

China Open

Thursday, September 25, 2025

Beijing, China

Zhang Zhizhen

Press Conference



T. ATMANE/Zhang Zhizhen

6-4, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the press conference of Zhang Zhizhen. We'll go straight to questions in English.

Q. Your thoughts on your performance today? And hopefully the ice is just recovery and not something more serious.

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Yeah, I mean, ice is for recovery, just like the daily things you have to do all the time after the practice or after the match. Don't worry about this. Just saving the time.

Today? Well, how do you say? He playing really good today. After first set, at some point I was watching the screen, he had 16 winners. I was only eight or 10, something like that. He was playing really aggressive from the baseline and really good serve. It's a little bit tough for me to return how he serve also.

There's really half year didn't play any lefty in this half year (smiling). In the baseline, the rhythm is a little bit different, little bit tough to find the rhythm for me.

Well, I mean, I feel today actually is a normal match after six months. This is normal one.

Q. Have you set yourself some sort of a time frame or have you been advised of a time frame following the time off, returning? How do you feel about the situation?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: What's the question again?

Q. Have you been given some sort of a time frame that you feel you should be back to the level that you were at and the tennis that you were playing?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: Well, you know what, always tough to say. Always there's many things you cannot control. Of course, I mean, everyone want to be back to the level, but

you have to take patience first and you have to do the correct way, even beginning.

I don't know how long it takes. But I think the toughest part that passed already, because beginning always is toughest moment for everyone I would say.

Well, just keep going. I wish the time would be short.

Q. Are you a patient person? When you were off, were you impatient to get going again?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: I am. But depends. Depends on - how do you say...

Sorry. Let me answer it this way: I am a patient person, but in this case, it really makes me - how do you say - mad of what I doing in beginning part. Really difficult. It was really destroying myself little bit.

But now, at moment, I try to see two months ago what I'm doing that's big improve already. I will keep this way, keep the same way, yes.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in Chinese.

Q. After the Olympics, the past year, what kind of changes do you observe in yourself?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: The changes within this year, I don't observe any changes. I see my daughter grow up. She's one year old. That's the biggest change.

I think there are two parts or three parts to the past year. The end of last year, the beginning of this year, I was on the tour. Then I was off for six months. Now I'm back on tour. It's really hard to pinpoint the changes.

If you ask someone who is taking a break of six months, it would really be hard to say for that person to describe what kind of changes are taking place.

Q. We've been asking Chinese players about their comeback after injuries. You've been in two tournaments after coming back. The feeling on court,

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ZHANG ZHIZHEN: I think it's hugely different after injury, after being away for so long. First of all, your feeling on court is a little bit unfamiliar. Sometimes you don't know what to do. Sometimes it's a lack of preparation or you are unaware how to prepare certain things. These things will come back. When you need to raise your level, sometimes it's hard to do because you don't know what to do.

I think today is a really good example. Three matches in the past two weeks. The first match was unexpected, it was surprising. A lot of people were thinking, You should be like this the first match after you come back. You'll be playing very well.

The fact is, in the last two matches, this is the true situation: you've been away for so long, you have to adapt to so many things.

Q. I saw fans discussing they want to see a very refreshed Zhizhen after your comeback. When do you expect that to happen, a 100% Zhizhen?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: I assume it will be next year. Unlikely this year. These past three weeks has been a process of recovery. It's something in progress. It's not an end result yet.

We're not totally doing it for the victory itself. It's a part of the process. We're trying to see whether my body can withstand the pressure, the stress. After such intensity, we have to assess how my body is. I would assume next year I will be back into competition.

Q. Who proposed this idea of playing doubles with Jerry?

ZHANG ZHIZHEN: I think he asked me first. But at the time I thought my shoulder wasn't good enough for both singles and doubles.

Back in Hangzhou, I was feeling well and my health was okay. I knew that Jerry was supposed to pair with Yibing. Yibing was in the top four in Hangzhou. It would be too much for him coming here into the China Open for the doubles.

Then someone in between proposed this idea to me again. I did not give an answer right away. After discussing with my team, I thought it would be good to try it.

We talked about pairing up in Shanghai next week, so why don't we try it in Beijing, too.