

# Rolex Paris Masters

Wednesday, 2 November 2022

Paris, France

## Gilles Simon

Press Conference



G. SIMON/T. Fritz

7-5, 5-7, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions? Who wants to start?  
Questions in French.

**Q. Can you still walk? Can you still talk? What's the situation for you?**

GILLES SIMON: Well, I do what I have to do. You win, you know you have another match the day after, so you have to continue and try to come onto the court in the best shape possible. Otherwise it's going to be very unpleasant.

So it's very short, because I'm playing quite early, I saw. But I do what I have to do, and I try not to think about it too much.

**Q. How do you feel emotionally with Bercy on fire? Tell us about these moments in the third set when you led you didn't feel so well. Tell us.**

GILLES SIMON: Well, it has come down, because I'm super tired, but I think I managed pretty well. Maybe I lacked something in the second set, because I was leading in most games. I was winning my serve games a bit easier than him. I had broken him, and I let him break me back by playing a bad game, missing a volley that was not too hard.

When he broke me, I had three breakpoints at 5-5, and I didn't win them, and I was finding that I was getting tired. Maybe I could have used more the crowd. At that moment I could have put more pressure on him. But I did that very well in the third set.

It was a very difficult match from the beginning till the end. Very long match. As often in these matches there were good things; others that were not so good. So out of three hours, you need to see everything.

**Q. Talk about the crowd in terms of communing with**

**the French audience, what you experienced in Roland with Carreno Busta and here in Bercy, is it not the two greatest moments of your career in terms of relationship with the French audience? And for your last season, is it not the best gift you offered to the crowd and the crowd made to you?**

GILLES SIMON: It's more the crowd that is making me a gift rather than the contrary. I'm just on the court, I do my best, as I have always done.

But maybe there is a perception that has changed when I said I was going to stop at the end of the year. Jo has also stopped. Often we were considered as a group of four. So there is one, and then two, and then you start saying, Okay, it's going to be difficult.

So indeed, from that moment onwards, and I said it on the court at the end of the first round, I felt a lot of support and compassion from the audience, which is no longer judging the result. Because before, when I was achieving this third round, they didn't say it was fantastic, but now they say it's fantastic.

So it's not really the result that counts. It's more the fact that I'm able to play at a very high level. Last time on two very important tournaments that are important for us. We played long matches. Maybe some people we played long years, and maybe some people got attached to us before we leave. We just want to play good matches. Try to enjoy this experience.

So if we are able to do so, it's fantastic. It's my great fear when I played in Roland, and when I came here, I feared that I wouldn't be capable of doing that.

Having done it so well in Roland, I felt that there was an expectation and people wanted it to go fine for me, they want to participate in the matches. But you have to be good. If you lose 2 and 1, the crowd won't participate, and the logic would be that you would lose 2 and 1.

So I did my best and I feel lucky and I feel very happy to have played well these two events.

**ASAP** sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

**Q. You're talking about compassion and sympathy. Is it not more than that? There is affection, love. What is it you are feeling, this relationship?**

GILLES SIMON: I'm not good at love, so I'm not going to talk about that. But really, at the beginning, I felt it like that because I felt it all around. Maybe for you it's different because you are covering mostly Roland, Bercy, the biggest tournaments. I played a lot of challengers this year. I was in the quallies of Lyon the week before. Less journalists when you go through the first-round quallies in Lyon.

But when you come to Court 1 it was really that. People were kind, were nice to me. It was not like condescending, Oh, yeah, we are happy to see you one more time. Try to move around on the court.

So it was very kind. There was a closeness that was different. It's also different on the challengers, because these are smaller tournaments. People come to see you. They say they're happy because you never played them, and they're happy to see you.

They say, Oh, you play so well. You tend to think, Oh, I'm not moving anymore on the court. So it's something different.

That's why I say that. I felt that throughout the year at different moments, and not only at Roland. Of course at Roland, you have a big stadium that was not totally full, because I played at 1:00 a.m., but something incredible happened unexpected. It's that I was able to have the right level against Pablo who, if we had played nine times out of ten he would have won 2 and 2. But I was able to do this magic result and play a second match. So it was quite unexpected.

**Q. You said you played a few good matches recently, that you played well. Do you surprise yourself on these two matches, especially the match of today in terms of game level?**

GILLES SIMON: In terms of game level, I was not so much surprised. I was more surprised in Roland, because I was coming out of six first rounds and I had won two matches in Lyon to qualify in the main draw, and I lost easily against Karen Khachanov. I was almost losing 0-0. And I was happy to lose 11-4. So five sets, clay court, two sets I had difficulties. I was very worried.

But here, I played better. Last week I was playing very well. I got ill, and I'm still a bit ill and sneezing. But I was playing very well, and I know that if I play well on hard court indoor, I can be a hard opponent.

What is always worrying me is the physical shape. Today I was playing Taylor Fritz. He's 1.93 meters, 86 kilograms, he runs everywhere, he's everywhere. Not only he serves very fast but he's hitting hard, he's moving fast. You have to be in your best shape otherwise you lose immediately, and with a harsh score.

It's more this that worries me, the level, because I know that if I move well on the court, we can talk about it.

**Q. Despite the stress you were mentioning for this last tournament, you have played two excellent matches, two of your best matches of the year, although you had other matches. It's not a chance. It was the case in Roland Garros, although you're surprised, not common ingredients you were able to implement, like some kind of detachment with the proximity of the finish line.**

GILLES SIMON: I have the impression I was being 0 out of 10 in terms of detachment. But I put them apart, because for me Roland was a miracle. The match has no connection, and the game level had no connection with what I have done over the last three years.

So it happened, and I said it's a miracle. So I said, Fantastic, I'm playing well. I'm moving well.

Here, what is different is that it's the contrary. I'm playing well. I was playing well at the practice. I was not moving so badly, so I knew that I could play well and I would just hope that I would not be too tense and be able to play the match, because if I play, if I don't let my shots go against Andy, well, I was losing Love-3 against Andy Murray, and if I didn't liberate myself, it was going to continue, because he makes one mistake every month and it's difficult against him.

So you have this thing. But I was more confident, but it was there inside myself, and I had to take it out. That's why the two are different. Although from the outside, it can seem similar. But I had different feelings.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports