

Sydney Tennis Classic

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Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Ons Jabeur

Press Conference



O. JABEUR/P. Kvitova

6-4, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: A great win against a great champion. You must feel really good about it.

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, finally, after so many losses against her. It was a great match. You know, I fought really hard.

It's not easy to return those powerful shots, but yeah, I have been prepared and I wanted really to win. So I went for it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Before when you've played her, you've never taken a set off her, and then you scored the 6-4, 6-4 win, and coming back from breaks down, as well. What made the difference today?

ONS JABEUR: Well, I think I'm playing better. You know, as a player, I'm much better on the court. I'm more confident.

I've got to say, I learned from my losses against her, especially the last one in Cincinnati. To be honest, I'm glad that the court wasn't super fast. It kind of helped me a little bit.

But, yeah, I mean, I had a good preseason. I practiced more and more on those shots. You know, I'm getting better on this one. Been trying to put every ball in and more ball in to make it difficult for her. It gave me confidence on the court to kind of make sure to play my shots.

Q. Was that one of the most satisfying wins that you have had in recent times because of the previous record you had against Petra?

ONS JABEUR: It's one of the good ones, for sure. I played well. I could have played better, for sure, but I think I had a goal in my head and I went for it. It's very important that I managed to really do what I wanted to do, like to return more of her serves, to serve better even though certain time I knew she was going to put pressure

on me, but then I managed that kind of pressure.

So I think the main thing here is my goals, I kind of achieved them during this match.

Q. You touched a moment ago on a word that's so important to any professional tennis player, and that's "confidence." The fact that you cracked the top 10, that confidence from last year is carrying through to this year, isn't it?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, of course, of course. When you play that kind of matches and you get more experience on court, I think it helps you be the player that you want to be.

But, you know, sometimes some things could shake your confidence. I feel like the player could decide if that does or not. I was working a lot on myself and on my mental, and I feel like and everybody knows if I decide something to do, then I do it, so I'm just going with this mentality from now on.

Q. Looking ahead to the next round and Anett Kontaveit, the records have turned. Compared to today's match against Petra, what do you think looking forward to playing her?

ONS JABEUR: Well, Anett is a great player. You know, we had our moments last year. I told her, You're obsessed with me, you always follow me, so stop (smiling).

But it's great to have her on tour. She's a tough player. Even the matches we played against each other were always tough. Let's see. It's a different court. It's a different country. Honestly, I'm going to do my best.

I know the pressure is on me, not really on her. But maybe some payback for last year, you know, (smiling).

Q. On the upcoming matchup against Anett, you know, first of all, how much were you paying attention to what she did in Guadalajara last year? What is it about the way your games lock up that you feel like has given you the edge in your last matchups?

ONS JABEUR: Well, I think she's pretty aggressive



player, but sometimes like she gives me a little bit of time. You know, I can do my slices and kind of the shots that I like to do.

During the last matches, I think it was just few points, you know, apart. I was just there, and I took my shot and I was ready for everything.

She puts a lot of pressure, that's for sure. I know she played really well at the end of the season. I saw a little bit how she played in Guadalajara, and honestly, like I said, she deserved that spot. She showed it in there.

It's going to be an interesting match. It's going to be one of the toughest matches. Like I said, when I played her before was never easy to play. Even sometimes if it's two sets, but it's always tight. So many points. I know she's someone that could really -- she doesn't have, let's say she's loose, you know, as a player. She's not that stressed. She is going to give everything, and she doesn't care about the results.

So I will try to do the same, and I will really try to win tomorrow.

Q. How important was it to beat Petra after being winless against her?

ONS JABEUR: It was very important. That's why, for some reason I was talking to my coach about it, that I wanted to win at least once, you know, against her. She's the kind of player that puts a lot of pressure on me that I don't particularly like, and that gave me really, let's say, the courage to work on this kind of a style of a game.

After Cincinnati was very tough, you know, loss for me, but she played unbelievable. I'm someone that doesn't like to go home without any solutions, without knowing what should I do later, you know.

We talked about that match a lot. We discussed it. We were working on those shots, on the shot that doesn't give me the time to work on it, and I feel like physically I'm much better. So that helps me to be better on the court and to get back and play better when you play someone that plays like that.

You know, you can see how important it is to me to win today (smiling).

Q. As it's the start of the season, first time talking to you, I just wanted to get a sense as to goals for the year. And also, did you get enough time during the offseason to kind of heal up everything that was obviously bothering you towards the end of the season? Do you feel with everything that happened the last few weeks, feeling 100% to start the new year?

ONS JABEUR: Not gonna lie to you. I'm not 100%, but I'm trying to get there. It is much, much better than the last year. But, you know, I managed to, you know, recover and everything.

End of the season also a little bit tough with the COVID. It didn't help much for me to, you know, to train and everything. But I'm very glad that I'm here. I was honestly just playing match by match and seeing how I feel. Sometimes, you know, with adrenaline and the way you play on the court, the pain disappear a little bit. So I'm really glad that it's the case.

I'm going to take care of my body more this year. You know, it's not easy to be in this level. So my main goal is to last and stay in the top 10. Why not be in top 5? I want to win more titles. I feel like I can do it.

So, yeah, the same mentality as last year. Just like I feel like I understand much more my body, understand much more the tour. So hopefully, you know, I can achieve what I want to.

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