

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Roma, Italia

Ons Jabeur

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Ons, good memories from reaching the final here last year. How does it feel to be back?

ONS JABEUR: It was good memories till the finals, then got ruined (smiling).

Yeah, I remember it was a great time here in Rome last year. Hopefully this year will be much better. The most important thing for me is to be healthy and to be back at my level.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. A quick question about the concept of a clay court specialist. That seems to be something that we talked about a little bit more in years past. In your opinion, is that still a thing? If it isn't, why?

ONS JABEUR: If you count Charleston as a clay, then yes.

Yeah, I think clay really suits my game. It's not that fast. I have time to doing all my shots. Usually I like to take my time to build the point. I think it's a great court to play my game.

Definitely I love sliding. I love doing the trick shots. The dropshots is usually great here on this kind of surface because it stays low.

Yeah, I hope this year will be better than last year, especially at the French Open, and we continue playing my game and having a great game.

Q. Just wondering what the last few weeks have been like, getting fit again, aside from punching your husband?

ONS JABEUR: I enjoyed that part (laughter).

I tried to stay active, keep my physical level at the perfect. For me, I was doing a lot of rehab, a lot of PRP, a lot of mental training to get back stronger.

I had fun kicking my husband in the face. It was fun



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(smiling). I had a little backup after. But I tried to come back slowly, hit few balls, even though sometimes I was actually sitting on a chair hitting the ball.

Yeah, I mean, I really did my best, and hopefully I can be ready here in Rome.

Q. On the question of being a clay court specialist, a lot of people talk about how different the conditions in Madrid and Rome are, also in Charleston. You've obviously done well at all three. Do you find them very different yourself? Do you have to adapt your game a lot?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, definitely the three courts are much different. I feel like tennis players, we're always adapting to anything. We travel a lot, jet lag, different hotel, different pillow. I don't know, just different conditions, different air. We're always, like, adapting anyways. I feel like, yeah, it's part of our job.

I believe I do it good. I try not to complain about it much. I hit yesterday here, so it was really nice courts. You can, like, feel the real clay. It's very, very nice to be here.

Q. A few days ago you tweeted your frustrations about the doubles players in Madrid not being able to have a trophy ceremony. Wondering if you had any thoughts on that, frustrations about that situation?

ONS JABEUR: I honestly don't know what happened. I'm not in Madrid. It gets messy. It's unbelievable. I need to monitor the players more (smiling).

I honestly don't know what happened. Definitely unacceptable not to give the opportunity for players to speak. I hope it's just a misunderstanding. I still don't have the full picture to see what happened exactly.

I spoke to some players. We'll see what happened. For sure I hope this thing will never happen again.

Q. On the calf tear specifically, can you give details? Did it happen in the Stuttgart match? Was it something that happened before and you tried to play the Stuttgart match?

ONS JABEUR: I think Iga thought that I was injured



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before, which is...

I got injured exactly at the third point of the match. I honestly don't know what happened. I know my calf was really sore. But as a tennis player, you always play sore, so it's a normal thing. But, yeah, I was going for, like, a normal shot playing tennis. I felt like electricity that hit me in the calf. That's where the tear happened.

Honestly, I tried my best to play. I kind of knew from the first game it was going to be impossible, but I tried to tape it and see maybe it could happen.

To see that beautiful stadium, all the people that came to watch the match of the day, was kind of difficult. That's why probably I cried a lot after the match (smiling).

Q. I wanted to get your thoughts on the format with the bigger events, draws, back to back.

ONS JABEUR: I'm not a big fan. I'm not a big fan. I prefer that the tournaments stay the same. That's probably also good to rest, but I don't think it's good for any of us, not you the journalists, as well.

I don't know what's going to happen. I think a lot of players are talking about it. I think it's better to get the facts straight and talk more to the WTA about it.

But definitely I can say that 90% of the players, they don't agree with it. Let's see what's going to happen.

I mean, what we try to do is make our sport better. This doesn't help at all.

Q. A few weeks ago you posted on Twitter about Zero Discrimination Day. You emphasized you were a Tunisian and African woman. That came after some anti-immigrant rhetoric.

ONS JABEUR: I'm sorry?

Q. A few weeks ago you tweeted about Zero Discrimination Day with the Tunisian stamp, emphasized you were a proud Tunisian, African and Arab woman, which I believe came after some anti-immigrant talk. Can you explain the significance of that tweet and how important it is for you to speak out about social issues like that.

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, some problems happened in Tunisia. It was just to clarify because there were a lot of bad rumors. I just wanted to stand. There was a lot of local, you know, issues there.

I feel like we just want to raise our voices and speak in that matter. Definitely I personally stand by that point, and hopefully we see less and less issues.

As someone that could influence other people, I believe that I needed to raise my voice and speak in that matter. Just peace, happiness, love, that's all I care about really.

Q. Regarding the ceremony and also the tournament format, as a top player, do you feel you have the power to band together with other players and make change when you see things you're not happy about?

ONS JABEUR: Well, I've been in both positions. I can tell you being a top player is more powerful. I believe it's also our job as a top player to stand up for our colleagues and to, like, raise the issues.

I'm not trying to fight with anyone. I'm not trying to, but I feel like we need to be treated better, we need to be treated in the right way. That was not the case back in Madrid or back in other tournaments.

For me, I think some players, they don't know the facts entirely in many other issues. We need to speak between each other and raise the issue before going out and saying any other thing. I feel like we need to be more educated about certain stuff to be able to speak about it.

I feel like everybody should speak about it. Iga is someone that's also vocal about a lot of things. I appreciate she's also having the time to speak to all of the other players.

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