely the time of year that I like. You know, I didn't have a good Wimbledon. I didn't play any grass court warmups. That was on purpose.

I just wanted to take my shot at Wimbledon and see what would happen. Didn't go well. Lost first round. That was a bitter pill to swallow, for sure.

After Wimbledon, I had some, you know, more time off to, I guess, stew over that loss. But the one thing I did was take care of myself, worked hard, got myself healthy and fit. I have been playing well ever since.

I think I have been very smart with my schedule, also. You know, starting in Mexico and Atlanta, playing a lot of matches. I had to take D.C. off, which was smart, and, you know, I did that because I knew I could do well in these two tournaments, Toronto and Cincy. That's proving to be the case right now.

Q. I heard apparently you're only going to be doing the U.S. tournaments, not going back to Europe to finish the year. Is that correct?

JOHN ISNER: Yeah, that's very likely. I'll play Indian Wells maybe. We're having another kid. Just playing in Europe and indoors is not something -- I do love that time of year, I really do, because the cities you play in are amazing, like I love going to Vienna and I love playing Paris at the end of the year. I have played Stockholm before.

That's just something that's just not on my radar at this stage of my career and at this stage of my life, too. It's really a situation of just wanting to be home with all three of my kids.

Q. The NHL, I know you're a big hockey fan, they announced today --

JOHN ISNER: I saw that.

Q. Just your thoughts on that? Curious.

JOHN ISNER: I think it's cool. I don't know how the finances work for the players or for the teams, but I think it's great. The NBA is doing it.

It's not traditional, for sure. We have never seen any corporate logos on a sweater like that in the NHL, I don't believe so. I think it's unique. I saw that the owners approved that, and I think it's a cool thing.

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