

# Western & Southern Open

Thursday, August 17, 2023

Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

## Ons Jabeur

### Press Conference



O. JABEUR/D. Vekic

5-2 [Ret.]

THE MODERATOR: Ons, not the way you want to win a match, obviously, but what are your thoughts?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, just one thing to say: I wish Donna a speedy recovery. I'm not sure what happened, but something was wrong. I wish her all the best.

I look forward to play the quarterfinals.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. There seemed to be a lot of confusion across the courts of what to do in response to the weather. What was your sense of how hard it was raining? Do you feel like you should have stopped sooner? What was your sense of things?**

ONS JABEUR: Honestly, I was just going to play. You know, I didn't think the court was slippery, maybe a little bit, but growing up in Tunisia, you play anywhere. You can't complain much.

But I felt Donna was uncomfortable, so I asked if she wanted to stop. It was I think at 4-1. But then she was, like, It's okay. We continued. I think the court was okay. But then, yeah, it start raining just after I missed the dropshot.

**Q. Did she find you and tell you she was going to retire or...**

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, she came to me. I was sitting on the couch. She told me she couldn't continue. Yeah.

**Q. In terms of making the quarterfinals and how you felt in your first tournament in a little bit, yeah, how are you feeling? Body-wise, recovery-wise, and rhythm-wise?**

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, I think I'm playing great tennis. You know, I felt it even from the first match. Was hitting the ball

right even from the few practices.

I mean, the body is good. Sometimes a little bit sore, you know, from playing. But it's completely normal.

But, yeah, I had a great preparation back home in Tunisia. It was very, very hot weather. I think it was a great condition to practice and prepare for this U.S. swing.

I feel confident. I mean, I want to go as far as I can this tournament. Yeah, it's just never easy around here. Hopefully Dash and Sabalenka will play until midnight or even more (smiling).

**Q. A few of the players have mentioned the balls feel a little different. Have you noticed any difference with the balls?**

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, my shoulder is so sore (smiling). I don't know why Iga and the others wanted to change, to be honest with you. I hope Iga is happy (smiling).

No, but they're different, yeah. For sure they're heavier. I'm not quite sure -- it's flying, like, the ball is still flying. I'm not sure what's the difference in there.

But yeah, I mean, I think when you take the ball a little bit late you can feel the difference. Definitely not good to hit indoors with these balls, because I tried when it was raining. It was terrible.

Again, I grew up not complaining, playing with anything. I'll play with anything, even rocks. I don't care (smiling).

**Q. On that, what would you say are the craziest conditions you have had to play tennis in?**

ONS JABEUR: Any tournament, you mean?

**Q. Yeah, maybe back in Tunisia back in the day.**

ONS JABEUR: Oh, back in the day. You make me feel so old. (Laughter.)

You know, when we were young, we played, like, three

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matches the same day, like, 40 degrees. I don't know what is it in here. But it was super hot. We'd play any conditions.

We never really checked the tension of the racquet, know which racquet. I played with broken racquets before, because I was hiding it from my mother. It was too expensive. She bought it for me, so I couldn't tell her I broke it, so I was playing with broken racquets.

But yeah, I think in these tournaments, I remember the conditions in Tokyo last year in Olympics was very, very difficult to play. Yeah.

**Q. Are you ready to potentially play Aryna next?**

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, I mean, at this level you're going to meet with Aryna, with players like her all the time. Yeah, I'm looking forward to have another great match against her.

I know she didn't forgive me for Wimbledon semifinals, so it's gonna be a fun match, for sure. A lot of emotions in that match. But looking forward.

I love to play players like her. I love to have that kind of competition, you know, that makes us the players that we are today.

**Q. You are a very crafty player. Do you think windy conditions like we have today might help your game a little bit, like dropshots, angles?**

ONS JABEUR: If I'm ready to play in windy conditions, I think if I could slice a little bit and be ready, I always played good when it's windy. Yeah, I mean, definitely depends with the player you play. It could be in your advantage, but I always try to adapt. You know, I think as tennis players, we try to adapt to everything.

Yeah, I mean, whatever is -- is it supposed to be windy tomorrow? Or not really? We don't know?

**Q. Not sure.**

ONS JABEUR: Let's see.

**Q. Second year in a row you're top 8 in the race to WTA Finals. Once again, we are at the point in the season where we are still not sure where the Finals are going to be. How does that affect the players who are in the race? Wondering if you guys have heard any information?**

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, honestly, it's frustrating. I don't

know what's happening and why we don't know yet. We are waiting.

I heard a few cities. I'm not sure where. Some, they say Saudi. I'm not sure. It could be a great option for myself, to be honest with you (smiling).

But, yeah, I need to qualify first and then see. But I wish they can take the decision as soon as possible so we would know where we want to go and the fans would know so we don't have empty stadiums and we can promote, you know, the WTA Finals as soon as possible.

**Q. Iga was in here a little bit earlier and she talked about kind of playing a three-set match, which means she lost a set, and came back and looking at her phone and seeing messages that were not very nice about a match that she won.**

ONS JABEUR: How could she lose a set? Unbelievable. (Laughter.)

**Q. But I would suspect that you get kind of similar, when you have a passionate fan base, that you can get similar types of reactions sometimes. Curious what your experience is with that sort of thing.**

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, we do. I mean, I'm glad that Iga is talking about it. Honestly, I mean, you win, you lose, you get hate messages no matter what you do.

I mean, I know why she did bring it up. It's not like it's affecting her, maybe a little bit, but I understand we need more humanity, more nicer people in this earth, but I don't think you can change the mentality of some betters. They have nothing to do in their life, and they are just spending money on you, and probably, what, they lost a couple of bucks on Iga losing a set.

It is frustrating, but it's the reality. I believe these people should not exist, but yeah, next time, Iga, don't lose a set (smiling).

But, yeah, I know Iga. She's strong, and those people are horrible and there is horrible people in this planet. What we do? We move on, and they get criticized in media conference like this and we move on.

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