

# Rolex Paris Masters

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Paris, France

## Felix Auger-Aliassime

Press Conference



H. RUNE/F. Auger-Aliassime

6-4, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Tough luck, Felix. What do you think made the difference today as opposed to the final in Basel last Sunday?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I have to give credit to him. He played much better. From my part, it was a bit of a tense start on my serve, for some reason.

Yeah, missing a few forehands and easier shots that I normally wouldn't miss or that I didn't miss in the last couple of weeks. From that point on, when I was down a break, I kind of always felt like I was fighting back and I was never ahead, and he kept pressuring me. He was very aggressive without missing.

So credit to him for executing his game plan as well as he did.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

**Q. Was it the forehand that really let you down today overall? During the match, as things may have been running away from you, did that whole streak aspect come into your mind at all and you felt any sort of pressure out of that?**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I feel like because of the way he was playing and how good he was playing, I have to give him a lot of credit. He kind of exposed, yeah, weaknesses in my game. He was just, I mean, playing so aggressively without missing. I haven't seen or I haven't played many players that were this aggressive and hitting that hard, that deep.

Then me, it was just, yeah, exposing the fact that I couldn't manage to kind of establish my game plan on the court and feel good and play two, three good points in a row.

I wouldn't say my forehand let me down completely. Of course I did miss important ones or easier forehands, start

of the second set as well getting broken there with two or three mistakes. So not particularly it let me down, but a few things in my game didn't work because of how he was playing.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

**Q. You haven't lost for a long time, and it's the first time that we see you powerless like this. What surprised you most today? Because last time you actually won. From the first point he actually was aggressive with you on the serve. How about the quality of his return game? It seems that he was always aggressive all throughout the game.**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, he wanted to play better than the previous final. He wanted to be more aggressive. He wanted to give his all, and it worked.

I thought, Oh, my God, he's going to miss some points, but he didn't. He managed to be consistent, to be accurate. On his return -- well, sometimes my serves were good, but I had to think how I should mix my shots to get the upper hand, and I knew that I had to be aggressive, more aggressive on my side.

But when we are actually from the baseline, it's not always easy. That's actually a combination of both things; the fact that he was very aggressive and that I couldn't push back.

**Q. Maybe this loss will actually help you blow some steam, because you won't have to continue with this win streak, and you'll come back home.**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, I hope so. It's tough to say. Had I won today, had I won tomorrow, I would be in heaven. It would be great to win.

Throughout my career, I have always tried to draw lessons from my failures. As I said recently during the US Open, I lost early, it was disappointing, but I managed to overturn this into something positive.

Today I'm over. It's the end of a winning streak. It's something that was good that ended.



From tomorrow onwards, I will focus my attention on Turin.

**Q. A question as for the final of Basel, there was a huge difference in the courts between Bercy and Basel. How about the balls? Did it make a difference?**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Balls were different. Conditions are different. The rebound was higher. They were faster. It went faster on the serve. It was harder to control. But when you had a good shot, then it was very efficient.

As for here, the rebound was less high, so I had to play loose to make sure that I would be efficient. It was harder to have a winner.

But he managed to be very aggressive, and the ball didn't fail him. Last time I was very good on my serve, very consistent, and I managed to have freebies because he made mistakes last time. But this time I couldn't or it went too late, and it didn't have enough impact on the scoreline. Every time that he could play well, he did play well.

**Q. Holger was 103rd in the ranking. Are you surprised by his rise in the ranking? Why is his tennis play so special?**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, I'm surprised, yes. I knew he had a lot of qualities. Well, we have Carlos who is a standout player, for instance. At his age I was in the top 100 as well at 18. We have a similar career.

But I'm surprised, and I have to say hats off to him for his wonderful rise in the ranking. He has played very well throughout this season. He's had also very tough moments, which is not normal for someone who is 18 years old. He managed to be in the final in Stockholm, in Basel. It's very incredible at his age. He hasn't been much on the tour. Hats off to him, because he's exceptional.

Today he was very aggressive. He was playing very strongly on both sides. He's serving much better. He served very well during the last weeks. But he's serving much better. I think he improved from a physical point of view, as well.

Before it was hard to have so many matches under his belt in a row. It means that he has improved physically, so it will be interesting to see next year how things will unroll.

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