

# Rolex Shanghai Masters

Thursday, 12 October 2023

Shanghai, China

## Sebastian Korda

Press Conference



S. KORDA/B. Shelton

6-7, 6-2, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the press conference of Sebastian Korda.

First of all, congratulations, Sebi. This is your first ATP Masters 1000 semifinal, and also your third semifinal consecutively since Zhuhai. How do you feel about your performance, and also how you're experiencing Shanghai?

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, it was a great match, super high level from the both of us. Yeah, just very thrilled to get through that one, especially in a tricky tiebreaker.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

**Q. Can you tell us a little about your year that began with, which began with an injury at the Australian Open. How did you get back to the top level?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, my injury actually started last year, probably like around this time. I was battling with a wrist, then it was okay, then it got progressively worse during the training block right before the Australian Open.

I played in Adelaide, it was okay. As I started playing best-of-five, a lot of matches, against a lot of really big servers, especially going to the forehand, yeah, it was difficult, it started hurting a lot.

Then, it was just a super long journey from there. I was out for three months, and just had to re-learn, basically, all the tennis stuff that I did, especially with the wrist. I was, basically, every single practice, every single forehand that I hit, I was kind just praying that it would stop hurting, and it just never would.

Now, occasionally I still have some issues. Obviously, that forehand in the tiebreaker is one of the things. I just don't have a lot of reps, you could say, on my forehand side, on my forehand, on my forehand volleys, returning. It's just something that will come, I just got to play a lot more

matches, a lot more practices and hopefully it becomes normal again.

**Q. You mentioned about the dramatic tiebreaker. Could you talk about how did you manage to refocus and regroup after letting go of match point in a row, and then eventually to finish strong. Secondly, could you also talk about, like, what it's been like to have a father who used to be a pro as well, who knew the sport and understand what it takes to be successful at the late stage for you, like, because we saw Ben's father here, and I'm sure your father followed your game at home, could you talk about that. I find this kind of intriguing between, not only two American young players, but also two tennis-playing families, could you also talk about that.**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, I think, I mean, both your questions kind of go together. That's probably one of the biggest things of having a father who played tennis was to kind of understand certain moments. I think in those certain moments you got to stay really calm. You can have such a big lead like that and you could just completely panic or get super down on yourself and just get lost.

I think that's one of the biggest things both my parents really taught me is to, you know, one, is to always believe in yourself, no matter the situation, to just really go after it. Whatever happens, happens, you just got to believe in yourself, go after it, and just enjoy the moment. It's still a super nervous moment, for sure, but in those moments you really do enjoy them, you just want to be on the victory side of things.

**Q. Sebi, just to follow-up to that question, you obviously come from a very sporting family generally, a very successful sporting family. Could you talk about any pressures that that creates for you.**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: I don't think it creates any pressure. In the end, we're all doing kind of what we love to do. Tennis is something that I just love doing. It doesn't matter if it's playing, watching, I watch tennis all day long, basically. I just really enjoy being here, really enjoy playing tennis.

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Same thing with my sisters, they love doing what they're doing. I don't think there's any pressure with it. Obviously, I would love to be better than my dad. My ultimate goal in tennis is to win two Grand Slams, one more than my dad. That's just, you know, little things like that, but I don't think there's any pressure. I just really love playing tennis, and just really having a lot of fun right now.

**Q. The Race ranking is 21 now, very close to top 20. Considering you miss three months this season, does that show how big the potential you have, how high you can get?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, definitely missed three months, but I also missed another four months of kind of re-learning how to do everything. I lost a lot of time this year with my injury, and, yeah, it's definitely sucked, but right now I'm starting to really get back into it, playing some really good tennis again, some high-level tennis, and hopefully the results will follow.

**Q. You touched on it there, but I kind of felt like you were, at the end there, you were kind of almost the calmest person in the whole stadium. Is that something that you're just made that way, or is it something you really worked on a lot to be like that?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: I was never in doubt in that moment (laughing). No, I was definitely, yeah, you got to kind of just take a couple deep breaths and you got to refocus yourself. But it's also good, you know, this kind of experience, for the next time it happens, I think it's a nice little thing for me. You just got to really believe in yourself in those situations. You know, really, yeah, go after it.

I got a little bit lucky that the balls were already super heavy, so his serve wasn't going through the court super quick, so I had an opportunity to get a racquet on it. Then, just played a good point after that. But, yeah, you just got to stay calm, believe in yourself, and hope for the win.

**Q. You even hit a winner from a one-hand backhand. Did you get that from dad?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: I hit a one-handed backhand? Yeah, definitely a lot of my childhood was seeing his backhand go by me, so a little inspiration there, pretty good shot (laughing).

**Q. Also, very lovely moment after the match at the net. Do you mind talking about, what did you guys talk about?**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, it was definitely a really good

moment. Ben's a really good guy. He's got a great family. We've started to know each other really well these last couple months. We have a great relationship together. We played doubles one time, will definitely play again in the future.

Yeah, I think we just talked about the tiebreaker and, you know, we were just kind of laughing. He's an incredible player, he's electric, he's fun to watch. He's fun to play against, honestly. I had a lot of fun during the match today. Just, honestly, just shows also the type of person that he is. He's incredibly nice, always has a smile on his face, and just a really great guy all around.

**Q. Could you talk through your next match with Hubi Hurkacz.**

SEBASTIAN KORDA: Yeah, definitely going to be fun. I'm going to have to return really well again. For me, he's, honestly, one of the best servers on tour, he's got a super tricky serve. He's a great athlete, goes to the net really well. So, yeah, it's going to be interesting, for sure. Hopefully, I return well, serve well, and we'll see what happens.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions? No more? Okay. Thank you, everyone.

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