

# US OPEN

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New York, New York, USA

## Jack Draper

Press Conference

J. DRAPER/R. Albot

6-1, 6-4, 6-3

**THE MODERATOR:** Questions.

**Q. (Question regarding the shoulder injury.)**

**JACK DRAPER:** It's been a sort of tough couple of months. When I was in Paris I think after I came to press, I thought it would be sort of a short-term thing. I turned into a long time and I'm sort of still doing all the rehab for it, making sure that it's okay.

There was maybe a possibility after Winston-Salem that I might not be able to play this tournament, but looked after it really well, taking it day by day. Today I didn't feel it at all so I was very, very happy, yeah.

**Q. Your serve speed seemed to be pretty level throughout the match. Presumably you forgot about it or were you consciously trying to manage it?**

**JACK DRAPER:** Yeah, I mean, I'm not going after it 100%. I'm sort of trying to hit my spots and use my slices and try and get more consistency on my first serve.

Luckily I've got quite a big serve so I can still hit it sort of 125 I think a few times. I looked at the speed and it was still pretty high.

I didn't think about it too much, but I knew not to maybe go full throttle with my arm, yeah.

**Q. Was it a relief to win a match like that, given what you've been through the last few months?**

**JACK DRAPER:** Yeah, I mean, I think it's been a really difficult year for me, to be honest. Last year when I was here, I had a lot of matches under my belt. I had an amazing year last year, felt very confident.

This year I've barely competed really. It's been an extremely mentally challenging kind of year. My ranking



has dropped a fair bit. I just haven't gotten that match exposure.

With all the training I've done, I've had a lot of opportunity to work on my body and work on my game. I can honestly say that 12 months down the line I do believe I'm a better tennis player. I believe I'm mentally better than I was here last year. I felt very anxious about playing, how to deal with it, whereas this year I feel more complete.

I'm hoping I can use this win and keep moving forward.

**Q. You played so well here last year. Did that help coming back here? How careful are you going to be of your rehab tomorrow? Ice bath?**

**JACK DRAPER:** Not too long in the ice bath.

No, just a light hit tomorrow and then prepare for the next day and make sure I recover well. Obviously last year I played really well here. I felt like today I played really well, too.

Got to keep on working for each point. Whoever I play next will be a really tough opponent again. Look forward to it. Hopefully I can play better than I did today.

**Q. You said it's been mentally challenging the last 12 months. What sort of coping mechanisms have you used over the past 12 months to press on mentally?**

**JACK DRAPER:** I think just I'm still young, I'm still learning about things, what kind of makes me happy off the court. I spent so much time not competing, I've had to figure out what to do in my time away from the tennis court.

I actually moved house. I moved out to an apartment with Paul Jubb, who is another British player. At the same time he's been injured as well. He really hurt his ankle at the start of the year. We've sort of been getting through the process together, I suppose.

But even with the injury I had after the French Open, I was straight back to training. I didn't take any time off. I really wanted to just get my body right and keep on improving. I know I haven't been in the best place, so I've kept on trying to work out with my team. I'm hoping that all that work that I've put will be in the bank.



**Q. By the time you were playing, sort of British players were on a bit of a roll. Does that help at all or is that completely irrelevant? Do you even think about it? Is it of any advantage or disadvantage?**

**JACK DRAPER:** What, here?

**Q. Yes.**

**JACK DRAPER:** I didn't know. I knew that Cam won. I think Andy was playing when I was playing. Dan. I knew a couple of the girls won yesterday. I was just trying to do all the right things for my shoulder and go out and play 100% today.

But, no, definitely having other Brits do well in the draw's amazing for British tennis. You always say it, but we can all push each other to be better. I don't think there should be any difference. Seeing other players do well that I'm training with on a daily basis makes me really happy because I see what they're going through, their journey. I wish them all the best and hopefully we can all support each other moving forward in big tournaments like this.

**Q. You obviously are a big server. There are a lot of big servers that struggle with returning. You're a good returner. How has that shot developed for you over the years, what you're trying to do on return of serve? Today you were standing back quite a bit.**

**JACK DRAPER:** Yeah, I mean, I felt good on my return. I've kind of, through not playing for a while, the last couple of weeks when I first came back onto the court, I wasn't quite splitting together. I was doing like the long jump when they were playing with their first serves. I've been really trying to work on my split, how sharp I am off the return.

Yeah, when I feel like I've got a few matches under my belt, when I see the ball well and stuff, I feel like I'm able to get quite a lot of returns back in court.

Staying in those return games is really important because if you have a big serve, you're putting pressure through easy service games, when you get those returns back in court, it's important to keep on making them play.

**Q. You're the youngest of all the Brits here. What is the dynamic amongst you all? Do they tease you because you're younger? Do you get on well with everybody?**

**JACK DRAPER:** Yeah, I mean, I've always got on well with Cam, Andy, Dan. They all give me a bit of gyp here

and there. I went to Davis Cup in Colombia this year, that was great to get to know especially Cam and Dan better.

Don't speak to them loads because everyone here is in their own sort of zone with teams and stuff. We're doing the best to do as well as we can in the tournament.

But no doubt those guys have been incredible role models for me and good support. When I'm around, they make me feel comfortable, especially on the tour, because you're in the locker rooms and you don't know many people. As a young guy, feeling welcome is obviously quite nice.

It's nice to be around great players like them. They're still doing amazingly well. I'm just very lucky to have them, I suppose.

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