

# Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

Monday, February 19, 2018

## Johanna Konta

### Press Conference

J. KONTA/A. Pavlyuchenkova

7-6, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. It was obviously tricky. Talk about the 14-minute game, how crucial you think that was.**

JOHANNA KONTA: It was definitely going to be tricky. But I knew going into the match that it was going to be. She's the kind of player that can play very hot and cold. When she's on, she's very on. I knew going into the match, actually the first set, she was very tricky to play.

The conditions are quite fast as well, so it doesn't lend itself to necessarily a little rhythm. I really just tried to have good tolerance out there. I was very clear of what I was trying to do out there, trying to have good acceptance that sometimes I wasn't going to be able to do it, otherwise just try to fight, get as many balls back to ask her those questions, and when I had my opportunities to try to play the way I wanted to play.

**Q. Last year you pulled out before coming here. This is your first time here. Your impression of the tournament?**

JOHANNA KONTA: I'm really enjoying it. Actually I came here last year, but I didn't get to play. I had to pull out on-site. I'm very happy that I'm back and playing. Hopefully I can stay here for many more days.

But right now I'm happy I earned my way into the next round. Have a tough match coming up next again. It's a very tough tournament. There's no easy rounds, there's no easy matches. It's a very, very high cutoff. I'm looking forward to that challenge.

**Q. Sitting up in the stands, it seemed quite still, no wind or anything. With all those double-faults, was there anything swirling down on the court?**

JOHANNA KONTA: There was a little bit of a gust that came every so often. I mean, wasn't strong winds. There was a bit of movement every so often.

But I didn't think I double-faulted that many times.

**Q. She did.**



JOHANNA KONTA: Then you need to ask her (smiling).

**Q. How are you feeling about your game at the moment?**

JOHANNA KONTA: I think most importantly I'm really happy that I'm playing, consistently playing, earning my way into more and more matches.

I think for me coming into this season, it's always been about finding my level again, really working towards playing my best level again. I feel like I'm doing that.

I feel like we're doing good work with Michael of trying to get me to play the best version of myself, on a consistent basis, and equally having good tolerance and good patience that it will come together when it will all come together.

**Q. After all the foot issues of last year, has that completely cleared up?**

JOHANNA KONTA: No, we're in the same situation as when you asked me in Melbourne. It's an ongoing thing. It's definitely in a much better place than it was.

**Q. It's manageable?**

JOHANNA KONTA: No, yes, exactly. That's why I'm playing. That's why I'm doing what I'm doing, because we're in a good place with it.

**Q. Petra, the run she's managed to have over the past couple tournaments, after everything she's been through. What do you make of that?**

JOHANNA KONTA: I think it's very deserved. I think putting aside the challenges that she's had off court, just her on court mannerisms, her on-court persona, she's a very, very classy champion. I think she plays that way. She plays with a lot of self-confidence. That comes through in these big wins that she earns.

Off the court, I mean, she's just as much of a strong person.

**Q. In terms of on-court mannerisms for you, do you ever consciously make an effort to look a certain way on the court or portray a certain kind of confidence even if you're not feeling them?**

JOHANNA KONTA: I definitely think there's an element of acting on court. I think there is a good old saying of

'fake it till you make it'. I think that definitely applies to some days more than others obviously.

We are human, every player out there. We're not going to feel great every single day. We're not always going to play great. Those days where you're not playing your best, you do put on a persona and you do try to fight your way through those days, try to find the best level you can on that day.

I mean, I always look to be as positive as I can, yeah, as happy as I can on court.