

China Open

Monday, October 2, 2023

Beijing, China

Ons Jabeur

Press Conference



O. JABEUR/A. Krueger

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Ons, congratulations. Your first win here in Beijing. Can you just give us your thoughts on the match and your opponent today.

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, was a great match for me. I think I played the next generation (smiling). She's a really good player. I think she's going to be one of the top players in the future.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How did you find the transition from Ningbo to here just conditions-wise? How similarly or dissimilarly do these courts play from there?

ONS JABEUR: I think the courts are a bit faster here. The conditions, whether-wise, I think it's better here. It was too humid in Ningbo. I think it's an advantage to me. Yeah, I was trying to adapt a little bit to the balls and the courts. I think with good hands, that's a little bit of an advantage that I can have (smiling).

Yeah, it was a good match to start. Hopefully for many more.

Q. In terms of you're one of the few top players who's playing kind of the full China swing: Ningbo, here to Zhengzhou. What is it about wanting to play three straight events in China that was a draw to you?

ONS JABEUR: Well, I wasn't supposed to play Ningbo. Yeah, I didn't have a good results in San Diego and Guadalajara. I thought maybe if I would finish early, I would fly to China and see if I could get a wild card. I wanted to go to Tokyo, but didn't have the visa. Yeah, it was a last-minute decision. Grateful for the tournament that they kept a wild card for me.

The race is the race, so I'm trying to get away as much as I can. Try to enjoy more time here in China, eating noodles,

enjoying the good food.

Yeah, hopefully it could be a great decision to qualify. I have this tournament here, then Zhengzhou, if I'm saying it good, and let's see.

Q. I know the WTA is trying new rules about performance bye. You got nothing here in China Open. There are some issues raised in Tokyo. I want to know your thoughts about this new rule?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, the rules about the performance bye are really, really confusing. For me, I wish I had a performance bye from Ningbo. If it's allowed to give from 500 to 1000, then it's allowed to give from a 250 to a 1000.

I think the schedule should be better. We shouldn't have a tournament in Mexico, then Tokyo, then Tokyo to here. At least Tokyo to here is better.

Yeah, I feel like if they're going to do performance byes, they should keep normal byes maybe, yeah, and explain better the rules for sure. I think we didn't have any explanation on that. For me, honestly I thought I had a bye in Ningbo to start with and I didn't.

Yeah, it is frustrating. I do understand the point of Elena, and hopefully we can find a solution about it with the WTA and avoid this happening. Definitely clear the rules once for all.

Q. Last time you came here in 2019, you were 51st in the world, and you played in qualifying round first. You are losing. Now come back to Beijing, you're having Grand Slam finals for three times, one of the top players in the world. Looking back the last four years, it look like a dream, right? How different do you feel now come back to China this time?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, completely different situation for me coming back here to China. I honestly did live some depressing moments here coming to Beijing because I think one of the times I was trying to sign in for quallies, and I didn't get in. I was alone five weeks here in China. I didn't know what to do. I wasn't the best playing tennis.



It's honestly good to look back at these moments and know that I was really in a bad situation. Now with the ranking being a top-10 player, if you asked me a few years back, I maybe would have told you it would be very difficult. I'm very glad I turned this into a positive thing.

Q. On that note, what is the biggest challenge of being a top-10 player over the last two years, and how does that contrast to four or five years ago when you weren't that? What were the biggest challenges of being a sub-50 player on tour?

ONS JABEUR: You cannot lose any match for sure as a top player. Everybody is watching. That's the bad thing about it (laughter).

No, seriously, I think being a top player brings certain pressure with it. People are expecting you, not just like outside people but people around you, are expecting you to perform a certain way, even I'm expecting to perform a certain way and keep the level up, prove myself that I'm a top-10 player on the court.

Well, before I think it was a completely different vision for me. I think I was, like, a little bit trying to get in. I knew I had the level to. Maybe I wasn't putting enough work for it. At the time I thought I was doing it, but I'm seeing the hard work that I was doing, I think it changes a bit.

I think maybe before I wasn't ready to be in this position, because now I feel like I'm ready because I did work on myself tennis-wise, physically and mentally to be in this position. Struggling and going through those tough moments did teach me to be stronger, for sure.

Q. What were your thoughts on Coco winning the US Open, winning a Grand Slam, being 19?

ONS JABEUR: I remember when I was 19. Long time ago (smiling).

Honestly I was very happy for her. I think everybody knows, but I said it before, she's going to win a Grand Slam now or after. Yeah, I do think she's going to win many more.

She's a great athlete, great person outside the court, on the court. Well, we don't like her so much on the court when she hits winners (smiling).

I think she's an amazing player for us, for the sport. I wish her all the best. I wish she could win many more Grand Slams after I win mine.

Q. I saw you are using Rafa's famous quote 'if, if, if doesn't exist'.

ONS JABEUR: Sorry, using what?

Q. Using Rafa's famous quote. It's a tough loss for this year's Wimbledon final. Three matches lost in a Grand Slam final. What's your mentality now? What is your biggest takeaway from all these three big losses for you?

ONS JABEUR: Well, yeah, definitely was very tough at Wimbledon and the other finals. But I will definitely learn from it.

Again, I talked before about being maybe not ready to win my first Grand Slam. I feel like the time will come. I do believe in destiny. I do believe that maybe it wasn't meant to be in Wimbledon this year.

I'm working hard to improve everything and take it one step at a time. I think I'm starting to change a little bit my thinking about preparing myself from now until that day happens.

Yeah, the hard work is coming. Yeah, hopefully one day I can lift that beautiful trophy.

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