

Citi Open

Tuesday, August 3, 2021

Washington D.C.

Felix Auger-Aliassime

Press Conference



F. AUGER-ALIASSIME/A. Seppi

2-6, 6-2, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How were you able to overcome the slow start?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah, well, I think first I allowed myself to play a bad first set, even though it's never great to start a match like this, to start a tournament like this. But in my mind I wanted to find a way to come back.

I think to get that early break and to kind of get the lead in the second set helped me a lot. I think I served a little bit better. I think I put more volume on my shot, more height. I think I was more patient also. A little bit maybe in the first set missing too quickly in the rallies.

I think just the combination of all of that, also just digging deep physically and mentally, allowed me to come back nicely in the match, to finish strong in the third set.

I'm happy with the way things turned around for me today.

Q. Did you have the Roland Garros first round in the back of your mind during the match?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: In a way, yes, of course. Second time I played him. He beat me one time before. Of course as a player you never want to go down twice in a row against a player. It happens, of course.

In my case, of course, I really wanted to find a way to win that match, to get my revenge just for myself, just more for myself than anything else, to try and get the win, so...

Q. You played a great Wimbledon, making your first quarterfinal. I know you were disappointed with the Olympic performance. Do you think maybe this tournament, dropping the first set, you needed a bit of resilience to bounce back, hit a tough spot, have that rebound moment?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah, I think this win hopefully will help me, sure, because of course Wimbledon has been great, but the transition has not been easy physically, mentally, the traveling. I think I'm still a little bit jetlagged from Tokyo. Just this whole combination hasn't made it easy for me the last couple weeks after Wimbledon.

But to dig deep and to find a way to I guess win ugly in a way, coming back from really a poor set of tennis in the first, to come back and win it, yeah, it's good that I can also win matches that way, not only playing my best tennis and winning in straight sets.

Q. This was your 60th match of the last 52 weeks. How is your body feeling? Are you feeling pretty worn down or are you feeling refreshed post Olympics?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: No, I'm feeling okay. We're used to it as players, to have this busy schedule. I mean, I'm a competitor. I love to play. I talked to fellow athletes, Canadian athletes, at the Games. I think it would have been tough for me to have schedules where there's just a few tournaments or few competitions.

I love to be out here again competing, playing in front of fans. It's great. I'm feeling good. Of course right now I just finished a match so my legs aren't so fresh. But overall mentally I think I'm fresh. This week my family's here. It's good to, yeah, be back in America, to play tournaments.

I feel good both physically and mentally overall.

Q. Being back in North America, having a support group again, how valuable is that for you, help your level of play?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: It's great. Since the first day I came here, a lot of people showed up for practices, taking pictures, talking to people. It's great to see. Always as a player, to come to a tournament where you feel that people are happy to see you, it's always a great feeling. I felt that from the first day.



You feel the history of this tournament. You feel the passion of fans. It's really great to see. I think they've made a great job putting this tournament once again after one year of break. I'm happy to of course be here.

Of course, being on the same jet lag as Canadian, it also helps. I have my friends and family watching back home as well. The support has been good.

Q. Wimbledon was a few weeks ago, seems like a while ago. How do you draw from the first Grand Slam quarterfinal appearance, the success you had there, the win over Zverev? Do you draw on that into the hard court seasons or is it already quite a few weeks removed for you?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: It's already behind, to be honest.

(Player Zoom lost.)

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Sorry. If you can hear, that's the idea, that Wimbledon already feels, yeah, a couple weeks ago. It's great to have that good memory in mind, but I'm already moved onto other things, focusing on the future.

Q. The US Open qualifying rounds are coming up. They've announced they're closed to the public to protect the players. However, they'll be at 100% capacity for the entire main draw if you can afford the ticket. Do you think the US Open quallies is an important time for families, egalitarian time for tennis, because it's free to get in? Do you think it will protect you to close it to the public?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, I wasn't aware of it. I actually just learned. First, yeah, I'm just learning something. Of course, I'll have a chat probably with some of the players I know, I mean, the ATP.

Me as a player, of course, I think fans are great to have whenever we can have them. I'm sure they made the decision thinking it was the best decision to make at the time. I'm not aware why, but I'm sure they made, yeah, the best decision for the players, for the fans and everybody involved.

But, of course, I think it's super important not only for us but I think, yeah, for families to come see a great level of tennis, quallies matches, to see new players coming up, young players. To see them from close, too, because you're in a huge stadium, sometimes you see them from afar. The fact they're in quallies, you can walk around and

see many matches at the same time, sometimes it's even better in a way.

I've had great memories playing night matches in quallies in New York. For sure it's a shame there can't be fans during the quallies this year, but I'm sure they made this decision looking at all the pros and cons.

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