

# Rolex Shanghai Masters

Wednesday, 4 October 2023

Shanghai, China

## Zhang Zhizhen

Press Conference



ZHANG ZHIZHEN/R. Gasquet

6-1, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the press conference of Zhang Zhizhen. We'll start with English questions first, and then we'll go to native language. One question per time. If we have more time, I'll give the microphone back to you. Before your question, please tell us your name and outlets.

First off, congratulations. It's your first win here at Rolex Shanghai Masters. How do you feel after all these emotions?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Still pretty excited because in the past, I never had a won set here. So, I mean, I was quite happy. Even now, even after the dinner, still I feel pretty happy. Yeah, hopefully, I can get a little bit better result here.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

**Q. Congratulations on the win today. As you talked on the court about being nervous during the match, could you just talk about your feelings going into the match?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Before the match, I was super nervous, like, super, super. But when I step on the court, I mean, I just need to focus what I need to do and just focus on the point and what I need to play, how I play, and then those emotions is just gone. So just really in the match, you know, just the nervous is gone.

**Q. You are China's No. 1 men's player. How does it feel for you to be sort of leading that group of Chinese players in a successful time for your sport?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Well, at the moment, yes, I got a high ranking, but I still have so many results I need to make. I mean, for my side, I still want to have a title. I wish I can have one title for the tour. I still have many things I need to do.

Yeah, keep going, keep trying to do what I, I mean, all the best what I can do, and hopefully, other Chinese players, they can catch me. Hopefully, they can catch me. I mean, I wish they could catch me and pass me, yeah.

**Q. Who were some of the players that inspired you?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: I'm sorry?

**Q. What players inspired you?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Well, the players inspired to me? At the moment, I don't know. I mean, my favorite player always is Roger. But now, I mean, I'm watching all the players how they play, and then I just try to play, like, my tennis. So, yeah, like this.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in Chinese.

**Q. Congratulations. Could you talk about the positioning of Lu Yen-Hsun on your team and the role that he played?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Mr. Lu is a coach, so to speak. At the European sites, I have another new coach, but I play more Asian Games, and then when I'm in Asia, Mr. Lu will give me a lot of help.

This year, I haven't decided where to go for the winter training. Perhaps, I will stay in China. If that's the case, Mr. Lu will continue to coach me. I think I will continue to discuss about our partnership for next year. He's very helpful, obviously, to my performance, and in particular for the grass court.

Actually, Mr. Lu can give me very good analysis how to play the game because he has watched many players and many matches before, so he's very helpful.

**Q. Watching your game today, you had a lot of aces, and then you broke Gasquet's serves many times. I wonder whether you have had specific training on aces as well as any targeted analysis to your opponent?**

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ZHANG ZHIZHEN: I think I'm playing good tennis, and my opponent is not physically well, so perhaps he's not playing as well as he could. But for me, I am focusing on my game.

You asked about pre-match preparation. Of course we will make preparations, but of course, I hope each serve will be an ace.

**Q. You won the gold medal at the Asian Games, and then you mentioned super, super nervous for your first win at the Rolex Shanghai Masters. Could you tell us why you're so nervous?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: I think the nervousness comes from the outside. Nobody around me gives me the pressure; however, I know many people have high expectations on me and these will give me pressure.

However, the good thing is whenever I am on the court, these emotions will go away. That's a very good thing. I think I want to just enjoy the moment, even to enjoy the nervousness, because that's also part of tennis.

**Q. You've been to the Shanghai Masters before, playing the qualifiers and then getting the wild card, but this time it's different. You played the main draw, and you also have a lot of fans cheering for you, so it's very different this year. Any special feelings about that?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Yes, I was happily surprised, actually. I saw a lot of fans when I was at the training session. During the practice, I can only say that these fans are very warm and passionate. I think this is good. I'm not opposed to it. This is my first time to experience the passion of these fans. It's good.

**Q. You said that you were very nervous before the match, but then we didn't discover that. And then you also said you are very excited. Again, we didn't discover that. How did you do to control your emotions so that these emotions do not affect your performance at the game?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Well, for me, internally, I am really very happy and excited, and then before the match, I think everybody can see that I am very nervous. My team and people around me can both see that I am very nervous before the match, but then it's different when I am into the match because I have to focus on each and every serve.

Also, I have to also think about how to play the game, what's my tactic. Whenever that's the case, you're no longer nervous anymore, so I'm getting relaxed gradually.

Yeah, I can say that I am relaxed.

**Q. At the Wimbledon, we had a video about you. You said that you haven't won any games, but then over the past two months, many things happened. Why is that?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Actually, before the match, I was not that confident, but the past two months were a very good memory for me, including the Asian Games, of course. I said before that confidence comes from practice, training, and then victory.

Compared to the beginning of the year and during the Wimbledon period, I am more confident now, and then if I'm not winning, then of course I have to go back to more training and practice.

**Q. Yesterday, you had a practice session with Tsitsipas. I want to know how you got to know each other, what was the performance yesterday, and then any gaps between you and the top players?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: How we got into contact, I am not sure. Mr. Wu Di told me about that, about this opportunity. So you can check with Mr. Wu Di for that.

We played one set. I lost 7-5. The feeling is good because I think I have learned how to play certain games, and then it's a good thing for me. If the scores are tight, then that itself is a boost to my self-confidence.

**Q. First of all, congratulations on your win today. In the previous press conference, I asked about your objective for this tournament. You said that you focus on the first match. Now you've realized the objective of your first match, and you made it in a very short period of time, in less than one hour. Could you tell us your second objective?**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: The second objective, of course, is to win the second match. We can have a lot of targets. Step by step, when you tick the box, you can go on with the next objective. Of course I hope that I can go further, beyond the second week. That itself is a victory for me. But I will do it match by match. I hope that you still get the chance to ask me my third objective (smiling).

**Q. Actually, from the Asian Games to the Shanghai Masters, the schedule is very tight. I want to know how you adjust yourself mentally and physically so that you are in a good condition.**

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Today is Wednesday. When I finished the Asian Games, that was Saturday. My decision was to

come back to Shanghai on the same night so that I have more time to have a good recovery and then to have some practice, but it's not high-intensity practice to make sure that I am not having any injuries.

In terms of climate, Shanghai is cooler than Hangzhou, so this adjustment, this change, is pretty smooth. Thank you.

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