

US OPEN

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New York, New York, USA

Joao Fonseca

Press Conference

J. FONSECA/L. Tien

4-6, 6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Three tough sets. Came from behind. Two hours. Give us your thoughts.

JOAO FONSECA: Well, Learner is a great guy, amazing player. Well, that's not why he was in -- he was in two slam finals this year. I knew it's gonna be, was going to be a great fight.

He played so good in the first set and beginning of the second one. I think he relaxed a bit, and I just got the opportunity with the crowd. When I broke him 2-1, I just, like, called the crowd and energy myself to get strength for the third set to win the second set and go for the third set.

So that's why I'm happy with myself that I fought to the last point.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Yesterday you said you had no words when you got to the final. Now you have won the championship. Can you try and sum up what this means to you, incredibly tough matches and the matches you have had this week and now that you have done it what it means to you?

JOAO FONSECA: Well, I still can't process. I can't process. It's really amazing. Yesterday I said I had no words to say but I also said the job was not done. Now the job is done.

Well, I'm so happy, I just want to enjoy the moment with my family and friends and coach and enjoy the win.

Q. Obviously the crowd was amazing for you. He said it didn't really affect him, but he thought that it really brought you up. Is that a fair assessment?

JOAO FONSECA: Yeah, I think the same. Learner has good mental strength and he's very calm during the whole



match.

But I think, yeah, just like support me, got me some strength to keep fighting to the last point.

Q. He was playing really well first set, set and a half, and I think it was 4-All when you really started to make inroads. Did you change your approach, change anything you were doing to finally get that break and send the crowd into hysterics there in the second set? Did you change anything to get those last couple games?

JOAO FONSECA: Well, I think the beginning of the match it was very intense. I was not doing my best shots. I was, like, thinking a lot of going to the line and cross. I think what changed, obviously the crowd change a lot.

There was one break at 2-1. I broke him. I called the crowd, and I just, like, had confidence with myself, and things just came true. I think I was just playing, and I broke him again. I did a second set. I think there was, like, I was, like, I need to think what he's thinking. He was thinking, okay, now the game is tie, and he's playing better. I was playing more aggressively. I was missing more. But I was playing more aggressive. I was more confident and more courage. That's what made the difference.

Q. What's been the best message that you received? Considering you played Learner not only in doubles in the Aussie Open final but also played him singles-wise. Can you just talk about overcoming how tough he is and being able to celebrate such a great moment for you, great Brazilian crowd throughout the tournament for you.

JOAO FONSECA: I forgot your question.

Q. No problem. No problem. You had to get through Learner who you not only played doubles slam final Australian Open but also played in singles this year. Getting through him and the best message you have received so far from winning this tournament considering all the great support you have gotten from the Brazilian crowd and others throughout this whole entire week.

JOAO FONSECA: Well, Learner is a very talented guy.



He had two finalists Grand Slams this year. He won doubles titles. He had, like, just, he play, like, five tournaments and he's gonna be No. 1 -- No. 2 now.

Well, he's a great guy. I mean, I'm not, like, very close to him but when I talked to him after the match, he was, like, Man, congratulations. You've got courage. You fought. You deserve it. He just told me that. Very nice to hear that.

Q. Congratulations. You are the third Brazilian boys champion. Would you tell me about your hero, Brazilian heritage, who you look up to, your hero. And the other part is how you approach this US Open. It was in your mind that, okay, Tiago Fernandes, the Australian hard court, Wild won here at the US Open, so maybe I have a chance after always blocking in the quarter this year, quarterfinals. So this is my Open, this is my Grand Slam which I can win? What kind of mentality...

JOAO FONSECA: Well, I did quarters in, like, Australian, Roland Garros, and Wimbledon. When I went to quarters this time, I just thought I don't want to lose again in quarters.

It was with Cooper, I knew it was going to be a great match, like two hours and a half, sun, it was very sunny. I think it was the most difficult matches of my life because of the sun, because of the pressure, everything else, and I think that makes me believe. After the match I knew that I had, like, skills and, like, mentally strength to win this tournament.

That's not why I said it, like, in last interviews that I did that job was not done. I was going for the title after the quarters, for sure. Well, you said about Thiago and both Thiagos, I don't know very much Tiago Fernandes but I know Thiago Wild. Well, I played with him in the beginning of the year and I like, he's one of the guys that I like watching play because of his, like, technique he's playing. He has great forehands.

I think that hero for me, Brazilian hero is obviously Guga. One of my favorite surface, my favorite surface is clay. Guga is just amazing player, amazing person. So that's why I'll say that he's my Brazilian hero in tennis.

Q. Have you heard from Guga in the last couple hours? What were the fans chanting at you? Can you tell us? Have you heard from him and what were the fans chanting?

JOAO FONSECA: If I heard from him now? No, I didn't even watch my phone (smiling).

Q. So maybe?

JOAO FONSECA: Maybe. I don't know. But, well, next week I'm going to Davis Cup. Last Davis Cup it was in Brazil and he was there. He was talking to the athletes.

I don't know if he's going, but probably he will send a message by video call, but I couldn't reach my phone yet. Let's see (smiling).

Q. What were they chanting at you? Do you know what they were singing to you, the crowd, the whole third set?

JOAO FONSECA: They were just supporting, like, just like, "Joao Fonseca," and in important moments, just...

Q. Just your name?

JOAO FONSECA: Yeah, saying my name and vibing.

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