

BNP Paribas Open

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Jack Draper

Press Conference



J. DRAPER/B. Shelton

6-4, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: First of all, congrats, Jack. Into your first Masters 1000 semifinal. Are you playing some of the best tennis here, do you feel?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, for sure. You know, my tennis has been really improving all the time with more experience at the highest level, and I'm gaining more wins against top players like Ben.

Obviously today was tough conditions. Really tough opponent. I thought I competed great.

Yeah, I did well to come through that one.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. I know that this is part of the progress, the next steppingstone, semifinal, but do you allow yourself to sit for a minute and think, yeah, this is exciting to have done as well as you have so far, particularly on a day like today when the wind was howling and it was freezing cold?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, of course. I'm always proud of myself, always looking at what I'm doing and thinking that I'm doing a good job and stuff like that.

Unfortunately obviously in tennis you're in a sport where there is always the next match and you have to prove yourself every time. Certainly for myself, my mindset, unfortunately that, as well, I feel like I'm never content with anything. I always want to have more wins and more opportunities to play top players.

You know, I just want to keep on progressing and keep on improving and keep on going for more success. Obviously at the end of the weeks, I look back on what I have done and I'm incredibly proud of myself, but right now it's all about my next match.

Q. How much of the landmarks incentivize you -- the

1000 first semi and then potential top-10 place if you get to the final -- how much are they in your head?

JACK DRAPER: In all honesty, I don't think about it at all. I just don't know. There are so many things I could think about, but obviously in tennis it's a sport where I just have to keep on going. It's one tournament after the next.

It's a bit crazy, really. So I just literally don't think. You know, I just end up practicing, eating, playing Monopoly Deal, getting ready for my match, competing as hard as I can. The result is the result, and then if I win, then great. If I don't, then I get back to work the next day.

So obviously it's really exciting, all those things. I was thinking about those things when I was a kid, wanting to be in the top 10 in the world and wanting to play in later rounds of huge competitions like this one.

So, yeah, like, I don't really set goals because I feel like I'm living my dream by playing on these stages.

Q. You had about two years there of on-and-off injuries that really set you back. What is it now that you think has allowed you to have this run of good health? Was it potentially just your body getting to the point where it could take the wear and tear of the professional tennis tour?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, it was a bit of everything. You know, when I was younger, I was always very small. Then I grew a lot when I was around 15, 16, 17.

Yeah, like, I think I went through many ups and downs, not just physically but also from a mental standpoint there was a couple of times when I wasn't sure if I was going to carry on. It's really difficult coming up through the futures and the challengers. It's brutal. It's not Wimbledon, it's not Indian Wells, not coming to these nice places and everything is amazing.

You know, it's going to a place for three, four weeks on end, you know, very lonely. When I was younger, I was thinking the sport was very different to what, you know, was the reality of it.

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So a lot of the stuff for me was kind of getting my head around the fact that I was going to have to -- it wasn't going to be I'm going to rock it at Wimbledon and win. It was I have to really put in the work for a long time to be able to get to this stage.

I think, you know, a couple years ago I went through a lot of injuries and I sat at sort of 40 in the world but I was sort of there, not really fully invested, so I looked to myself and I thought if I'm going to do this, then I'm gonna have to put in a hell of a lot of work. I'm going to, you know, just really take the ups and downs as they come. You know, look forward and be positive.

I think from there, really, I got about 16 months of really good stuff, and, you know, I feel really healthy. I feel good in my mind, feel good in my body. I'm looking forward to hopefully what's to come.

Q. You were just saying that you're never content. That's good, but is there the risk of that sort of feeling adding pressure on yourself?

JACK DRAPER: No, not really. You know, I think I have thought to myself often, is that a good thing? I think when I look at all the best players in the world, especially, like I said in a sport like this, where it is relentless, it is every day we have to keep on coming out there and proving ourselves. There is many, many matches in a year, many, tournaments, and I think to have that mindset is really positive, in all honesty, and it's suited to this sport, because you can't have any off days. You have to keep on going.

I think a big quality of mine is the fact that I give my all. I compete my hardest every single time I play on the court, every point, and yeah, my game has really come together. I think that the competitiveness that I bring to the court also is a real key to my success, as well.

Q. Before each match you go into, you have had four great matches here so far and pretty competitive matches with the scores. What kind of scouting and mindset do you go into each match with?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I mean, me and my coach are big believers that if I put my game on the court and if I do the right things, then, you know, I can honestly beat anyone.

Obviously at this level, the margins are so small. Maybe there is a couple of things tactically, maybe where the person likes to serve a little bit more, where maybe my positioning could be on the return, but everyone is so good that it's kind of like I can beat them and they can beat me, because they can play amazing tennis and I can also play

amazing tennis.

So let's go out and give it everything, try my best to execute a game plan and we'll go from there. A lot of players like to analyze things very closely. You know, I'm not like that. I know that if I give my 100%, then that's all I can do.

Q. Can I now be a pain in the ass and say, could you focus that slightly more? Can you give me a fat paragraph on what it would be like to play Alcaraz and also a fat paragraph on what it would be like to play Cerundolo, depending on the result today?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, first off, Cerundolo, when I played him at Davis Cup, he played a great match against me. I don't underestimate him, especially in the matchup against Carlos. I think he's been a top-50 player for a while now. Playing really good tennis. Really dangerous forehand. Good competitor, as well. So that would be really tough.

As for Carlos, you know, he's obviously a great champion, already doing amazing things in the game, so good for the sport not only for the players but for also spectators to watch him. I think, you know, he's setting the benchmark really high, and that's good for a player like myself because I watch him and play against him, and I think what I need to do to be at his level and to hopefully compete for big events.

So, you know, I'd obviously love to get the chance to play Carlos again. I think it would be a great match. He brings so much to the court, especially in these conditions. He absolutely loves these courts.

And yeah, it would be another opportunity for me to show, you know, hopefully that I belong at the top again.

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