

Australian Open

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Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Ons Jabeur

Press Conference



O. JABEUR/Y. Starodubtseva

6-3, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. First win of the Australian Open campaign. Can you just give us your overall thoughts on the match today.

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, just first match. Tried to be as relaxed as much as possible. Happy to be back and happy to be in the second round.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. How much rust out there tonight?

ONS JABEUR: Not so much, but I was happy to be back. You know, I didn't know how the first match would be. It's the first time I don't really play any tournaments before Grand Slams, so it was a big risk.

Yeah, super happy to come back with a new everything, kind of (smiling).

Q. New debut of a bunch of different things. Talk a bit about the decision not to play a tournament before Melbourne, what went into it. I know you played the exhibition in Riyadh, but why did you choose to take this risk?

ONS JABEUR: I'm not sure if you're going to believe it, but this decision was kind of made before the grass season last year.

So I felt like I have been getting a lot injured. The season is very long. So I was, like, Okay, maybe it's better that I take my time, rest, take my time also to do a good preseason. I'm sure after I would be able to play a lot of matches, and I'm not going to miss it much. So I was, like, Okay, I'll keep full energy for the Australian Open.

Since, given what happened last year, I didn't want to take the risk and just come back and play a lot of tournaments.

Q. Obviously on the topic of what happened last year, some players might kind of feel a little, not

PTSD, that's overstating it, but walking those hallways, remembering the moments after you lost to Vondrousova, things like that, having bad energy, bad mojo, did you have any of that walking the grounds here or is it new chapter, new page?

ONS JABEUR: I didn't since I didn't play the same court, so it's a good thing. I had a small feeling, because the first day I practiced on Rod Laver Court, and it was weird coming back, but thank God everything is behind me now and I'm feeling much better.

Q. In terms of your preseason, it sounded like it was a bit of a busy one just with everything happening off court as well with sponsors and all that sort of stuff, can you give us insight into what that month and a half was like after Cancun? Were you able to have the proper preseason you would have wanted?

ONS JABEUR: I was honestly. I just took small vacation. I went to Bali, and then with Karim, my husband, really had amazing time there. We relaxed. Then we had actually time to do two weeks only fitness with him, so he was very happy taking advantage of that, making me run every day (smiling).

I think it was relaxing. You know, no rush. We didn't have to, like, go anywhere at the end of the year. Then I was in Dubai a bit. My family was there. It was nice to have, like, a family moment.

Then, yeah, new sponsor, new opportunities. I'm very happy and honored to be the ambassador of this amazing brand, Kayanee. It's a Saudi brand that was meant to inspire more women. So we share the same values. I'm very happy to do that and looking forward to represent this beautiful brand and hopefully many more to come.

Q. How involved were you in terms of colors, fit...

ONS JABEUR: Oh, very involved. I was loving it. I was loving it. Yeah, but I'm not into fashion a lot. I found it very interesting to, like -- they were, like, asking me for every little detail, and do you like this, do you like that. I'm not used to this, you know (smiling).

So I felt like, you know, valued and appreciated. It's a feeling, like, honestly I cannot even describe, you know,



given what happened in the last years.

So I'm very happy to start this new partnership. I'm choosing the next, you know, the collection, the colors again, they asked me which ones I like more, the designs. We are going to try something -- like today I entered with Batman, they called me. I heard they called me Batman. It's good. The vibes are good. I felt like maybe Serena a little bit, you know, style (smiling).

You know me. I don't do those things. I'm honestly having fun to have those different collections and feel very pampered from Kayanee. So I'm looking forward to show you more outfits.

Q. We said also it was a Serena-esque jacket.

ONS JABEUR: She was copying me a little bit (laughter).

Q. In the design aspect of things, are there things where you suggested, Oh, I'd like this and they were, like, obviously a fashion expert, they were, like, We can't do that or you don't want that, and vice versa, We'd love to do this, and you're, as an athlete, That's not going to work?

ONS JABEUR: I'm very open. They even hired a personal stylist for me, which I felt like, Whoa. I fired my sister because she was supposed to be the one taking care of that (smiling). But I was, like, yeah, she can keep the job if she brings the kids.

But basically, you know, when you work with professional people like this, they know your style so they know which things you would like. Me, on the other side, I was very open about trying new stuff, like, the coat, like this, you know, and everything around it.

It's a perfect match. They have, you know, the sportswear already, and I'm designing my own collection of tennis because I'm the only tennis player they have. Looking forward to do more, for sure.

Q. Looking ahead, you'll play Mirra Andreeva.

ONS JABEUR: She won? Good.

Q. Her name has often come up around you. She's said you are one of her tennis idols and everything like that. I'm curious what you have made of a 16-year-old like her, managing her career, the results, and what it's going to be like to play her for the first time.

ONS JABEUR: I think she's been playing amazing, like she has only couple of tournaments that she can play given her age. I feel like they should give her more tournaments to play.

Yeah, it's going to be a very difficult match. I know she's 16 years old, but she's very tough. I might be her idol, but she wants to go there and kick my ass, for sure.

But it's an honor to play her, really. I'm a big fan of her and love her attitude on the court.

It's going to be an amazing match for both of us. I have been -- I wanted to practice with her, but every time it's difficult. Here is the first practice until the next ones (smiling).

Q. I know all the top players, you go to a slam and you say, I want to win the slam, that is obviously the goal and that is success. Given that you come in, this is your first tournament of the year, everything like that, does that change your, not ambition, that's overstating it, but what is a successful tournament at Melbourne Park for Ons?

ONS JABEUR: For me it would be a second week. Obviously if I didn't play any tournaments before, I just didn't want to put a lot of pressure on myself. If I put maybe enough pressure on two Grand Slams, I say, it's okay, and be more realistic to say I'm just going to go and enjoy myself on the court, you know.

I have enough pressure on my plate, so I think it's just good to enjoy my time here.

Q. Can I ask you about the documentary?

ONS JABEUR: Yes. Did you watch it?

Q. No, I haven't seen it. Haven't been able.

ONS JABEUR: Courtney, I've got you.

Q. I have read very good articles from people who have watched it, but I'm curious what the mindset was in terms of being as open as you were in the documentary and sharing with the world about your disappointment after Wimbledon, what it meant, you know, what happened here in Melbourne, as well, opening up about all that.

ONS JABEUR: You know I'm an open book, you know, always. Have been with you guys, and whatever you question, I answer honestly.

I'm excited that I had my own thing, you know, my own documentary, that I was able to speak freely and speak about everything.

I appreciate the team that I have worked with. They are very, very professional. They didn't want to push me to do anything, that it was against, you know, myself or what I believe it in.

So they let me be natural. They showed me, you know, on and off the court, but mostly off the court. I was happy to share my thoughts. I was happy to let people know what I was thinking.

When you watch it, I really want your honest opinion about it.

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