

Roland Garros

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Paris, France

Ons Jabeur

Press Conference

O. JABEUR/O. Dodin

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THE MODERATOR: Ons, very good performance out there today. What were you most happy with in your match?

ONS JABEUR: I think it was a great match for me. I managed with the conditions, with the wind, and with someone that hits very hard.

I hope I can continue playing even better for the next matches.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. A question on the way Oceane played. Do you feel that she took a huge amount of risks, especially in the first set?

ONS JABEUR: Well, it's part of her game. That's how she plays. She hits, like, very flat, and her game is very risky, so you can expect a lot of winners and a lot of mistakes.

I think the key for me today was to make her make more mistakes than me and manage to get away the ball from her and not get her in her comfort zone.

Q. I was just wondering, how much do you know about your next opponent? It's Olga Danilovic from Serbia. Have you ever watched her play, for instance?

ONS JABEUR: I did watch her play before. Not here. She's a good friend, too. She's very nice, and we always joke around. Now I'm teasing her, and I'm like, I'm not talking to you and stuff. But she's a great player, young.

It's going to be definitely a tricky match for me. I will speak to my coach and see what the strategy will be for me.

Q. Ons, I just want to ask you about the crowd. You've obviously got some amazing fans, and there are pockets all over. You were playing a French player today, and there was one moment when you



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hit a return, and it was a dead net cord and obviously a winner for you, and it won the game. The crowd got involved, and they sort of boo, but it's kind of pantomime. Do you hear that or do you just block it out? Do you kind of acknowledge it at all?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, definitely not the best to have those reaction with booing and everything, even though hitting the net is part of the game. It was luck. I didn't want to hit it probably that way, but lucky for me.

The most, I think, tricky thing was during the match is not to get involved with them because as soon as you react to what they're doing, it's going to get heated. That's what happened with other players.

So, for me the key was just to focus on what I'm doing. I cannot control what they do, so I kept focusing on myself. I know they will try to get anything to get me out of the match.

Q. We spoke to Mirra Andreeva earlier, and she told us that you are one of the players on the tour right now who really inspires her. She also said that she thinks that you are one of the nicest players on the tour as well. So I was wondering what does it feel like when you are already inspiring some of the younger players on tour, and what does it mean to prove to yourself and others that you can be a really nice person but also be super competitive as well?

ONS JABEUR: Well, she's a cute girl. I've been enjoying watching her interviews and the way she was talking about me. I mean, it's an honor that she talks so good about me, even though I want to make the list of beautiful faces, you know, of her list.

But, yeah, we'll definitely set up a practice. I heard that she wanted to practice. I hope I can continue inspiring others.

I wish to also bring that human side of me and the other players on tour because, after all, it's just a tennis match. It's great to be nice to others, and also a tennis match is a tennis match.

Whatever happens there with all the craziness of some players, I'm sure some players are very, very nice outside the court. You can even ask me about any, and I will tell you that they're very nice. The demons when you play just come out during the match. I hope, really,



... when all is said, we're done.®

players could be nicer to each other even outside the court.

Q. Just wondering how you're feeling on the court really. Obviously, your preparation wasn't ideal. Do you feel that there's kind of any bit of rust in your game, or does it feel quite normal as if you had played a normal clay court season?

ONS JABEUR: I think, yeah, I'm getting back to my level. I feel like I'm moving great, and I'm feeling like it's getting better during the matches.

The game is there. Physically I'm feeling definitely much better. Just a few things that are going to go my way probably in the next few matches. But yeah, we'll keep working hard and improving every day.

Q. Once again, dropshots are the key to win. How you do it? Do you have dropshots training sessions? I wanted also to know about other aspects of your game. What are the other aspects of your game that you need to work on to go further in this competition and win the title?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, the dropshot is one of the great shots that I do, especially here on clay. The ball stays really low. How you do it, maybe not say born with it, but I learn how to do it even better with the years. But the strategy of when you do it with the wind, with the players, not a good place, I think that's what helps me during the game.

Yeah, for the next few matches I think I'm going to work more on my serve and get maybe less double faults and be more solid with my serve will help me improve a lot, and put more pressure in my return games on other players to be ready and maybe save time during the matches.

Q. Ons, I know you're a big football fan, and I've seen some videos where you've been showing your football skills as well. If you think about some of the players who you could be playing here at Roland Garros, if you had the chance between playing a tennis tiebreak or a penalty shoot-out to get through to the next round, which would you choose and why?

ONS JABEUR: I think penalty because I have more chances to win against any player here (laughing). Female, you know. Yeah, I enjoy football. I watch a lot. It's a great sport, and I really cannot wait for just watching the next World Cup.

Q. You're obviously a popular member in the locker room and everything. You're friendly with a lot of players. I'm curious what it was like when you first came onto the tour. Were you shy then? Did it take

a while for you to get used to being around players, or was it instant?

ONS JABEUR: Let's say my jokes weren't that funny at the time (laughing).

I don't know. I'm always spontaneous, but unfortunately -- I say "unfortunately" because when you go up with the ranking, you get more interesting in the locker rooms, but I wish to change that. I'm always like everybody is the same no matter if you are No. 1 or No. 500. I was trying to joke a lot, but, you know, I think now I'm more funny.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

Q. Two matches, two victories. We see that you are gaining confidence in this tournament.

ONS JABEUR: Yes, that's the objective, to play more matches and to get used to clay and to be in perfect form. That's my objective.

The objective is to be in the second week and continue shining because it's a surface I can play very well on. It's a pity I didn't have good preparation before.

But a Grand Slam is a Grand Slam, and the mental aspect is all ready, so I'll continue as far as I can.

Q. Regarding the atmosphere, did you find there was a specific atmosphere here in Roland Garros? Some complained about whistles or sound. Do you find the positive and negative differences with other tournaments in other countries?

ONS JABEUR: The French crowd is a bit difficult, I would say. I don't like it when they boo, but that's part of the game. They want French players to win.

In the other countries, although I hit a good shot, they appreciate not necessarily here. They prefer me to miss, but it's part of the game. French spectators are passionate about tennis, and it's a great pleasure to see that many people are watching.

I have also French fans, so that's also a great source of satisfaction.

Q. How are you able to be a champion with a fighting spirit while being nice and kind to your colleagues and having a friendly contact with them?

ONS JABEUR: When I go on court, I forget that they are friends while playing fair play, of course. Since I've been young, I love competition, I love winning. I hate losing, so that's why I do my best to be solid. But when the match is over, I don't see why I should be so stressed or so rigid with the other players, so I'm very relaxed.

It also reflects my character. I love joking with others.

Q. Let's talk about Mirra Andreeva. She's arriving in the season. She is shaking up everything, and now she's in the third round. That hasn't happened since 2005, such a young player in the second round. What image do you have of this young player, who is incredible, has very mature tennis? What do you think of her?

ONS JABEUR: It's good for our sport to have someone like her, and most of all she speaks very well. She's funny, and she plays very well, and she shows on the court that she's not just 16 years old. She's here to win matches. I love her personality. I hope she's not going to change because we need girls like her.

So I'm really impatient to practice with her and to see her level because if she's in the third round, it's because she has something. I hope that the world of tennis will protect her because we need girls like her.

Q. You came without so much preparation just due to the difficulties. In this type of match with a player hitting so hard and making mistakes, were you able to gain confidence knowing that it was more about her than you?

ONS JABEUR: I didn't have any references. I had to focus on the game. It's true that I would have liked to have more rallies to feel more rhythm, but that's part of the game.

Most important is that I remained focused in difficult moments, when she could play an ace at any point in time or hit a winner at any point in time. So it was difficult for me to manage emotions also with the crowd.

But I'm learning. I've learned a lot from this match. It will help me for the future, and I will be ready for the third round.

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