

# US OPEN

Friday, September 8, 2023

New York, New York, USA

## Rajeev Ram

## Joe Salisbury

### Press Conference

RAM-SALISBURY/Bopanna-Ebden

2-6, 6-3, 6-4

**THE MODERATOR:** Gentlemen, congratulations. Continued success obviously, tremendous tournament. Championship pedigree. Down the first set. Take us to the changeover between Sets 1 and 2. Different tactics, different strategy, to get yourself into the area you needed to go to to win the match.

**RAJEEV RAM:** Yeah, I mean, honestly strategy didn't have that much to do with it, because, you know, we just needed to play better. We needed to be better.

But I think that's where experience has a lot of benefit. We actually were in the exact same position not last year but the year before, we lost the first set 6-2 and were completely getting outplayed. We knew we could do it because we did it before on that court, in that moment, in that match. So I, for one, I think called on that more than anything and had to remember what that felt like to try and turn it.

It was little by little, but we were able to do it as a team. I think we were both not thrilled with where we were obviously in the first set, but the fact that we had done it before in that same moment was a big deal.

**JOE SALISBURY:** Yeah, same thing. I mean, there wasn't anything tactical. It was just, yeah, we have been in that situation before. We knew, yeah, we weren't playing well. I think we both came out pretty nervous, bad start. Yeah, just bad first set.

But we knew that we were, yeah, just going to compete hard to try and stay in it and hopefully raise our level. Yeah, that's what we did.

I think we came through some tough games to stay in it at the start of the second set. I think they were kind of close to running away with it, and we just managed to stay in



there and gradually raised our level.

So, yeah, I think that's the thing that we're most happy about is that we have come through that not playing our best and we just fought, fought hard.

**THE MODERATOR:** Questions.

**Q. Joe, I couldn't quite tell for sure, because you had a towel over your head but it looked like there might be a tearful moment at the conclusion of the match. Was that the case?**

**JOE SALISBURY:** Yeah. Yeah, there was a little bit. There were a few tears. Yeah, I don't know why this one seems more emotional than the others. I don't think I have ever cried after any matches, especially not ones that we have won, even at the Grand Slams.

But yeah, there is something about being here, about, yeah, doing it again and I think doing it after the year we have had. We have had some struggles, had some pretty low times.

Yeah, to come here and do this together with all of our team, and just knowing that the work we've put in and just how hard we've had to, yeah, fight to be in this situation, I think it just, yeah, kind of just came out a bit at the end how, yeah, how special this is.

**Q. You have achieved something the Woodies have never done, the Bryan brothers have never done, doing a hat trick. Put into words what it means to you making history like this.**

**RAJEEV RAM:** I'm not sure I've got the words. I'm a bit of a tennis history junky, and to say that we have done something that no one's done they said since 1912, so for sure, not the Open Era. I really don't even know.

It will be something that I will carry with me forever and I'm incredibly proud of, and really humbled to say that we have done something in a sport that no one else has done.

**Q. It hadn't been a great year, one of those guys was ever saying you guys maybe were having a hard time winning three matches in a row seems like. Did the confidence ever go, and when you get here you say,**



**No, no, no, we're fine, we're a great US Open team and it's just going to be normal?**

**RAJEEV RAM:** No, for sure it's not that. Confidence is something that can be a bit thin sometimes. It's on a razor's edge. But I think what I'm the most proud of is that we knew that was the case. We knew we were having a tough time. But we put in the work starting kind of after Wimbledon was over that, you know, this is the tournament that we know we can play well at, proven it before, and it wasn't going to happen by accident.

It was a lot of tough moments. You know, we still didn't even have that great of a summer. We lost three first rounds and we still had to work for it. It was building slowly match by match here though.

**Q. Joe, you have obviously gotten right back into form this fortnight. I guess there is no chance now of Davis Cup for you, is there? That's kind of settled, or is there still an open door that you have heard of possibly?**

**JOE SALISBURY:** No, don't think so. I think, yeah, the team's set. I think, yeah, I won't be in it this time, which, yeah, it's obviously disappointing. Always want to play Davis Cup if I can. Hopefully, yeah, hopefully I'll be back in the team soon, but yeah, not this time.

**Q. Raj, you found out yesterday about this stat of 1912. Is that more pressure or more motivation?**

**RAJEEV RAM:** I mean, I think it's probably more motivation. I certainly didn't feel pressure out there today. There's plenty of self-inflicted pressure just because we're in the finals of the US Open, but I actually really didn't think about it that much before or after, during, or anything like that -- sorry, not after but before or during. It was just more after, now that I can reflect on it.

I am just incredibly proud of that, that we have that at the moment.

**Q. Why do you guys think it's in a hundred years, more than a hundred years since this has happened? Why is it so hard?**

**RAJEEV RAM:** It's frickin' difficult. A lot has to go right. You have to get really lucky. If you think about, we saved I think the first year in the quarters against Matt Ebden and another Aussie, Max Purcell, I think we saved four match points? We were on the brink of it. That Colombian served for the match against us in the semis last year.

Surely it wasn't just us being good that got us through that. We were in the moment, we did a lot of good things, we got

a little bit lucky. Yeah, there were so many matches that we could have maybe not won that we did.

**Q. Congratulations to you both. Joe, both Rohan and Matthew, they thought they really played well and it was so close. What does it mean to overcome how well they played particularly in the opening set? Rajeev, you had those great words for Rohan on the court, and he mentioned that moment where he wanted to give you guys a point where the ball hit his elbow only for the umpire to not give them the point. Just your thoughts about Rohan and his class there. Joe, you can go first on that one.**

**JOE SALISBURY:** Yeah, I mean, I think that's what we are most proud of. You're never going to play your best. You're not even going to play your best half the time. I think, yeah, we played a lot of good tennis this tournament. Today, especially the first set, was not very good. They played well. Obviously credit to them for not letting us play well.

But I think, yeah, getting through tough matches where you're not playing your best is, yeah, it's very difficult to do. I think that's what's got us to kind of where we are now and winning these tournaments, because there is no chance if we hadn't done that quite a few times, and I think that's what we're most proud of, because it's easy when you're playing well, but when you're not and have to fight hard and the other team is playing well, that's the really tough thing.

That's, yeah, that's what we're most happy with.

**RAJEEV RAM:** Yeah, and regarding that, like I said on the court, I don't think -- I don't not think. I know I haven't seen anything like that in all the years I have been playing, and especially not in a Grand Slam final. For someone to -- you know, nobody saw it, nobody heard it. It would have been only him that would have known that happened, you know, if he didn't say something.

Quite honestly, when he was going to the chair, I thought he was complaining about something. I thought maybe somebody was maybe flashing something in his eye. The last thing I thought of was that he was going to give us that point.

I don't think he was complaining us. I just thought there maybe was something bothering him he was trying to get the umpire to do something about.

Like I said, he could have gone, he would have been the only one that have known that that even touched him. That is an extra level of sportsmanship. It was in a huge point.

It wasn't like it was 40-Love. It wasn't like it was -- it was to give us Love-30 to possibly get two breaks and basically close out the match right there, I think.

Yeah, I don't even know what to say about that. I told him again in the locker room, I don't any words to say how much I appreciate something like that.

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