

HSBC Championships

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Queens Club

Jacob Fearnley

Press Conference



HSBC

CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Queen's Club

J. FEARNLEY/C. Moutet

6-3, 2-6, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Two wins today. Tell us how you're feeling right now.

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, I feel good. Obviously a bit tired, but yeah, happy with how the day has gone.

Yeah, I thought I played good at times. Yeah, happy to get through with two wins.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Well played. On court, you talked about playing more aggressive in the final set and imposing your game. Over the past year, what's it been like trying to find the balance between playing your aggressive game but not overplaying, if that makes sense?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, no, I think I'm still kind of managing that as best I can. I think it's finding the balance between making too many errors and making balls, so not being too passive. I think still at times I struggle a little bit. I like to play aggressive. I like to go for my shots.

So I'm aware that maybe a few more mistakes will come from that. So I don't really think about it too much. If the shot's there to hit, I'll hit it. If it's not, I might still hit it but I might not. It really just depends on, yeah, on kind of how I'm feeling that day.

If my shots feel good, I'll go for everything. If they don't, then maybe I'll be a little bit more smart about how I'm playing.

Q. Jack always speaks very highly of you, and I wonder if you could talk a bit about your relationship and how he'll handle being "the" guy this year post Andy Murray?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, we get on very well. It's obviously sometimes difficult, because around tournaments it's strictly business, you know, and there is not a whole lot of time to socialize.

But outside of tournaments, yeah, we get on great. I have known him since I was maybe 10 years old. It's really cool to kind of be playing these tournaments together after so long.

We went our different paths, but to be playing these tournaments, it's really cool. I mean, yeah, I think he'll be fine. I think the way he's played all year, I mean, he's been so consistent. It's not like he's just had one big win and that's been it. He's consistently making deep runs in every tournament, which shows me and I think it shows everyone else that he's more than ready to take over that role of Andy Murray and be at the top of the game for a very long time. And he deserves it, for sure.

Q. There was a lot going on with the other side of the net during the third set. How difficult was it to keep your cool when he was talking to the umpire with time violations and et cetera?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, no, I mean, it can be tricky, but I played Corentin before, and yeah, I kind of know that's what he's going to do. He's going to get angry. He's going to talk to the ref.

So when he was doing it, it wasn't really a surprise. Yeah, I just expected it. And once it happened, I'd already kind of prepared for it and I could just move on from there.

And also, it helps that I was kind of up in the score. Maybe if it was a little bit closer, it would have been a bit different.

Q. How important is it for you that these milestones, quarterfinals and stuff, are coming on your home turf and the lead-up to Wimbledon?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, I mean, I think it's good. I think it's always good to have British guys doing well before Wimbledon. I think it increases the hype and gives the fans something to watch and look forward to.

Obviously, yeah, what Jack's doing, being No. 4 in the world, I think, it's exciting, you know, and obviously there's myself, Cam, a lot of great wildcards that have been named.



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I think British tennis is in a good position, and it's great that it's peaking right before Wimbledon.

Q. How do you think your time playing collegiate tennis has prepared you for conditions like today and moving forward?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, I mean, I think my collegiate experience helped just my tennis, full stop. I don't think it necessarily just helped today because of the way Corentin was acting sometimes. I just think that going to college tennis was the best thing for me.

I definitely wasn't ready to play professional, and I maybe only peaked in my last two years in college. Yeah, I think it set me up in the best way possible to play on the tour, to play on big courts.

Yeah, it just gave me the confidence and the maturity that I needed really to play on the tour. Before college, I just wasn't ready for that.

Q. Jacob, your thoughts tomorrow on Jiri Lehecka.

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, I have never played him. Just in the doubles right here. But, yeah, he's a great player. He's been consistently top 30 for the last few years.

Yeah, I know it's going to be a tough match. He plays aggressive, hits the ball big, and yeah, I know it's going to be a fight.

But hopefully I can recover and then prepare the best that I can for the match, because yeah, I'm looking forward to having another match on that court against him.

Q. It's quite unusual to know who you're playing in the singles and then play them in the doubles before you play them in the singles. Have you had that in college tennis before? What could you know about Jiri's game this evening that would stand you in good stead for tomorrow?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, I mean, I have done it before, play singles and play doubles. It feels a little bit more difficult in these kind of events, just because it's emotional, a little bit more draining just dealing with all the fans, and kind of the moment on the court.

It feels a little bit bigger, so sometimes it is difficult. Like today, before the match, I definitely wasn't feeling great, but once I stepped out on court, I was fine. But yeah, no, it was fine.

Q. At some point this year, I think you talked about how coming up to the ATP Tour you had to almost accept you might win less than on the Challenger

Tour.

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah.

Q. What's that been like, wrapping your head around winning less than when you were making finals every week but still your ranking rising steadily? How satisfying is it to have a breakthrough like this and to reach a pro tour quarterfinal?

JACOB FEARNLEY: Yeah, I knew that I wanted to challenge myself. I mean, when I was between 75 and 100, I could have still played challengers, but I don't think that was the best for my development.

Yeah, I mean, it's a losing sport. You know, you can't win every week. And putting myself in positions to play on big courts against big players, that's why I play the sport, you know, and I feel like I can learn so much more from that than -- not that the Challenger Tour is weak, but obviously this is where all the players are trying to get to.

Yeah, I was probably going to have to lose a little bit more along the way, which I have. I think I already lost more than I did last year by quite a bit and won a lot less matches. So, yeah, it was to be expected.

Yeah, try and learn from it. Doesn't make the losses any easier, but there is always next week, and I'm just loving playing tennis.

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