

Roland Garros

Saturday, 29 May 2021

Paris, France

Ons Jabeur

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What was it like seeing that poster and your face on that poster, like "Legends of Roland Garros"?

ONS JABEUR: It was amazing. Honestly I think it's a great gesture from Roland Garros to do like -- I assume the "legend" was for Federer and the others, and the "champions" were for the juniors who won here. So it was really amazing to see.

I didn't really see it at the beginning. I was walking by and Karim and was, like, Oh, my God, this is Ons Jabeur. I was, like, Whoa, this is amazing. I really appreciate it. I took a picture right away and posted on Instagram.

Q. In general, what does this place mean to you? Because I know that when you have success early on it comes with pressure, right? It was probably the biggest thing that happened to you, but also, tell me about that part.

ONS JABEUR: I mean, I have a lot of history coming here to Roland Garros, winning the juniors, like doing great last year. Plus now, I'm like different other pressure of me going to the second week.

But I enjoy playing on clay, to be honest. I love sliding. I love how the dropshots are going really well.

I'm just trying to enjoy every match. I have kind of a difficult opening here. I admit that it's one of the good draws I have, but it's a Grand Slam, so you always expect everybody to play really good.

Q. The injury and stuff, how tricky were the past couple of weeks for you to be ready for Paris?

ONS JABEUR: I mean, I thank God it happened in Madrid and didn't happen after, because I had more time in between. To be honest, the week that the French Open postponed the Grand Slam kind of helped me a lot. So maybe it was a good sign from the universe to stay at home a little bit, enjoy the good food there. That's what I did. Honestly I stayed with my parents and I did a lot of treatment. I tried to relax a little bit and then get away from the courts.



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Now I'm back. I want to play more matches and I'm hungry to play a lot of matches.

Q. Regarding that poster, does it sort of hit you and maybe remind you of the importance and the effect that you have on other people from Tunisia, from the Arab world, when you see your face on a poster with Yannick Noah, Roger Federer, these players?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, at first it was surprising. Like I said, I had to take a picture and post on Instagram. The reaction from a lot of people also surprising for me. It reminds me that, you know, I have, like, people are really following and they really appreciate what I'm doing, so it gives me a lot of courage to play even better here.

I know there is a lot of Tunisians following me right now, even like outside Tunisia, and it's getting bigger and bigger, the fans outside like Tunisia. I appreciate that. I hope I can give a good image for myself, for my country, and for my continent.

Q. Regarding the form that you find yourself in now, do you feel like you have the injury issue behind you and you're really just looking for match toughness right now again? There is no problems?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, I mean, I played a lot of matches, so I don't think that I have a lack of playing matches. I am 100% now with my injury, so hopefully I could be -- I practice with a lot of players here, even like Swiatek yesterday, and it was amazing hitting with her. I can feel myself ready to begin the tournament.

Q. You ready for a big fight with Yulia?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, big, big, fight. A lot of running, a lot of rallies. Yeah, ready for that.

Q. Can I ask about Ash Barty?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah.

Q. A player who has really improved so quickly on the clay obviously. She's a Roland Garros champion now. What do you make of her consistency and form on the clay this year? Why do you think she's been able to be so consistent and so effective on clay?

ONS JABEUR: Well, I know Ash since juniors. I got a picture last time, I showed her, we were laughing when

we won the doubles in Roehampton before Wimbledon.

What I admire the most about Ash is like she's so humble and I feel like she's the perfect No. 1. She has the game to play on clay, on grass, you can just put her on the street she can play good. Whatever, she can play amazing.

I love seeing her play, because she's always loose, like no pressure. She makes you look like there is no pressure. She's playing like really loose, like the slice and everything.

I've got to say I have a lot to learn from her, and I am glad that I'm playing at the same time as her, and it's really honor for me.

Q. I'm curious about the practices before slams, because we are seeing so many top players play together. You said you played with Iga the other day. What makes you choose someone in particular to hit with? What's the process like? For example, how did the practice with Iga come about?

ONS JABEUR: Well, my coach and her coach are friends, and we kind of practice together first time in Miami, so we kept in touch. She's really a nice person. You know, like not the kind when she was playing good, only practice with the top. She always practice, if I ask her, she always practice with me.

To be honest, sometimes you just like -- depends who you play against. Sometimes I just look for the similar game. It's always good to hit with the top players to know, like, really how -- I'm always curious to know how they're practicing, what's the level they put in the practice, the points. It's always good to play against them, with them or in the practice.

Honestly, I try to always find like great top players to practice with.

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