

# Miami Open presented by Itaú

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## Jack Draper

Press Conference



M. KUKUSHKIN/J. Draper

7-5, 0-0 [Ret.]

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

### Q. How are you, first of all?

JACK DRAPER: I'm good, thank you.

### Q. How do you feel after what happened on court? Have you recovered? Can you talk us through what happened?

JACK DRAPER: Yeah. About midway through I started feeling my back, but I think the conditions got on top of me a little bit today. Physically, I just need to improve more.

It gets (indiscernible) at this level as well. I've got a lot to improve on, but my level seems to be pretty close, so yeah.

### Q. Did the humidity really take you by surprise? Was that the issue today, do you think, that you weren't able to cope as well as you wanted to because of the extreme heat and humidity?

JACK DRAPER: I think I have gone for a bit of a stage where I haven't really played a lot of tennis because of few injuries and a few niggles, so it's kept me off court a little bit. My match fitness probably isn't its best anyway. Granted, the heat was difficult but, you know, every player has to deal with that.

So I just think probably by not being on court loads and stuff probably has an effect. Especially when playing at this level you have to be physically, you know, all there and you have to be able to deal with these things, and I wasn't able to do that today.

### Q. Have you ever collapsed or retired on the court before? In the last two hours, what have you physically been doing with the doctors and the physios?

JACK DRAPER: Maybe once before. Maybe at a tournament when I was a bit younger. Never collapsed or anything before.

In the last couple of hours, I have been with physios, trying to recover as best as possible, just trying to look after myself and move forward.

### Q. Just before you collapsed, in the changeover you had kind of the doctors to look at you. At that stage were you thinking, I don't think I'm going to get through this match? Was the collapse a big surprise to you from that stage?

JACK DRAPER: At the changeover, like I was starting to feel my body a bit, but I did know I was really struggling. And I spoke to them and I said that I'm going to carry on because I wasn't feeling faint. I wanted to complete the match.

But obviously when I got out there, that wasn't the case. On the last point, I didn't collapse. I actually just tripped because I was starting to feel really dizzy and stuff. I wasn't like I didn't fall over. I generally just tripped up. I think the doctors from there thought I shouldn't continue.

### Q. You said before like the things you need to improve, do you think that was general conditioning or just like kind of actually like game management in terms of taking on enough water and ice, as well, or a bit of both? What are the sort of things you mean there?

JACK DRAPER: No, I think I deal with all the off-court stuff pretty well. I look after my body. I do all the things, like I drink the right things and I eat the right things.

Today I was hydrating and everything. I just think this is something, because I'm a young guy, I need to focus a lot on my physicality from now.

Like I said before, like I have gone through a stage where I haven't been able to play lots of tennis because of the pandemic and everything. I haven't been able to be on court as much as I'd like to.



Obviously at this level there is no way out of that. You know, you have to be on your game, you know, all the time physically. I believe like with more tennis and like putting myself out there more, it will become second nature to me.

**Q. It looked a bit scary early. What happened to you out there? Did it feel scary? Were you concerned about your health?**

JACK DRAPER: I mean, I knew that it was extremely hot. Yeah, at the time, yeah, I was a bit concerned. But then obviously like after a couple of hours you start to like recover and calm down and, yeah, like recover from what went on.

So, yeah, I've just got to treat it as a learning experience and move forward with that experience.

**Q. You were talking about the kind of work ahead of you to kind of get that match fitness and so on. I mean, it sounds like it's been a tough year for everybody, but I thought I heard you took a bit of time away from the game and sort of re-evaluated your priorities. How is your kind of attitude now? Do you feel like you've got the bit between your teeth to kind of put some weeks together, some trips together and kind of build in that way?**

JACK DRAPER: Yeah. Look, like last year was an extremely tough year for everyone, not just myself or tennis players or anyone. It was an extremely tough year. I think we all took a look at ourselves and went from there.

But this year I have really got the desire and the motivation to be a great tennis player. You know, there has been times in the past where maybe I have been a bit apprehensive about that, but, like, as I've gotten mature, as I've gotten older, I have started to really realize what I wanted to do and what I'm capable of.

So to answer your question, yes, I'm firmly motivated and I really want to get to the top level of this game. I'll do anything to get there, whether that be traveling five weeks on the tour or going somewhere else. Like I'm ready, I'm at a stage now where I want to be able to do that.

**Q. Are you still working with Ryan? How is your team looking?**

JACK DRAPER: Yes. I'm working with Ryan Jones. He's been my coach for the last four years now. We have an amazing relationship. He's an incredible coach and mentor for me off the tennis court, as well.

I'm training out of Jet (phonetic), which is an academy

basically run by Ryan and some other coaches. My fitness trainer is Martin Skinner, who used to be a tour fitness trainer as well, used to work with Aljaz Bedene, Kyrgios.

So I'm in really good hands. Yeah, like my team is very stable and, yeah, I'm very happy with, you know, what potentially my going forward, you know.

**Q. What's your plan from here sort of through the clay and leading on to the grass?**

JACK DRAPER: My plan from here is to go home. As I have said like previously, like I haven't been able to get a lot of tennis in. I actually forgot to mention I had COVID in January, so I was out for two weeks with that. Didn't move a muscle. That was after preseason, as well. I put in a really good preseason and then I didn't play.

So it's been a rough start to the year, but from here I think I'm going to come back to UK, I'm going to play the Pro Series, the seven matches in seven days in Loughborough, really try and get my match fitness up. Seven matches in seven days will do that. After that I'll look to play quite a few challengers on the clay in Italy before hopefully being on good form coming into the grass court season.

**Q. Were you one of the players or one of the people that caught COVID at the NTC, do you think, or was it unrelated? How badly did it affect you?**

JACK DRAPER: I mean, I found out at the time when I was at NTC. Whether it came there, I have no idea. Like for the record I thought, whatever else has been said, I thought the LTA did an incredible job of handling the COVID situation over that year. There was lots of precautions in place, and I thought they handled it really well.

I got it. It's obviously an extremely aggressive virus and you can catch it from anywhere. Yeah, I got it, and it did affect me quite badly for about seven days. I had bad symptoms. And then I recovered pretty quickly from there.

But, yeah, definitely had an effect on me because I had just put a lot of good training in, and that was pretty much taken away.

**Q. Obviously it's a bit of a weird disease, isn't it? Do you think that maybe had any effect today? Has it had any long-term effect on your conditioning?**

JACK DRAPER: I mean, you can't say. I mean, I have put in loads of great training since then so it's no excuse.

But it did have an effect on me at the time probably, but a

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