

# Roland Garros

Wednesday, 7 June 2023

Paris, France

## Ons Jabeur

### Press Conference

B. HADDAD MAIA/O. Jabeur

3-6, 7-6, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Ons, if you just want to give us your thoughts on the match and your performance today.

ONS JABEUR: You don't want to know how I feel? (Laughing.)

Yeah, difficult match. I mean, it's never easy playing Maia, but she played really well. She was probably more physically ready than me, but it is what it is.

It is tennis, and grass season already started in my head.

THE MODERATOR: English questions, please.

**Q. Considering where you're coming from, considering the rest of your season, especially the part of the clay court season, what were your expectations coming in? Could you say you're satisfied with your overall performance regardless of the fact that obviously you wanted to do better?**

ONS JABEUR: We always want to do better, unless we win the title, you know.

Yeah, I mean, I think it is a great tournament. I honestly wasn't expecting to be in the quarterfinals. Especially this is kind of my first tournament after being injured.

I think it was good. I was trying to push myself until the end, but I think pretty satisfied with the results. You always want to push for more, but I mean hopefully next time will be better, and no more quarterfinal here at the French Open.

**Q. I like an old one, I joke about your way is the right way to play different shots, to change a lot, everything. But as I see, it looks like women's tennis is going like men's tennis, to be aggressive. The first two points, serve and return, especially return. Do you agree this is with tennis? I mean, looking to now watching to Gauff and Swiatek, it's return, boom, boom. Is this the tennis now, or is still a way to someone I like a lot, like Ons Jabeur?**



**ROLAND-GARROS**

ONS JABEUR: Well, I believe women's tennis was always aggressive for some reason. I mean, you can see Sharapova, Serena, Venus, very powerful.

I think that this may be an error. There is a lot of mix. I mean, unfortunately Ash retired, but she was mixing a lot. Iga, she's aggressive, but with a little bit more spin than maybe Sabalenka. Rybakina is more aggressive. Yeah, I think there is a mix of a lot of things, which makes it very interesting to see a lot of changing in this top 10 or top 20.

I mean, on clay I think you should try to mix it a little bit, and that's maybe what most of the players are trying to do now except Aryna. She hits pretty hard.

**Q. You mentioned in your opening answer that maybe she was a little bit more physically ready for today's match than you. Can you give us a sense of kind of were you feeling low on energy, is the calf okay? Just what do you mean kind of by that?**

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, thank God, there is nothing hurting. I didn't have much time to prepare for especially clay season because it's more physical than any other surface.

I'm feeling okay. I think I rushed my way back on tour, but that's because I wanted to be ready for the French Open. You know, like all the training and the physical training, maybe I didn't have enough time to prepare for that, but I did my maximum. I did what I could do in a short time period.

But, yeah, she probably played longer than me, but she's a beast, and I wish her all the best. I mean, honestly, what she's doing for -- I feel like my story and her story are a little bit similar. I'm very happy for her and for Brazil, and hopefully she can do much more for her country.

But, yeah, for me now I'm going to try to rest a little bit and be ready, but I'm good for now.

**Q. On a similar vein, did you sort of feel coming into the match today that maybe you had to win it in straight sets, it was one of those ones where you could feel like you didn't have maybe enough left to push it all the way?**

ONS JABEUR: I always want to win in straight sets. I



... when all is said, we're done.®

think, yeah, I thought maybe I should have been more aggressive or maybe should have stepped in more in the second set, especially I had my chance at 5-All I think.

But yeah, it's never easy. I tried not to regret things because they hurt at night. You know, they don't let you sleep well, but that's tennis unfortunately.

The only thing I maybe should have done more is be more aggressive in the second set.

**Q. You're a person who does so much for tennis and for women's tennis. You just mentioned that you think your story and hers are a bit similar. So if you could develop that a little bit. In which sense do you think her winning and everything that you have already accomplished and will accomplish, how does it affect women's tennis?**

ONS JABEUR: Well, I think you should answer more the question than me. You know what's going on in Brazil more than me.

I mean, I believe history-wise, of course, Brazil had more players than in Tunisia. But there is another player who plays doubles as well from Brazil, but representing their country and feeling that pressure and coming from Brazil, such an amazing country, maybe more known for football than tennis.

But I understand where she's coming from. I understand the pressure that she has, but she's handling very well, and she's doing a lot more in her country to inspire more and more younger girls.

Also, she's doing great for women's tennis in general. Not just for Brazil, but in the world. Honestly, I wish her all the best. I think she beat me today. I'm not sure that I should say more good things about her (laughing). I honestly love Maia a lot, and probably the last two matches that she won, I cried with her.

She's really amazing, and she deserves all the best, and I hope that she could win a Grand Slam one day.

**Q. Ons, I really enjoyed watching you play here at Roland Garros over the last two weeks. One of the things that's really impressed me is your juggling skills that you do before each of the matches. So I wanted to know, what's it like juggling all your commitments on the court and off the court during a Grand Slam, and what are you most pleased with here at Roland Garros this year?**

ONS JABEUR: With the hands you mean?

**Q. Yeah.**

ONS JABEUR: I mean, I have a clown career if it doesn't

work with tennis. It's a good exercise for the eyes, and I love doing it. I mean, you like my juggling more than my drop shot, or which one is better?

**Q. (Off microphone.)**

ONS JABEUR: It's just a routine that I do with Karim, and I try to improve my reaction a little bit and skills kind of on the court. I think that helps really well with my tennis.

**Q. Talking about going ahead to playing at Wimbledon and the lead-up, can you talk a little bit about your schedule, how your preparation is, and do you feel like you can replicate with one extra win what you did last year?**

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, for now I think I'm going to have the same schedule. Berlin, Eastbourne. Maybe Venus wants to play doubles there. I'm not sure. She didn't ask me yet. Then Wimbledon. Just trying to play as much matches as I can.

To be honest with you, I want to enjoy playing on grass because I do enjoy a lot. I have my brother's wedding before, so I'm going to party for a bit and just be ready.

I'm hoping to go and get the title really in Wimbledon. I'm dreaming about it. It's something that I always wanted.

Last year was unfortunate because I was very close. When I put something in my mind, I know I can do it, so it's definitely here.

**Q. Another question about grass. I was just wondering, do you think you will be ready physically for the grass season since you said you rushed your preparation to be ready for Paris? And also, given that you went to the final at Wimbledon last year, do you think that knowing you can get to the final without having to defend the points would be a bit of a plus?**

ONS JABEUR: Well, first, yeah, I think I could be ready because physically you put a lot of effort on clay than grass. I think maybe that was my preseason in Roland Garros here for the grass season.

But I think, yeah, I'm healthy, so we're going to try to work more and more on a few things. Yeah, I think grass season is looking good for me.

For the defending points, yeah, that's kind of weird. I never had that before. But it's funny because since Wimbledon was over last year, one time I say, Oh, points would have been good. Then afterwards I was, like, Nah, I don't think I need the points, you know.

When we were close to the race, I was like, okay, might

**ASAP** . . . when all is said, we're done.®  
**sports**

have been better to have the points now. Now coming to Wimbledon, I think no points was good. (Laughing.)

THE MODERATOR: French questions.

**Q. How are you feeling after this match? We could see that you were hanging in there.**

ONS JABEUR: Yes, I'm a little bit sad. I really wanted to go further in this tournament, but at one point you just have to accept your physical status today. But of course, I can't criticize myself because it was my first tournament after injury. I did everything I had to. I really trained hard, and that's tennis.

I have to accept it and just carry on working even harder to be truly ready for the grass season.

**Q. Are you particularly disappointed that you haven't managed to show your best tennis here, we saw that you had a lot of support from the audience, specifically as regards to the other Grand Slams here for you?**

ONS JABEUR: Yes, well, show my best tennis, it's a little bit harsh, but I tried. I think, generally speaking, I played very well in this tournament.

It was really lovely to see the Tunisians in the crowd because I know that there weren't any tickets, and it was terrible to see the empty stadium. There were a lot of Tunisians who wanted to come and see me play.

But I really gave it my all. I gave everything I could for this tournament, and I'm trying to be 100% ready. If somebody had told me at the beginning of the tournament, Do you think you'll be playing the quarterfinals here, I would have said, Maybe, I don't know.

**Q. Does it feel good to be in the skin of an outsider? Were you hiding your game? I'm thinking about Wimbledon last year. Mentally is it a good position to be in the position of outsider?**

ONS JABEUR: Well, actually, I adapt too much. I try to accept my position. I saw Alcaraz's coach saying you have to accept that you are in the position of being a favorite here in Roland Garros, so I accept any position here, be it favorite or not.

That is part of the game. It is part of everything. Just in the way that we accept the positions that we play in during the matches, I have to accept everything and learn to do this. This is what I've been trying to do in this tournament.

**Q. This quarterfinal is your best result here. Will you be able to build trust upon this result for the next**

**Roland Garros and for the next Olympic Games?**

ONS JABEUR: Yes, obviously. I love Roland Garros. I love being here.

I am going to take this year as a very positive year here in Roland Garros and try to prepare for the end of the season because now we have to switch our mindset to grass. It's a long season, and I'm really going to try and work on my game to try and be ready for next year.

**Q. We know that you're dreaming of winning the tournament here. Now you're going to grass season. Which surface do you prefer? Which surface is your game the most effective?**

ONS JABEUR: Well, because I lost today I'm going to say grass. I prefer playing on grass with my style and the changing rhythms. I can hurt a lot of other players more than here in Roland Garros, which is more physical.

It's not that I don't like the clay court, but I really have fun on grass, although I do love clay courts.

**Q. Talking about Beatriz, apparently you know her well. We don't know her very well. Can you tell us about her, about her personality, her background. Do you think that she's really going to stay up there in the top 10, top 15?**

ONS JABEUR: She's a player who plays really well. A left-hander who really hurts her opponents. I know that she has a winning spirit.

We've known each other for quite a long time, and I knew that she played very good balls, and she just had to tweak a few things. Since she's done this, she's really come up, and she's had some excellent results, especially on grass.

She played really well last year. I think in Toronto also she played very well. It's somebody who is honest, who is a really good person off the court, and I think that we can really trust her.

We saw it today. There was a trace that she had kind of wiped out, but she said, No, it's in. I don't think that many players have Maia's personality.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports