

HSBC Championships

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Queens Club

Jack Draper

Press Conference



HSBC

CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Queen's Club

J. DRAPER/A. Popyrin

3-6, 6-2, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: We will go straight to questions.

Q. Well played, Jack. Great fight. You obviously pride yourself on your toughness and how tough you are. You have talked about that a lot. How much do you think it's something you have always had, and how much is it something you have acquired over the years, particularly with your success over the past few years?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, definitely. I have always been a really good competitor. That's something I pride myself on is trying my absolute best for every point whenever I play. I think that comes from when I was younger. I think I have an older brother that helps that. I was lucky enough to have coaches who made me very competitive, as well.

I played up, as well, so I was always quite small, and I had to fight hard for every point if I wanted to make any headway in the match.

I think I have always had that, and I think that's one of my biggest strengths, to be honest. Especially on a day like today where I wasn't my best, wasn't feeling my best, but I came through and I gave myself another chance.

Q. At 5-All in the tiebreak you changed your racquets after the missed return. Quite a big time to do it, but obviously it seemed to work.

JACK DRAPER: Yeah. I had one racquet in my bag which was a bit of a higher tension than the others. I think on the 5-4 point, there had been quite a lot of points during the match where the ball just flew off my racquet a little bit.

I thought, it's 5-All in the tiebreak, give myself a chance on his serve, if I go up in the tension, let's see what happens. I managed to chip one and it went pretty close to the line and won the point. I played two pretty good points. I said to my coach after the match, Let's go with that tension from now on (smiling).

Q. Obviously a strong finish. You went ace, ace on the last two serves and hit that backhand winner. Do players talk to the coaches about finding those shots that hit the line on big points, or is it just something you kind of pick up through just repetition and being out there competing day in, day out?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I mean, I wasn't really thinking a bit too much. I knew I had to be brave in those moments, especially on these courts. Feels very fast out there.

Obviously still adapting from the clay. You know, I feel like the last couple of matches, I've missed quite a lot of shots where I just haven't committed to the ball.

Yeah, in those last few points, I really committed, especially on that backhand line, and that paid off. I think, yeah, I guess it's not really something that I really speak about with Trots. If I could, I'd try and do that every point, but it doesn't work like that.

I think I'm really proud of the way that I finished the match today. I think that will give me confidence, you know, moving on, tomorrow having a day off, training on the grass again, and just hopefully with time get more better and more comfortable.

Q. How would you assess your grass court level at the moment over the first two matches? How much do you feel like today's win was important, not just for progressing but for the fact you're going to get at least one extra match now before Wimbledon on the grass?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, to be honest, I don't think I have been that great. You know, I think I have competed really hard. I think my serve's been pretty good.

But I think off the ground I have not been that clean. I think my decision-making could be a lot better. I know it's easy to say. I have just beaten a guy ranked 20 in the world. It was a good match, good competing, but the tennis I know I can play and the tennis that's got me to the position I'm in, I think there is still a lot of improvement to come.

My goal is to peak at Wimbledon, you know. I'm going to give myself a chance each day to get better. I've been



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hitting the ball better and better in practice each time, but sometimes that doesn't necessarily adjust to the match court straightaway.

So hopefully more tennis this week, a day off tomorrow, I can start to show better tennis out there and be a bit cleaner.

Q. You thanked the crowd after the match. How important were they to get you over the line?

JACK DRAPER: Big time, yeah. I thought today especially, you know, I needed it. I think in the first set I was pretty flat. I played a really poor game.

You know, it was tough. He was serving cannons, and I felt quite low on my energy. I have not been feeling so good. I think I really got myself going. I think the crowd picked up on that. I think maybe the crowd picked up on the fact that I needed that energy. And definitely I felt that in the second and third set. Started to feel like they were behind me. In the tiebreak also.

Yeah, seemed like they were quite worn out by it, because it's really not many people left in the stadium now. I appreciate all their support, and it definitely was a big factor in why I was able to get over the line today.

Q. You mentioned your family on court, as well. We could hear your granddad cheering you on every point. How much does it mean to have that extended family when they're able to come to the UK events, especially given it's your first British grass season as a top, top player?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, so important. For me, family is the most important thing in the world to me. To have them here, I think in certain moments, I think to myself, like, you know, I can't lose in front of my granddad, do you know what I mean?

I think they helped me just to fight through every point. He's with me. They're living it with me every point. You know, I think that helps me to fight even harder. You know, I definitely don't want to lose in front of them.

I always give it my all, and it's nice to have that support.

Q. Taylor Fritz lost yesterday to Moutet. And I think it means if you win your next match, you will be fourth seed at Wimbledon. How much of a motivator is that for you to play well with the idea of not having to face the likes of Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner at Wimbledon until the semifinals?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, it's obviously a big thing. I think it would definitely help. But at the same time, I don't think I will think about that at all.

You know, anything that I have sort of done in tennis or achieved, I have never really thought about it. I've just kept on going. I focus on what's important to me, what I can control. I can't control if I go out there on Friday and play a great match. I can't control who I'm playing, can't control any of those things, but I can control what I do between now and the match, and I'll prepare the best I can.

I'll give myself the best opportunity to hopefully do that. And of course if I'm in that position, you know, it helps going to Wimbledon. Yeah, we'll see.

Q. You have talked about feeling physically strong, and you're looking pretty strong these days. I see you wearing the sleeveless, as well. You must be feeling yourself a bit. Curious how much of a priority has it been to be more physically strong? You have talked about Matt Little. How has he changed your fitness, and how differently are you working in the gym compared to before?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I have always worked really hard off the court. I think, you know, it's helped me play more consistently on the tour. And I think those matches at the start of the year in Australia really helped me to get over that hurdle.

I have felt better and better every Grand Slam I have played. You know, before, I felt like my energy wasn't that strong, and I felt like I looked like a bit of a Ferrari but I was a bit of a Toyota, like broke down quite easy.

Now I'm starting to feel generally stronger and confident in myself. The sleeveless, yeah, I have worked out a couple of times, but that's just because Nike gave me a couple of sleeveless shirts, so I just pulled them out. It's not to please anyone. But I appreciate you saying I look good. Cheers, Mate. (Smiling.)

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