

BNP Paribas Open

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Jacob Fearnley

Press Conference



J. FONSECA/J. Fearnley

6-2, 1-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Jacob, I know this is not the result you were hoping for, but a great battle out there with Joao. How tough were the conditions on center court?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, no, very difficult, extremely windy. I think a couple of days earlier in the week it was a little bit windy, but in practice it's been pretty calm.

Yeah, it was a bit of a shock. But, no, it was good. I thought the tennis was pretty good, but obviously disappointed with the result.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Tough match, Jacob. I was sitting by two Brits who insist you're the next Andy Murray. Do you like that kind of comparison?

JACOB FEARNLEY: I mean, it's nice, for sure, but yeah, I mean, I think there is only going to be one Andy Murray (smiling). I don't think that I can say that I'll follow in his footsteps, because his career was amazing, one of the best to ever do it.

But, I mean, it obviously is nice to hear. But, yeah, I mean, I don't really think about that. I just try and do what I can do and be the best version of myself.

Q. Kind of a nice comparison, though?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, no, 100%. It's a really nice comparison. To be compared to him in any way is extremely rewarding. Yeah, hopefully people keep saying that.

Q. How tough were the conditions out there? It looked pretty windy. Did you feel like that changed during the match? Was it windier at the start and got less?

JACOB FEARNLEY: No, it got more windy throughout the match. Especially in the kind of middle of the third set on

my serve it was extremely windy. Because obviously it's in kind of, like, a bowl. It's swirling, so you don't really get a sense of really where the wind is going.

No, I mean, yeah, difficult conditions, but it's the same for both players. And I thought, considering, though, the conditions, I thought we played some good tennis.

Q. Getting back to the wind, can you compare that to anything that you have experienced before in terms of -- I mean, you played in Texas where it can get, I imagine, get pretty windy there in the plains. Are there other instances that it made you think of? What do you do in those situations in order to combat it?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, of course, I mean, Texas can be very windy, especially in the spring, this time of year. Actually, the way the TCU courts are positioned is kind of like a bowl, as well. It's kind of similar, swirly wind.

I mean, there is not really much you can do. I think a lot of it is mental. It's just kind of accepting it and trying to make the best of it. I think in the past I've definitely had times where I've got very frustrated about it, and that kind of isn't the best and most optimal thing that you can do, because, I mean, you can't really control what the weather is going to do, so you kind of just accept it and try and use it to the best of your ability. Yeah, whoever uses it to the best of their ability usually wins the match.

Q. It's only been less than a year since you turned pro. Last year in Oklahoma State, very windy conditions, winning national championship. How did playing in college prepare you to become the player you are today?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, I owe a lot to college. I mean, I had a great four-and-a-half, five years at TCU and really developed physically, mentally, and set me up to play on the tour, I think. I got the opportunity to be coached by two of the best coaches in college tennis with David Roditi and Devin Bowen.

Yeah, I think all of the experiences I had in those five years, playing against amazing tennis players, different



conditions, different atmospheres, different courts, different environments, it all helped me kind of mold my game, and it's the same on the tour.

I mean, you see all the time you're using different balls, you're playing on different courts. Last week I was playing indoors with Tecnifibre balls, and this week I'm playing on slow outdoor courts with Penn balls, so it's the same thing. There's a lot of kind of moving parts in college, and it's the same on the tour. I think that's what makes the difference, as well.

Q. Obviously there is so much hype about Fonseca at the moment. What do you make of his game, playing him? What are the things he does well? How does his ball feel compared to some of the other guys you have played?

JACOB FEARNLEY: I mean, the ball is pretty similar. I mean, all these guys hit really big. I mean, obviously he has the ability to kind of hit that ball that's maybe a little bit bigger. I mean, we have all seen that, and he hit a couple day forehands that were massive. So he has the ability to kind of up his kind of pace of shot.

But I think what's impressive is, I mean, how strong he is mentally and at such a young age. Obviously there is a lot of hype around him, but you wouldn't -- and I feel for a lot of players at his age, it would kind of bother him or kind of let it get to his head a little bit, but it doesn't really seem to do that.

He seems to play the same, be mentally on at every match. That's a difficult thing to do, because, I mean, I feel like I had a similar kind of rise, as you will, but I'm five years older than him, and he seems to handle it extremely well. I know how difficult that stuff can be.

Yeah, I think that's kind of the most impressive thing. And obviously he has a lot of fans that follow him, which help, for sure. I'm sure he really appreciates that support.

Q. Was that your first time playing him or hitting with him or anything like that?

JACOB FEARNLEY: No, I played him in Canberra first week of the year.

Q. Was that a challenger?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Challenger, yeah, in the semis.

Q. Any change from then until now?

JACOB FEARNLEY: I played a lot better in this match

than I did in Canberra. I played pretty terrible in Canberra, to be honest. Yeah, I thought this match was definitely more even and I had a chance to win.

In the match in Canberra, I had no chance to win. I wasn't playing great, and he was just blasting winners past me. It was a different match, for sure.

Q. And other than playing better, did you have a different attack plan, given that you have seen him?

JACOB FEARNLEY: A little bit. I mean, I served a lot better. In the last match I hit a lot of double faults, and in this match, considering the windy conditions, I served maybe two or three in actually pretty critical moments. Still, I didn't hit as many. I served a little bit better today.

Obviously the conditions were different, slower conditions. In Canberra, it was a lot faster. So I think Joao was hitting it massive as we all know he does. Yeah.

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