

BNP Paribas Open

Wednesday, March 15, 2017

Jack Sock

Press Conference

J. SOCK/M. Jaziri

4-6, 7-6, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You seemed to be on fire. That's a couple quarterfinals appearances in a row now for you.

JACK SOCK: Yeah, I mean, been a good finish to the year last year in the fall, and then a great offseason for me.

Changed it up a little bit, but, yeah, started out this year with a lot of confidence, physically, mentally, all of it. I think it's shown on court so far this year.

Q. What are some of the things you're doing differently that's making a difference?

JACK SOCK: I think it's just routines, honestly. You know, I worked a lot in the offseason on getting into a specific routine that works well for me. You know, just been sticking to it.

Maybe in the past, a couple years ago, you know, maybe did not have that specific of a routine or be that strict on it. You know, like, off days now, I'll do some gym work and really do good physio treatment work on the body.

Yeah, just kind of putting everything else aside and focusing on the task at hand. I think it's paying off, for sure.

Q. What are your thoughts on playing Nishikori?

JACK SOCK: He has a decent backhand. He has a decent ranking. I mean, very, very solid player, very consistent player. He's top 5 for a reason, and an established top 5, top-10 player.

Yeah, I think we're just going to have to play. Definitely play my tennis is going to be my best chance to win. When we played in Shanghai and I was able to win, I was playing aggressive, big forehands, coming forward when I could.

Yeah, just trying to keep him back, you know, behind the baseline and, you know, kind of try and move him side to side. If he's moving in, stepping into balls, forehands or backhands, dictating points, then it's



going to be trouble for me.

Q. You have had success here in doubles and you had a good run here a few years ago. How much does that help in terms of a comfort level with the conditions and the way the ball plays here?

JACK SOCK: Yeah, I mean, it helps a lot. You know, first few years here when I didn't do very well, you know, I didn't really look forward to coming back to this tournament just because, you know, result-based, I didn't have the best first few matches here.

But yeah, now that you get some matches under my belt, you know, this and the US Open are my favorite tournaments of the year. You know, I love coming back here. The home crowd is always amazing. I feel like they are into it and the energy is great.

I have played all my matches on Stadium 2 and the crowd has been incredible. Hopefully I can keep riding that home crowd and the American fans will be behind me on Friday.

And, yeah, like I said, just have to play my tennis and, yeah, definitely use these courts to my advantage, though. They're a little bit slower and higher bouncing, which should help me.

Q. You have had two very tight back-to-back matches, and there are two philosophies or bowling through your opponent and kind of having an easy path versus really having to fight for the wins. Given your personality and you say you play your game and you're going to go out on your own terms, either way, how are you feeling about those wins and how much confidence has that given you now?

JACK SOCK: I'd say three in a row now, you know, four in the third, and last night and then today.

Definitely getting my money's worth on court, getting my time on court, you know, and to feel comfortable out there.

Yeah, I mean, you know, whether you win 1-1 or 6 in the third last night in an epic match, still moving through, yeah, sometimes you like to win 1-1 and be done in 55 minutes and move on to the next one.

Yeah, I mean, the way the schedule plays out in these tournaments it's nice. Like today, big opportunity, off tomorrow, light practice and get some rest, you know, get ready for Friday after having, you know, quick turnaround last night to today and two long matches.

Yeah, like I said, definitely get my time on court in, but that's a lot of reps for me and makes me maybe that much more comfortable on court.

Q. This country has such a rich tennis history. You're now the highest ranked American. How do you feel about that? Are you embracing that pressure? How do you cope with that?

JACK SOCK: Yeah, I first realized through social media after a match, you know, on Twitter that I was the top American.

But, you know, now that, you know, that's where I am, I definitely take pride in it, for sure. If you view the history of top-ranked Americans we have in tennis through the years, it's a pretty cool list. To be a part of it is definitely a cool feeling. It's awesome.

I hear it only from you guys. I never talk about it outside of media and press. It's a cool feeling. I'm going to try to hold on to it as long as I can.

There is, you know, a nice confidence boost from having that. But also, on the flip side of that, for American tennis in general, hopefully it's not at 18 where I am now. Hopefully it's kind of like it was back in the day, top 10, top 5, and hopefully No. 1 again one day that American tennis can be there.

I think there is a good group and cluster of us guys coming up and making a push, and hopefully there will be a lot of battles for that top ranking and higher ranking over the next few years.

Q. Are you a fan of the band Queens of the Stone Age? Has anyone told you you look a lot like the lead singer?

JACK SOCK: I don't know who that is, and I hope that's a compliment. I don't know (smiling).

Q. You were saying it's taken a good player to beat you this season.

JACK SOCK: I said that?

Q. Yeah, you said that. You said if you look at all the defeats, you can't really be too -- you can't hang your head too much about any of it. What do you have to do now to actually beat one of those top players?

JACK SOCK: I think it's just staying on the path I'm on. I have had chances against a lot of them. I have had a

couple close matches with Rafa and close one with Stan in Canada.

But I have also had a handful of top 10 wins now and last year. I think right there, tennis-wise, I'm right there. I think they just don't lack anything mentally. They don't give up anything mentally, and I think that's where -- you know, that will be the deal breaker for me. Trying to do a lot better job of this year.

As you see, last night losing the first set and today losing the first set and tight situations, hopefully have that positive energy which is big for me, and keeping my head up out there, and, you know, moving on to the next point every time.

I think that's where I will see the breakthrough past those top, top guys.

Q. You just said you've got a rest day tomorrow. What do you do in those rest days? Is it staying in the room? Is it lying by the pool? Is it playing a round of golf? What do you do?

JACK SOCK: No. It's coming here and practicing at noon for -- I don't know. Until, I don't know, 30 minutes maybe. I have had a lot of time on court this week, so I'm not too worried about the hitting balls side of it. Just coming out, getting a feel and having the racquet in the hand a little bit. Doing maintenance work on the body in the gym, shoulders, hips and stuff. Just prehab and all that.

And then, yeah, a good couple hours in the physio table back at the house with my trainer, and, yeah, just making sure everything is feeling good. Massage, ice bath, all that. Just recovery and get ready for Friday.

Q. Do you know what happened with that flicking ice thing on the court thing? Have you ever been given a warning for something as bizarre as that?

JACK SOCK: That was ridiculous, I will say. No, that was -- I will most definitely be appealing that at the end of the tournament if I get fined for that.

Because we are in the heat of the moment. I don't even know what the score was at that point but I know it was tight, tight scoreline. I have an ice towel around me and the thing breaks open, and I have 50 ice cubes on me that are melting all over my body and all over my racquets and getting on my bag and stuff.

So, yeah, I flick them off, naturally I think anybody would do, and they didn't even get onto the blue side of the court. And the ref who seems to not like me very much said, Don't do that.

Then I had one more on me and I hit it and it went a

little farther on the court, and they said unsportsmanlike conduct. So, yeah, that's -- yeah, I'll keep it G-rated, but that was ridiculous.