

US OPEN

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Jack Draper

Press Conference

J. DRAPER/M. Mmoh

6-4, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Four sets, a little over three hours. You move on now. Assess your performance this afternoon.

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, Michael is someone who has been in form this summer. He's beat a few top-10 players, I think. He's playing good tennis. I knew it would be a tough match today. I knew it would be a battle. Quite a long match.

I was proud of the way I went out there. I don't think I played my best tennis necessarily, but, I mean, I guess that's what tennis is about, trying to get over the line when you're not quite at your best.

But like I said, he made it really difficult for me. He came out firing in the third set, and luckily, you know, I took my chance in the fourth. I'm glad with the win.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. I think you said you were, like, 70/30 whether you were even going to play this tournament. Now that you're a week into it, how is your body holding up? Also, at what point do you stop being sort of just happy to be here, happy to be winning matches, and start thinking about, you know, I could be on the verge of doing something really special here?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I mean, when I am playing, I'm not here just to, you know, be here and be happy to play. Like, I'm a competitor when I get into the matches. I want to win everything.

Definitely at the start of the week, there was real concern about my body and with the year I've had whether I'd be able to, you know, to play one match. Obviously best-of-five sets, so it's completely different to what a three-set match even holds.



It was difficult. Like I said yesterday in the press, you know, I got told I had a small tear in my shoulder at the end of last week, and then we didn't know if it was related to the previous injury that I'd had, which was quite serious.

But it turned out it wasn't. It was in a different place. You know, probably likely to do with my shoulder in the place that I had the injury. But, you know, we just wanted to stay fit this trip. That was kind of the goal, you know, to get consistent competition in, because that's just something I haven't had.

To come here this week and to play the way I have and to compete the way I have and for my body to hold up has been, it's been pretty special for me, really.

Q. Given the circumstances coming in here and the determination you had, to reach the fourth round of a Grand Slam, is that the best win of your career, most satisfying?

JACK DRAPER: I mean, yeah, I don't think it's, like, almost the best tennis I have had but certainly mentally and physically. I've never won a four-set match before. You know, even though I've been top 50 in the world, I've never -- you know, I haven't had much Grand Slam exposure. In the Grand Slams I've been in, I had the No. 1 seed twice out of four times I played before the French Open, so I've had tough draws and I've maybe not been able to sort of progress as much in the tournament as I'd like.

You know, for my body to be the way it was today, I'm very proud of myself, and that's a testament to the work I've put in as well. It's not been easy for me the last sort of year or two with the injury struggles I've had. I come into each tournament thinking, Oh, am I going to hold up this week? Five sets is a bit different, and to do it at this level, I'm very pleased with myself.

Q. Celebration at the end, a bit Titanic vibe. What was that all about?

JACK DRAPER: I don't know. You're obviously just very pleased to get over the line. I think there was a point when, in the first game of the fourth set where we played, like, a really long point. I gave my coach a bit of a death stare after I lost the point, and I think I sort of did the same



when I won the match.

No, I don't know what's going through my head at that moment. I'm obviously just extremely, extremely happy and proud of myself to get over the line.

Q. Don't know yet who you're going to play. Give us your thoughts on each possible opponent.

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, Rinderknech -- I think that's how you say his name -- I think he's one of the best French players. I played him at the end of last year in Paris. You can expect a really big game, big serve, powerful groundstrokes. Pretty mentally dialed in a lot of the time. You know, top-100 player.

Obviously Rublev, he's been top 10 for many years, having great results, you know, consistently doing well in the slams and won his first 1000 this year.

Both incredible players. You know, anyone who you play in the fourth round, I suppose they've won three matches and they're playing good tennis and feeling good out here. Be really difficult either way.

Q. You mentioned you hadn't won a four-set match before. Wondering, after he won the third set, what was going through your head and how did you kind of regroup? The momentum can swing, shift quickly in five-set matches. How were you feeling?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, the momentum definitely switches a lot. The first two sets I felt like I was in control. Maybe he was struggling a little bit physically after such a long match against John Isner.

You know, I took a break at the end of the second set which in hindsight maybe I shouldn't have done, because, you know, that gives a bit of time for him to regroup and stuff. That's probably what, like, seven minutes or eight minutes' break. He came out firing. In all fairness, he started serving really well, used the crowd quite a lot. You know, he was a different player from the start of the third set.

I knew I had to just stay in the moment, stay calm, and know that I'm still two sets to one up and know he's going to have to play two strong sets to beat me still.

Q. What does a regular day look like for you when you were rehabbing and going through that process?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I mean, I'd wake up pretty early. I'd drive in with Paul, my roommate who was also injured. We'd just be all day at the NTC doing two fitness sessions

a day. All the rehab I needed to do, probably not seeing much progress because it was quite a serious injury, but trying to really work hard on all the other areas.

I think that's a testament today, you know. I haven't had any, like I said, four-set matches where I've come through. I think the last couple of four-set matches I played against Rafa I was cramping after two sets, and also de Minaur at Wimbledon I was cramping a lot.

Today is a real confidence booster for my body, for sure.

Q. I was wondering how does it feel, especially as you've just talked about, getting through your injuries and being able to last in four sets, especially because you had to retire in the same round last year?

JACK DRAPER: What was the question?

Q. How does it feel now that you're into the fourth round after you had to retire in the third round same time last year?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I was thinking that on the court today, you know, it's like "Groundhog Day" out there. I think it was exactly one year on. Last year I was playing Khachanov, and I felt like when I was playing him I was so tired. You know, I was sort of carrying a bit of an injury. You know, I'm so proud of the work that I've put in the last year.

Even though I haven't been able to compete too much, you know, I generally think I'm a much better player and better all-around athlete, as well. To come here a year on, despite maybe my ranking having dropped a fair bit because of the injuries and not being able to be on the same confidence level that I was last year, you know, I'm incredibly proud of that and hopefully I can keep going this week.

Q. You're someone that can hit a serve well into the 130s. So the fact that you're still getting your serve power back and you're still able to finish points and be aggressive, how much even more optimism for you do you carry onto that as well as who's your favorite Premier League football team, by chance?

JACK DRAPER: Two very different questions there. Yeah, like, my short arm is still gaining that confidence. I wouldn't say I think in my last couple of rounds my first-serve percentage has been that great.

I'm still trying to sort of figure out, you know, how I'm hitting my spots and using my sliders out on the courts and not trying to go too big on it.

My favorite Premier League football team is Man United.
Are they playing this weekend? Tomorrow?

Q. You have been happy with the Ten Hag era so far?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I think it's a tough job, obviously. Like, Man U, they have had a rough few years, but hopefully they can get a bit of form going this year and I will be watching tomorrow night. That's for sure.

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