

US OPEN

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New York, New York, USA

Jelena Ostapenko

Press Conference

J. OSTAPENKO/B. Pera

4-6, 6-3, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Jelena, assess your performance today.

JELENA OSTAPENKO: Yeah, I mean, it was not an easy match. She played really well. It's never easy to play in the third round. Everybody wants to win.

But even some games I didn't play my best, but I managed to win. I think that's one of the most important things.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Through your first two matches, where do you see your game going into the next round? A few fights here, but scrapping through. Where do you see it?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: Yeah, I feel like, as I said before, playing against myself a little bit because especially the second match I was leading, so, like, 6-3, 5-2 obviously. But the Grand Slam is different tournament and everybody wants to win, so it's maybe a bit more difficult.

Yeah, and also today, like, I had chances in the first set. I think I was 2-0 up with a break, then I was rushing here and there. I think maybe matches like this give you more confidence.

Q. In terms of dealing with just the chaos of New York sometimes, the US Open, noise, movement, are you finding that a distraction while you play through the first three rounds or are you starting to zone in and focus?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: I mean, I didn't really go, like, out much here in New York.

Q. On court, the stadium...

JELENA OSTAPENKO: Yeah, I mean, it's a special atmosphere. It's nice here to play. A lot of fans always. I



hear my name. Yeah, today there was a little bit crazy situation, yeah, when a fan was shouting during the serves, which he's not supposed to do.

But, yeah, it happens in tennis, unfortunately, even fans know that you are not allowed to speak during first and second serve, they do this maybe on purpose, I don't know.

Q. Does it matter to you what kind of form you have in the hard court season coming into the slam or are you able to erase it all and start fresh?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: I mean, it's good to get some wins and to play some matches before a Grand Slam, but also to not play too much because sometimes you play well in the tournaments before, and then when you come you are a little bit exhausted because still winning another tournament, like other tournaments, it also takes a lot of energy, even they're not very big tournaments.

Still every match day takes more energy than just a normal practice day.

Q. So you have a little more energy to start this tournament?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: I mean, yeah, I had really good practice week in the Hamptons. It was very quiet there, yeah, very nice place, especially before US Open.

Q. That is your normal place?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: For five years, yes, we go there before the US Open.

Q. Court 17 can be a crazy court. Some players smelled weed in there. When did it happen with this fan yelling out the way he did? When did he get removed?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: With the weed, it's a normal thing. Every match I smell it. It's not a surprise they were complaining about.

But, yeah, this fan, I was leading 4-1 in the third set, and then suddenly I served a serve and he started to shout like crazy. Yeah, not like one or two words, I think two



sentences in a row. Of course, the chair umpire told him to be quiet.

Q. In that situation where Bianca Andreescu told a fan to shut up when he was yelling, were you almost wanting to do the same thing?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: I mean, he just left after the chair umpire told him something, so it was like go, go.

Q. You're one of the players that has the first-strike ability against Iga that makes Iga feel uncomfortable. Is that the process where you're going to have to have this match in the fourth round to do the things you've done in the past that you defeated her to do it once more?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: Yeah, I'm just going to play my game and focus more on myself. For sure it's going to be a difficult match. On the other hand I have nothing to lose and I'm already in the fourth round. I think it's a good achievement, especially at the end of the year. I'm just going to play my best.

Q. Facing Iga, what is the challenge for you? Where her game is now, what do you see as being the biggest challenge?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: I mean, she's playing quite consistent. She's winning a lot of matches. It's also not easy to be No. 1 because everybody obviously wants to beat you. I probably will take advantage of that.

Q. Before you won Roland Garros, what did you think it took to win a Grand Slam? After you won Roland Garros and did it, were you right or were you wrong? In other words, what you thought you needed to do, did it turn out to be true?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: At that age I didn't think much. I was just playing. The older you get, the more you think.

Yeah, I just played and I didn't really think much, so...
Yeah, as I said, now I wish I can be like this now. I'm trying to work on that because the less thoughts you have when you play, the better it is.

Q. You're one of the more entertaining personalities on tour with Ons and Dasha. Is there a personality on tour that entertains you that you think fans should be talking about more?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: It's a hard question. I mean, there are a few - how you say - funny girls. I mean, Ons is joking a lot all the time, so she's a funny girl, too. Yeah,

there are a few girls.

Q. You talk about overthinking. Would you say a matchup against Iga is going to be an advantage to you because she has to do the thinking, you're the one that's not expected to win so you can go there and maybe create a surprise?

JELENA OSTAPENKO: I mean, I think it's, of course, easier to play when you are not the favorite because, especially these three matches that I played, I was the favorite. You have a little bit more extra pressure because you understand that everybody expects you to win.

So maybe that's why it was little bit like a roller coaster. But I think now I can play free because it's great to be in the fourth round, yeah, just enjoy it.

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