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Charleston Open



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Ons Jabeur 6 7
Caroline Dolehide 3 5
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THE MODERATOR: Ons, welcome back to the quarterfinal in Charleston. Can you just give us an overview of how you felt you played out there today?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah, thank you. It was a better match for sure. I'm getting used to the clay more, and I'm just -- the most important thing I'm enjoying myself on the court, and hopefully it will continue to be better and better.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please?

Q. Congratulations. How is your knee, number one? Your confidence, and what about your game, specifically about your game that you were very happy with today that seemed to be an improvement on something that maybe from yesterday or whatever? Now that you're upping your level a little bit as you move through the tournament.

ONS JABEUR: Yeah. My knee is good. I mean, it doesn't bother me. I think, honestly, it's the clay, it's easier for my body for sure. But, yeah, overall I'm just -- I think my serve is getting better. My return, too, was tricky today because Caroline serves really well, and at certain time when you lose like the momentum or where to hit the ball exactly, it is very tricky, but very happy that I was moving up and backwards and kind of was trying to disturb her a bit. And, also, I think tactically it was really good for me. I was seeing the court much better. I was more creative on the court, and I think that will really help me for the next matches.

Q. I know you talked on the court that your sister played the beginning of the second set. What did it take for you to win that second set?

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ONS JABEUR: She hates me. I always do that to her. Poor thing, she just had a second baby. So I just want to congratulate her for this.

And, you know, just, again, few points could really change up the game, and I started very bad my serve and tried to come back, and missing easy volley, but I know with someone like Caroline you don't necessarily want to lose your serve because it's much tougher to break her than any other girls. But I was frustrated. I tried to talk to myself, and you know, just get back to the game, find my rhythm in the return, and just like a few points. It could have been worse, but thankfully, I came back and was more focused.

Q. Ons, congratulations on today. Last year you were in the doubles with Paula Badosa, and also last summer we loved seeing you and Serena team up --

ONS JABEUR: Doubles? It was Sabalenka. Here?

Q. Was it Sabalenka?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah.

Q. Sorry about that. I think I'm confused because you and Paula are always --

ONS JABEUR: We played in Miami.

Q. Anyway, to my question, can we expect to see you on the doubles court any this summer, and what do you enjoy most about playing doubles?

ONS JABEUR: I'm trying to play more doubles, definitely. My coach wants me to play more doubles. But I love like how the game is fast, and it changes up a lot from singles for sure. It's fun also to play against doubles specialists. It's always a challenge, but definitely a great matches for us. So we can get used to the matches. I'll try to play, maybe on the grass season or maybe clay. I'm not sure.

For me now, I'm getting priority for my health more than anything else, but yeah, definitely love doubles, and you never know. I'll maybe surprise you with another partner, you know. Maybe Venus if she wants to play.

Q. Ons, congratulations on today's win. I saw you after your match go over to some fans in the stands. Can you just talk about a tournament like this being so intimate and just how special that is to be so close to your fans here in Charleston?

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ONS JABEUR: Yeah, it's always special for me. I think it's a very important part that I give more time for the fans to have pictures or autographs or just like just hear them talk to me. It is very important for me. I spoke about my relationship with the fans. It's very important to -- it is part of, honestly, hitting a backhand or a forehand. Mentally I think that helps me a lot. And, yeah, people are honestly very nice. They give you a lot of love, and I couldn't ask for more.

Q. Ons, you were joking a little bit about early in the second set, but can you just talk about I think she really challenged you to go up a next level, and do you feel like you're starting to find some of that form that we saw a lot from you last year? And is it about digging deep and being able to trust that that level is still there or how do you actually discover that out on court?

ONS JABEUR: Well, I mean, I'll try to make my answer as simple as I can, but definitely she started hitting better. But I always see myself, you know, if I was hitting longer returns, if I stayed better in the game, it probably would have bothered her more. But, yeah, tennis is all about digging deep. It's all about being patient, because sometimes you're doing everything perfect, but it's not coming yet. We've seen a lot of examples from different other players. Irina last year struggled a lot. Krejčíková also had a tough beginning of the season, but then -- you know, because you see these players. You see them like working hard and doing everything possible. You see them training. But sometimes in the match doesn't come. And for me that's what I'm -- it's all about. I'm doing the necessary work outside the court and just being patient. And you know, these two matches are just rewards of where I should be, and the key is for me to be confident, patient and the results will come for sure.

Q. On that subject, Ons, how do you feel you have developed confidence over time, because you certainly have. What process was it?

ONS JABEUR: I mean, definitely the experience from playing a lot of matches, and some matches were tougher than others, losing maybe very close, and you learn from it. I work a lot on my mental health with my mental coach. And, you know, confidence, it's a tricky thing, you know. Seems like maybe big

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players like Serena, Djokovic, Nadal, they do lose confidence, and people probably they know they see them how they play and say, oh, they're pretty confident all the time. No, really. It's very tricky. And I think you should always still believe in yourself, give yourself time when it's going wrong, because again, tennis it could be like a few points, a few games.

And for me through the years I'm learning to know myself better, to be able to just enjoy and give myself time. And very important to be surrounded by an amazing team because they always support me. And if I'm feeling down, they're going to bring me up. If they're feeling sometimes down, I'm like there to encourage them. So it's a teamwork, you know. And that's how I'm building my confidence through the years.

Q. Just on the next match, Kalinskaya.

ONS JABEUR: I hope she's pretty tired. She's an amazing player. Honestly, I expect her to be better ranked. Such a fighter. She's moody on the court, you know. You don't know if she's having fun or not. But I enjoyed our match last time in Indian Wells. It was fun. So let's see what she's going to bring tomorrow.

Q. You talked about your mental coach and patience on the court, especially on clay. Do you ever work with like accepting, like accepting -- I don't know if that has anything difference to do with patience, maybe if patience --

ONS JABEUR: It does.

Q. But acceptance is a lot to do with confidence, too, that it can bring you confidence or move you in and out of confidence just to say, yes, this is the way it is now. Do you work on things like that?

ONS JABEUR: Yeah. I mean there is a lot of things, and you're right, yeah, accepting also that players are playing good. That's part of it. I feel like also there is something that's very important, which is self-love. That's very connected to confidence, because as soon as you love yourself and give yourself a chance, then you're going to step up, and I think everything is really connected to each other. And as soon as you allow yourself to play good and give yourself a chance, you become more confident, calm; courage is there. There's a lot of things that are really connected. And, yeah, with Melanie we work on a lot of those things, accepting that it's --

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I'm injured, you know, and this is how it is. It is also very important sometimes to let go of things. Also it is very, very important. Next time session about psychology.

End of Interview

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