

# US OPEN

Tuesday, August 29, 2023

New York, New York, USA

## John Isner

### Press Conference

J. ISNER/F. Diaz Acosta

6-4, 6-3, 7-6

**THE MODERATOR:** John, three sets, a little over two and a half hours. Assess your performance.

**JOHN ISNER:** Actually very happy with how I played. Very happy it didn't go into a fourth set. Three-set match, two and a half hours, that's pretty long.

Sneaky kind of hot and humid here this week so far. Just sweating a lot. The conditions aren't that easy. I mean, I saw Ons struggling with it a little bit on that court. But I had the better time to play when it was full of shade.

As big as I am, you sweat a lot, it takes a lot out of you. I'm very happy to be through in three sets.

**THE MODERATOR:** Questions, please.

**Q. Your first time playing a possible last match. What were the emotions like?**

**JOHN ISNER:** Yeah, I mean, it's a little bit emotional. I think in a sense it's helping me free up a little bit. If I didn't win that match, it would be tough. I'm very resolute in my decision to retire. There's no doubts about that.

I've just got to try to empty the bucket here. One of the reasons I'm retiring is because my body is really sort of feeling it. I know why right now, too. It's not like it was five, six, 10, 12 years ago, so...

But still alive. Got a lot of adrenaline keeping me going. We'll see what I can do.

**Q. This is a crowd that's desperate to see an American man make a run. Have you let it creep into your mind at all how cool it would be to go on a run, go out on a high note?**

**JOHN ISNER:** Yeah, that would be amazing. I typically play better after I win my first match. The first one



is the hard one for me. You kind of come into a tournament on a little bit of a losing streak, haven't played much, you're only practicing. The first one is the hard one.

If I can get my body feeling pretty good in two days, I think I would be tough to beat. I would love to keep this going, of course, as long as I can.

We'll see what comes of that. Right now I'm just one of the I don't know how many Americans are still left, but I'm sure there's a lot. I'm one of the bunch. Love to keep going.

**Q. You said you started thinking about it seriously around the French Open this year. Was there a singular moment where you knew for sure or did it start creeping along?**

**JOHN ISNER:** That's a great question.

My plan at the beginning of the year was not to retire. Truthfully, I wanted to play this sport for as long as I can, but I wanted to play it at a high level.

My ranking is really bad right now. I haven't ranked this low since I came on tour. It's been 17 years of amazing consistency. Just trying to build my ranking back up with how my body's feeling didn't seem too appetizing for me.

To answer your question, yeah, probably maybe after the French. After Wimbledon I think that confirmed that as well. I didn't play a great match there. It's fine. I mean, I've had an amazing run, so...

I wasn't going to announce it then. I knew probably after Wimbledon that I wanted this to be my last tournament, and here we are.

**Q. How did it feel when you in your mind finally decided?**

**JOHN ISNER:** It's tough. When you're in the midst of your career, you don't think about this ever happening, but you know it will. Eventually every player is going to retire. 10 years from now it could be Taylor and Frances playing their last match here. Of course they're not thinking about that, but it is going to happen.

It has been pretty emotional. Pretty emotional on the court



at the end. I'm very glad I won. I think I would have been a bigger mess had I lost.

To have so many friends and family, especially my wife, four kids getting on court with me, you can't replicate that. It's just extremely special. Those are moments I will always remember and will have amazing footage from that.

That's what it's all about for me right now, trying to create moments. I'm not trying to prove anything at this stage in my career. I want to create some moments. I thought I had a pretty good one out there after the match today.

**Q. How do you feel about playing Michael tomorrow after the day he had?**

**JOHN ISNER:** Thursday.

**Q. Oh, Thursday.**

**JOHN ISNER:** Yeah, well, first and foremost, I'm a big fan of Michael. He's a great guy. He's sort of come into his own this year. I think this is the best year he's had ever. It's great to see.

He battled some injuries. I think he had some kind of surgery this year, but he kept that momentum going. Played well in Australia. Had a very comprehensive win today.

Never played him before. Playing another American at the US Open should make for a very cool atmosphere. Just looking forward to the match. I believe I can win, for sure. He believes he can win, so we'll see who the better man is.

**Q. You're not a typical big ego sort of guy, but do you think about your impact on the sport? You were the U.S. top guy for a lot of weeks, months, years. You led to rules being changed. Do you ever think about having left a mark on this sport?**

**JOHN ISNER:** I haven't put too much thought into that.

I do take or did take pride in being the top-ranked American for as many years as I was. At the same time I also realized it wasn't the 1990s where America had five guys in the top 10. There were certainly times when I was the only person playing Madrid and Rome, the only American there, for a couple years. That was sort of weird for me.

But, yeah, what my legacy is, I'm not sure. I just want to be remembered most importantly from my colleagues as a guy that I'm pretty easy to get along with off the court. I think I've had great relationships with the guys before me,

my contemporaries on tour like Stevie, Sam and Jack, then the young guys. I feel like I get along with all of them.

I'm always going to be in their corner when I'm long gone. I will be willing to lend a helping hand if anyone ever wants that, too. If it's advice, it's just advice.

I want my legacy to be someone that was pretty affable and pretty easy to get along with.

**Q. Once you're gone they can get rid of the...**

**JOHN ISNER:** If they did that, if they just reverted back to the old ways when I'm gone, then you can 100% pin that one me. Probably 92% on me, but it would be 100%, yeah.

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