

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Saturday, 14 May 2022

Roma, Italia

Ons Jabeur

Press Conference



INTERNAZIONALI
BNL D'ITALIA

BNP PARIBAS

O. JABEUR/D. Kasatkina

6-4, 1-6, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Ons, another three-setter, match point down. How do you feel to be in the final this week?

ONS JABEUR: Very happy to back that other final in Madrid. It's never easy to play Dash. I know this surface kind of suit her very well because it's slow and she likes it.

She was playing really well this week. It was a tough one for me not being 100% there. Pretty glad that I got the win and finals again.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. When you're in these positions late in the third set, down a break, match point, how much confidence do you feel you have in that moment because of how much you've been winning lately, coming back in the quarterfinal against Sakkari?

ONS JABEUR: Definitely a lot. I think the match, how it was going, breaking each other a lot, I did that before, believing that I could break her again. Given the situation last match, I think that was pretty easy. Just one break, you know, it wasn't two (smiling).

You know, like I said, it's never easy to play Dash. I was maybe a little bit lucky that she double-faulted and missed a few shots.

But, you know, I think the experience that I have little bit kind of helped me today to take the break at 5-All.

Q. Do you remember the last time you won from match point down?

ONS JABEUR: No (laughter).

Q. It was in 2013 against Shuko Aoyama in Seoul.

ONS JABEUR: Thought you took me to a match where I was five years old (laughter).

Listen, it means a lot to me, especially mentally, that I could come back from a match point and prove that I did that today. That means a lot to me. Hopefully I can keep being stronger mentally because I know tomorrow it's all about mental.

Q. Something you do remember, in 2019 you won the Arab Woman of the Year in the sports category. It's since then that you've been so good at this level. Did that award, honor, inspire you?

ONS JABEUR: I think, yeah, definitely a lot of things started at the end of 2019 (laughter). What is that? My head is not here.

Yeah, 2019 with the Arab awards. I think the mentality, the way that I was thinking for 2020, I changed a lot of things. I was saying that I was sick of losing matches, especially I know like I could be top 20 or top 10. Just need to work harder and put, like, things in more disciplined.

Since then I think everything start to be better. Definitely I was believing much more in myself.

Q. Speaking of Iga, as you mentioned, needing the mental tomorrow. You joked you were the co-pilot of Iga earlier this week. You are both on win streaks. You're 1 and 2 in the Race. What is it going to be like to face her and what do you have to do to win?

ONS JABEUR: Well, definitely there is only one - how you call it - the saving jacket?

Q. Parachute? Life jacket?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, life jacket.

So tomorrow the plane will crash and there is only one life jacket. I hope I take it (laughter). I'm the co-pilot, though. There is no priority there.

Listen, I think tomorrow for me personally, it's going to be about believing in myself that I can win tomorrow. I know I had a lot of matches that are played lately, back-to-back matches. It's not like playing Indian Wells, Miami, you have a day off and everything. So physically it's going to be very tough for me.

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

I know that mental could overcome a lot of things. Playing Iga, someone didn't lost a match since ever, I think that was maybe missing the other players to believe more that they can beat her. She was playing unbelievable, I believe, in Miami-Indian Wells. Now she's playing great. She's a human being. People should know that.

I'm ready for the battle. I want to win tomorrow. It's the finals. It's not a first round or second round, it's the final.

Did I tell you how sick I am of losing finals?

Q. Never talked about it.

ONS JABEUR: I'm sick of losing finals (laughter).

Plus, I had kind of my first baby in Madrid. You know how much I love twins, so... It's the brother or sister, Rome (smiling).

Q. Yesterday you were down 6-1, 5-2. Today match point. Was the mindset during that moment yesterday and match point today a little bit similar?

ONS JABEUR: Little bit different. But I was thinking about yesterday, definitely. At 5-4 I was like you came back from a long way, like this is nothing comparing yesterday. You should be able to come back.

The main thing for me is to stay calm because I was little bit angry today with myself when you don't find your way, when you don't play as great as you expect, that didn't help me much.

The dropshot saved me at 5-All, and the match point.

Q. On the match point, your forehand you hit on the line.

ONS JABEUR: I have no idea what happened that game.

Q. How confident were you that it was in? You turned your back. They checked the mark.

ONS JABEUR: I saw it. It was in. 5-4?

Q. Yes. Match point.

ONS JABEUR: I'm 100% sure it was in. If they going to say out, I don't know what I'm going to do. But I saw it on the line, for sure. I was pretty confident.

Q. Besides plane crash analogies, are you excited? It's pretty rare to get two players with double-digit win

streaks playing each other.

ONS JABEUR: Did it happen before?

Q. I can't say never, but it's definitely very rare.

ONS JABEUR: Yeah.

It means a lot, especially we've been criticized as women's tennis that there is no consistency in the level and everything.

You can see, I mean, I said before someone that show us how it's done. Before it was like Serena, she was doing great. She was kind of pulling the other players towards her level. Now I feel like Iga is doing the same. Ash was doing it, as well.

I think really I want to thank Iga for the inspiration she gave all of us, you want it or not. Not just Iga, but all other players. If the level goes high, I think you attract more. It makes us better.

Djokovic said it, but Nadal and Federer. I feel like it's the same thing for us. We should really encourage each other and push each other to be better.

Q. How different does it feel to make the final in Rome compared to Madrid?

ONS JABEUR: You mean, physically?

Q. No. Does this feel like a big deal to you or not?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, I mean, maybe less than last week, for sure. I mean, for some reason I feel in Rome I didn't have the time to think. Back-to-back matches. Even tomorrow I play at final at 1 p.m. They should have put it at 11. It's crazy.

The thing is, it's nice not to stress about it. In Madrid I had a lot of time, the semifinal and the finals. It was horrible to wait.

Yeah, maybe I take the great experience I had in Madrid to have it here in Rome.

Q. How do you feel physically after all this match during the two last weeks?

ONS JABEUR: We've been working really hard the pre-season. I knew that physically I could handle anything. Just believing in myself should have been more, believing that I could play even four weeks in a row, I can do it.

I am exhausted, yes, but it's part of my job. It's going to help me push more tomorrow. There is only one match left. I gave it all from the first round, now I should really continue giving my best.

Q. Iga has been saying she's been focusing on herself very much. I think she mentioned she has barely seen you play on clay at all. How much have you actually seen her play? How important that is?

ONS JABEUR: I think I saw her today because I was in the room and she was playing Aryna. I was watching little bit the match.

Yeah, good strategy. I believe that focusing on ourself is very important to kind of evolve and do better. It's a great thing that she's focusing on of herself to know better, to know what she needs to do or not.

I think it's all about you during the court. Personally if I want to win, I will do it. You have to really want it.

Tomorrow, that's what I'm trying to do.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports