

cinch Championships

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Queens Club

Jack Draper

Press Conference



J. DRAPER/M. Navone

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Jack, congratulations. Is this the ideal start to the tournament for you?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah. I mean, you know, it was good to get out there. It was obviously a challenge playing sort of less than 48 hours ago in the final in Germany and then to come back here. But in all honesty, I felt incredibly calm, I felt really good, I felt confident about my game. I have been practicing well again.

Yeah, I don't feel too tired. Really happy with the way things were today, and yeah, keep on moving forward.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Alcaraz next. How much of a test will that be for you?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I mean, it's probably one of the biggest tests in tennis right now. He has a huge pedigree. He's obviously won here last year, won at Wimbledon. You know, he's setting records all over the place. He's an incredibly good, young player.

I think it will be a really exciting matchup. I have played him a couple times already. I know what to expect. He's incredibly explosive and just an incredible player all around.

So it's going to be a great challenge. I can't wait to get on court with Carlos.

Q. Wayne wasn't with you last week when you won the title. He's back today obviously. Tell us about the dynamic between James and Wayne and the way it's all working at the moment.

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I mean, it's working incredibly well. Obviously me and James for a little while now have been thinking about adding someone with real value to my team, to my coaching team, because, you know, James has got family, the demand of being a tennis player, but not only just the tennis player, the coaching

team, physio, the S&C, it's really demanding.

He's away from his family all the time on the road with me. So it's important that we have someone to share the load. Now, there is one thing just sharing the load but also it's important for that person to come in and add value. Wayne was someone who really believed in my tennis and believed that if I did certain things differently, then I can really rise to the top of the game. So that was a big plus there, that someone like him really believed in us and what we are trying to do.

So, yeah, like currently, you know, we're just sort of, I guess we are at the start of the journey with Wayne. Obviously me and Trots have been together for three years now, and we have done incredible work, and it's just getting another pair of eyes, another opinion that's important. I feel like in sport there is a lot of egos. A lot of coaches wouldn't maybe want another coach to come onboard and talk differently or whatever, but I feel like we all share the same vision for my tennis.

Yeah, we're really enjoying the process of just getting better. Really, really excited to have Wayne onboard. He was obviously a great player, a great guy, very calm, a bit like Trots. That's kind of what I like. I like it when it's sort of, you know, things are calm and we are, through ups and downs, trying to work things out. I think he's going to be huge for my tennis.

Can't wait to see what happens.

Q. Your next match is on Thursday. Carlos has already said he's going to ask to be scheduled early because Spain are playing at the Euros at 8:00. England are at 5:00 that day. Are you going to be making the same request so you can catch it?

JACK DRAPER: No, I didn't even know that they were playing (smiling). It just seems like there has been so much going on recently that the football has sort of gone a bit over my head.

I guess if we are playing early, then that probably suits it. If England are playing at 5:00, can maybe see how the match goes and go and watch the football. For me, the most important thing is the match.

Q. On Carlos, what impresses you most about him?

You mentioned explosiveness there. Is he someone who you sort of chat to away from the court?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, the first time I saw Carlos was -- well, I heard about him first from a friend of mine who is the same age, saying he's going to be incredible. But they're so young, you don't really know what they're like.

But first time I ever saw him was he came with Juan Carlos to London to the Royal Albert Hall. We played an exhibition match. I think he was 14 and I was 16. You could see what an incredible player he was.

But not only that, but, like, his team environment, his professionalism, his everything, his dedication, what he was doing on the tennis court at 14 years of age, I think I was still playing 20-20 cricket at school at his age. So I think just the way he's been able to deal with all the experiences, all the hype, all the Grand Slam semifinals, finals, and just coping with the demands obviously being at the top of the game at such a young age, I think that's incredibly impressive. Because especially in a game like tennis you have to be incredibly mature at a young age. What he's done already at this stage of his career is what most players dream of.

So incredible respect for how good he is and also, yeah, like, off court he's incredibly kind, incredibly nice, very respectful, his whole team. He's kind of amazing for tennis.

So I'm looking forward to getting out on court with him for the third time. Hopefully I'll have the crowd behind me. It will be good.

Q. We have seen a few players slipping and sliding on the grass courts in Queen's. Just wanted to get your opinion on what's the difference between playing on the grass courts in Stuttgart and then coming over to Queen's Club here and playing today? Do you feel any difference in terms of the grass court or is all grass courts the same to you?

JACK DRAPER: No, no. All grass courts are different. Obviously different climate, different places, you know, it makes different -- obviously the biggest things on grass court is how much they have been played on.

The grass court in Stuttgart, by the end of the week, was playing like a hard court, you know, because it's been played on a lot. Whereas the first few days, I'm sure everyone was slipping and sliding.

I think it's obviously the same for these courts. Obviously if they haven't been played on too much, they're going to be really slidy and a bit wet and kind of not enjoyable to move on.

The more they get played on and the more the sun is out,

that will dry the court out and it will turn into more of a court that you can move properly on and play some really good rallies.

Q. You mentioned you played Carlos a couple of times before but not for a little while now. How much more do you think you have moved on physically with what you've achieved in the game? Obviously the win this week, making you more ready for that challenge?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah, I mean, I think I played him for the first time in Basel. I had chances in that match. I think he was just coming off winning the US Open. You know, we played a great level.

Then in Indian Wells, he was playing incredibly well. I was injured before I even got on the court, so I didn't have the best chance of winning. But still, he was playing incredible that day. I'm not sure if it would have mattered if I was injured or not.

But I think obviously since two years ago now, I have changed massively emotionally, physically, my sort of game identity. Also he's changed a lot as well. He's won Wimbledon, he's won Roland Garros. You know, he's done a lot as well.

I think it will just be a really, really good match with some really good tennis, and hopefully we can, yeah, we can compete really hard and put on a good show.

Q. How good were you at cricket at school?

JACK DRAPER: Hmm, well, when I was younger, it was quite funny because no one could catch. Everyone's scared of the ball. I was either out golden duck or I hit, like, 50 runs or a century because of my backhand. No technique. I would just swing.

Of course when you're younger, the boundaries are so much shorter as well. Always difficult. It was always frustrating because I wanted to win and I was used to playing tennis, individual sports and stuff.

I couldn't understand it when the school teacher would say, oh, you're off after four overs. I wanted to keep going. (Laughter.)

So it was kind of very frustrating, that. But maybe that's why I chose tennis in the end. Yeah.

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