

BNP Paribas Open

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

Jack Sock

Press Conference

J. SOCK/G. Dimitrov

3-6, 6-3, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Great win. How far have you come in two nights since you lose eight games in a row to Laaksonen and it looks like it could be a tough tournament for you and you turn it around. What's different now that's allowing you to stay in these matches and fight through these things? You're playing like a top-10 player in the world. What's different?

JACK SOCK: I mean, just a lot of work on it. I think the tennis has always been around that, you know, area. Always things to improve definitely on court and on practice court and everything with my team.

We worked a lot. We worked hard in the offseason. During practices and training sessions, put myself in situations like that where I play a game where I start down in a game or do a drill that I may not like it as much. But put myself in situations where I'm not the most happy but still find a way through it. I think those moments are definitely paying off.

Yeah, just a lot of talks with everyone on my team daily, making sure my head is clear going into these matches. If you put one foot in front of the other and keep your head down, things like tonight can happen.

Q. You've had all that work done, but obviously matches produce confidence. So the legacy of what you're doing now, how much of that has really been in the start of this year?

JACK SOCK: Yeah, I mean, I think -- I think that starts in November/December. The work I did then translates to, you know, two titles so far and winning matches like tonight.

Yeah, I mean, without the confidence that you build in the offseason, not only mentally but physically and tennis-wise, you know, all of it together gives you that confidence to start a season.

You know, everyone is eager to start in January in Australia. Everyone wants to get off to a great start and win a lot of matches when you start the year. You still got to go out and produce and do it.



So for me to put in the work I did in the offseason and go out and have the start I have had so far only gives me that much more confidence on court.

Q. The game where you were Love-40 and Grigor had the match points, how do you get out of that? What were you saying to yourself?

JACK SOCK: Just praying I get some good serves and forehands. I think everyone knows what I -- you know, everyone kind of knew what I wanted to do on those points. I was able to hit two good serves the first two points.

And, you know, the 30-40 forehand I had, you know, I just said, Go for it. I have hit it thousands, millions of times in my life, probably.

You know, I have said, start of the year, if I'm going to lose to someone, it's going to be on my terms, you know, the tennis that I play. I'm not going to go out and play a match where I'm playing defensive or not my game necessarily.

So, you know, 30-40, just grip and rip, and I was able to hit a good one.

Q. The point of the match might have been the point where you broke back in the third and the volley you hit. It just seems like a lot of what you're doing now is borne of, you know, very soft hands, and very deft touch at the net. How much has the doubles success that you have had lent towards the singles success you're having now?

JACK SOCK: Yeah, I can attribute a lot of it, I think.

I have said this multiple times since the doubles has kind of been the hot topic in my press and with media and stuff. I think any time you can play deep into a draw, you can hold a trophy above your head, you can give that congratulatory speech at the end of the week, whether singles, doubles, mixed doubles even in Rio, that gives me confidence doing something like that.

But, yeah, but to play through a doubles draw, no matter the level, like I said, to hold a trophy, only gives you that more confidence on the tennis court in general. You're serving, you're returning, you're moving around the net. You're fine tuning a lot of

things in your game.

So, yeah, when I'm playing singles, I like to be aggressive. I like to come forward. I feel very comfortable at net. You know, stuff like that can happen on break point or in general. I thought I had a very great net game tonight overall. I had a lot of great volleys and came forward at the right times.

He broke me, you know, in the third, with a good passing shot. You know, I was able to get it back in the same type of situation. It pays off.

Q. What are your thoughts on Malek Jaziri? It's not an Andy Murray or Wawrinka or Cilic or anything like that. It's a big opportunity, obviously, but talk about playing him.

JACK SOCK: Yeah, I mean, you can say big opportunity or you can look at the results that happened so far this year. Murray is out first round here, and Roger in Dubai, me in Mexico.

I think there is a trending pattern on the tour now where I think any guy in the top 100, top 120, for that matter, if they're on fire and you're not on point that day, I think anything can happen on tour now. I think all the guys are kind of noticing that now, as well.

And so, you know, same goes for tomorrow. You know, on paper, yeah, may be ranked higher, supposed to be a better player in whatever sense, but if I don't come out and play great tennis and play my A-game, then I won't be playing the next day.

Q. Is that a change that you see on the tour? That more guys think they can knock off the top guys?

JACK SOCK: Yeah, I think so. I think definitely since I have been on tour and definitely before that, those top guys were dominating every tournament. I think guys would go on court and not feel like they had a chance against them.

I think you go on court now and whoever it is, if you go on court, you think you're seeing the ball well and playing well that night, I think everyone has confidence to put themselves in a position to beat those guys.

Q. With this being a good year for you already, a couple of titles inside the top 20, did you start this year as a goal to break into the top 20, and what kind of goals are remaining for you?

JACK SOCK: I don't really do number. I obviously have, you know, in my own head, you know, where I want to be.

But, you know, I don't, like, sit out in December and be like, You have to reach this point by that time and all

that.

I kind of, like I said earlier, just build that confidence in the offseason, put myself in position to win matches, hopefully win tournaments. That was one of my, you know, I guess you want to say goals.

Yeah, one of my motivations this year was to win more singles titles. I won my first one in 2015, and I think when you win one, it makes you win a lot more, and I put myself in position last year a few times in finals and wasn't able to get it done and it doesn't leave a great taste in your mouth.

But I was able to turn it around this year and start out and have two already. In Houston, 2015, when you get one, now you get two, you get three, you kind of get obsessed with them and you want to get more.

Q. What are your goals for American tennis? At least according to Martin Black, he certainly seems extremely proud of what you're doing as an individual and we love what we're seeing. How much pride do you take not only what you're doing for American tennis and what the other guys are doing, too?

JACK SOCK: Yeah, I think it's great. American tennis fans are -- they're used to champions and Grand Slam winners. And we have had an amazing track record in U.S. tennis of amazing champions, and, you know, players pretty much any year all the time.

You know, so for them, it's maybe been more of a drought since Andy won the US Open. I think Mardy did a good job and Isner did an unbelievable job of keeping us relevant. Without him, we were barely within the top 10, top 20.

This new wave is very good. I, personally, I didn't realize I was the top American until I saw it on social media after a match. It wasn't something, I, like I said, set out to do. I do take massive pride in it now knowing it. I know all the guys behind me, everyone wants that spot. But, you know, just compartmentalize, put it aside, and focus on what you're doing.

At the end of the day, it's an individual sport. Everyone is out after each other. But also on the flip side of that, we're all really good friends and we push each other and very competitive and play Davis Cup together and all that stuff.

So I think there is a little bit of both. I think as a cluster of Americans, you know, we have a lot of success hopefully coming ahead.