

US OPEN

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New York, New York, USA

Ons Jabeur

Press Conference



Q. ZHENG/O. Jabeur

6-2, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Ons, not the result that you wanted, obviously. You've had a little while to reflect. Give us a little idea of your overview of the match.

ONS JABEUR: I was in anti-doping, not a few minutes to reflect (smiling).

Yeah, I mean, she's a great player. It was a tough match. Probably she played a good game. Not my day today. But I'm grateful for this tournament.

Being in the fourth round, just a bonus. I wasn't expecting to even play at the beginning, so...

We'll get back to work and hopefully we'll improve more for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. In the 5-2 game, she got tight. Can you talk about the crowd support and how they embrace you here.

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, it's always special to play against amazing crowd. They support me no matter what. That's actually what I need as an athlete, as a player. That's tennis. You lose, you win.

Yeah, I'm very grateful for their support. I just tried to get back to the game, but I don't think I can do anything about it. Hopefully we'll come back next year stronger and just get the support from this incredible crowd.

Q. Was it the rhythm in the rallies with her, she's so athletic, also you trying to handle your serve? Is that what you felt was the most difficult for you today?

ONS JABEUR: I think there is couple of things. Her game is definitely different from the other players that I played. She has more spin. Maybe I didn't get that enough rhythm.

But, yeah, her ball is kind of heavy, so that was a little bit difficult for me. Obviously, if you don't feel your shots, that doesn't help much.

I tried to stay in, and every time she showed that she's there. Yeah, just a great game for her. Wish her all the best for the next matches.

Q. In terms of what you take away from the US Open, how difficult was this time for you in New York having to manage what you managed and what is the lesson you take?

ONS JABEUR: I think no matter what the tournament is, you always take a great lesson.

For me, I think I discovered something in me that it could help me for the rest of the season and help me for the rest of my career.

It's managing these conditions always help. I know that I can dig deep. Sometimes maybe I'm tough with myself because today I couldn't, like, get that warrior mood on. It's just disappointing.

I know, like, I was trying my best. It is tough to accept that at certain times that it is what it is. Yeah, definitely that's the lesson I will take to San Diego, because that's where I'm going. We'll work more on some technical things, and hopefully I can improve more and be ready for the next few tournaments.

Q. It was a lot more humid and hotter today than some of your other matches. Do you think the weather had any impact on your playing today?

ONS JABEUR: Honestly, I didn't think about it. I know it's humid. I think the other night, too, it was a little bit humid, too.

Breathing-wise, it was good. As long as I'm breathing, I'm alive and I'm good (smiling).

Q. On the back of Iga, having to deal with Jelena's power last night, how you fought in this match, the depth of the WTA is really deep. Your thoughts of how the last few days have gone in regards to Aryna being the new No. 1, the dynamics of the tournament?



ONS JABEUR: Honestly, I'm so happy for Aryna. She deserved that. She's a very solid player. I've practiced with her. Big serve, big hitter. I think she deserves to be No. 1 spot. She deserved that for a long time ago.

Definitely the match yesterday was very interesting. Not so many people surprised because Jelena can play amazing, amazing games. That's the beauty of also WTA, to find different heroes. I honestly love how Aryna plays with her passion on the court. You can feel it.

Hopefully she will stay No. 1 until I get there and take her place (smiling).

Q. We all know how much support you get throughout the Middle East and the Arab world. How much of being hard on yourself is about that kind of pressure and expectation or how much of it is kind of internal?

ONS JABEUR: I think I'm trying to get used to it. I'm playing tennis for a long time now, having good seasons for I don't know how many seasons - you tell me. Definitely I want to make the Arab world, the African world, proud of me. I'm learning how to handle the expectations from them.

But, yeah, I honestly don't see any negative things in there, only positive. I cannot tell you guys the amount of messages that I receive either on social media or outside. When I go to any country, there is always Arab women or men that is supporting me. That means a lot to me and always pushes me to do better.

Q. How do you compare the baseline firepower from Zheng Qinwen and Sabalenka? They both have that forehand that's really heavy. Does she have the tools to beat Aryna, if they play?

ONS JABEUR: I mean, as someone that played both, I think Aryna hits harder. Speed-wise I think it's harder. I think she can do both. She can put a spin and she can hit hard. I'm not sure for Qinwen. She can put a lot of spin, for sure.

I think Aryna has much more experience. Her game, you always on your toes. She hits hard, that you always expect something big. She has, like, great hands. The serve is not shaky. If she wants to go for an ace, she would. I think her ball bounces higher on the second serve. Yeah, it's going to be interesting. But my money's on Aryna (smiling).

Q. When you have days like this in terms of trying to get your energy up or say you want to relax, try to

have fun, do you ever try to pump up the crowd to give you that support?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, I try to laugh and to have fun on the court. Sometimes it's tough because you think people will mistake it for not being concentrated or just not caring about the game. That's very tough to do the balance for me.

I know I was pretty tense today. Just tried to talk positive to myself. Yeah, if it's not your day, it is not your day. I really try to just think about positive things, to just get into the game.

I felt even in the rallies, I wasn't playing my game. But, yeah, definitely the crowd cheering always helps. Maybe should have done some of this. I don't know.

Q. Because of how much of a fan favorite you are, is that something you want to do in any matches?

ONS JABEUR: I did that before when I was playing my game. When you're off, you're just off in every sense of whatever, base, forehand, backhand.

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