

# Brisbane International

Monday, 6 January 2025

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

## Jiri Lehecka

### Press Conference

J. LEHECKA/R. Opelka

4-1 (ret.)

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

#### Q. How are you feeling after quite of a big night?

JIRI LEHECKA: Yeah, I mean, it was a tough week for me. Definitely to play 10 matches in a week is never easy. We had a couple days where we needed to play doubles after singles, which is very exhausting.

Yeah, here I am. I'm very happy that I won. Unfortunately the end was a bit sad. If I would have to choose, I would choose to finish the match differently. But that's how it is.

I perfectly know how he feels. Happened to me also. Yeah, I wish him just speedy recovery. I hope it's nothing serious.

#### Q. Did you know he had a back injury going into the match?

JIRI LEHECKA: No, no, I had no clue. From what I heard, he warmed up normally. I saw him yesterday, how he beat Mpetshi. The level was amazing. They played a great match.

I must say I had no idea that he's having any problems. I just saw during yesterday's match that he was just talking to his team about his left wrist. I just saw it from the TV. That's all I saw. Yeah, that he has a problem with the back, I had no idea about that.

#### Q. You said you've been through similar. Was that a back injury?

JIRI LEHECKA: Yeah, happened to me in Madrid last year. I had a stress fracture on my T-9 vertebra.

#### Q. How is that now? All good?

JIRI LEHECKA: I must say all good since I started to play again in the summer. My first tournament was Cincinnati Masters. Since I started to play again, I have never felt anything again. I hope it stays that way.



#### Q. What are the plans this week? Will you play in Adelaide?

JIRI LEHECKA: I still need to decide. Definitely Adelaide is a place where I love to come back. Last year I won my first title there. I mean, it's same like everywhere in Australia. The conditions are great. The staff and all the people doing the tournament are very helpful, very professional, which is a big help into the decision making whether you want to go there or not.

I must say that my body got a very exhausting week here in Brisbane. We will still need to talk with my team. I haven't spoke to them since I walked out of the court. We will make a decision soon.

#### Q. If you don't play there, you're in pretty good condition for the Aussie Open?

JIRI LEHECKA: No, definitely. I think this is the best possible preparation which a player can have. To play that amount of matches helps, for sure. Definitely it will be good challenge for me to prepare for the Aussie Open, as well.

The biggest difference is that here and also in Adelaide you have a roof on all the courts. If I don't count two doubles matches, then I played basically everything under a roof. You move to Melbourne, you play basically almost everything outdoor with no roof if there is no rain or something.

I would need some time to get used to the heat again. The conditions here were not also very easy. Few days was humid. Yeah, it will be a bit different there. This week was definitely helpful.

#### Q. Will you and Mensik play doubles again in Melbourne?

JIRI LEHECKA: They Aussie Open, no. We will both focus on singles. Of course, is a bit different. It's the best-of-five. Matches can be much more tougher, much more longer. We will focus on our singles matches there, singles competition.

But definitely in the future I think if there will be any good chance tournament which will make sense for both of us to play doubles in, we will join together again, sign in, we



will see how it goes.

**Q. What is it about Brisbane, Australia, the courts, something here that's super special?**

JIRI LEHECKA: It's funny to say, but after we arrive here from Europe, everything seems special. In Europe it's snow, minus, cold.

Jokes aside, I mean, here in Australia, I always felt good. I always felt the conditions on court and also off court are the ones which suits me well. I like the courts, the speed of the courts. Also the balls are the ones which I'm looking for also when I'm practicing back home.

Every player has a different opinion on that, but these conditions here I find very helpful. Also for the body. Definitely these conditions are good. I feel that it suits my game well. The game I am trying to play, the aggressive game style, going to the net, going for winners, these conditions suit my game well also. That's a big help for the beginning of the season.

**Q. From your singles perspective, is it encouraging that you're able to play so well against different types of players, Rune, Dimitrov, Jarry?**

JIRI LEHECKA: Definitely. This week was so many different players on the other side of the court. I started against Holger, who is a big hitter, solid player, very experienced for how young is he. Then I went to play against Yoshihito, he likes to run, he likes to put every time an extra ball into play. He's lefty. That was another challenge. From that directly to playing Nicolas Jarry, big server, guy going into every ball. Then Grigor, who is playing one-handed backhand. Then finishing with Reilly, who is very tall guy serving big.

It's something I find very positive. I'm very happy. I think also me and my team, we find it very positive that I'm able to produce a good level against any type of player, doesn't matter if he's tall, small, serving well.

From what we found out is that I'm just trying to focus on myself. I'm just trying to focus on my game to do my things well, not to think about things that I can't change. Just focus on things I can improve during the match from my side and in my game. That's something what help me through this week definitely.

Even I had some bad moments on court, I was just trying to focus on what I want to do, not on what the opponent is doing. That's definitely a big plus, big improvement in my game.

**Q. What are your goals heading into the Australian Open?**

JIRI LEHECKA: Definitely the goals are high. I played

quarterfinals two years ago. I know that I'm capable of such a result.

We will see. I know I have the game, I have the level. I beat some good players already. This week also helped me to build my confidence up. I will have a high goals.

I don't want to say that I'm going to win, but I will do my best to go as far as I can. We will see if I improve my best results to one more round.

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