

Rolex Paris Masters

Monday, 28 October 2024

Paris, France

Ugo Humbert

Press Conference



U. HUMBERT/B. Nakashima

6-3, 4-6, 6-4

(In French.)

THE MODERATOR: Well done, Ugo. A bit of a more complicated match than in Tokyo. Can you walk us through it?

UGO HUMBERT: Well, it was an intense match with a great start from me. I started rather strongly and aggressively. Then he served better. I had trouble returning.

In the third set, he even had occasions to break me. I went for it, and the audience was behind me. So I'm really happy.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Well, done, Ugo. For you, what made a difference in this match? Would you say a year or two ago you would have lost this match, especially in the last set when he was leading 4-3, he was about to break you, and then you turned it over? What changed?

UGO HUMBERT: Well, it's very narrow. Some matches you lose when you had a lot of occasions, and others you win when you were behind. So what I had to do was to fight for it.

When I stopped after the second set and I took a break, I thought, well, this might be your last Bercy, so don't think about it. Just go ahead and take the energy from the public.

I really was confident. Even though there were difficult moments, I had to save some breakpoints, but after all, I'm still here so I won't ask myself. I won't question it (smiling).

Q. They often say there are several matches in one. How does it go when you have a first set where everything is going fine and it's even very fast, second

more neutral, and then you go for the fight? How do you manage it? Do you say, well, cool it, or do you say fight it, or...

UGO HUMBERT: Well, in the first set, I saw he had absolutely no occasion on my service. He couldn't win any strokes or any points. I only broke him once.

But for two games, he was still 40-Love and advantage, so I had occasions to do even better. Then the match turned over. He served better. I was less vigilant. My eye was not as fast. I was returning not as well. So you start asking questions to yourself, which is very difficult.

Then the third set, it started, and you have to think, well, okay, it might not be perfect, but you have to fight for it. You have to go and get it. You have to push.

You know, these matches are very narrow. I love these kind of matches. I love to win them. When I'm not perfect, I don't play my best tennis, but I'm playing well and it's easy. So I managed to win, even though I wasn't maybe playing top.

Q. Well done. Congratulations. We saw you go and get the support of the audience in the third set. Does it help you, or is it a way of discouraging your opponent?

UGO HUMBERT: A bit of both, really. For an hour I was okay, and then I felt my energy was lowering. It was more difficult, even in my mind, so I had to fight and use everything I could to give it all.

You know, I have played in such atmospheres when not everyone was supporting me, so I know it can help and it can help also against the opponent. And this happened. He made a few mistakes when he was about to break, so I'm happy.

Q. You have a second round which should be okay. What was the third one? Are you optimistic?

UGO HUMBERT: Well, stop it, because every time you say, okay, you're going to play so-and-so...

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Q. Supposing you had to play against Alcaraz in the third round, what would happen?

UGO HUMBERT: Well, I'll try and win the round of 32 in the next round, so I want to win my next match and then I'll see.

Q. You were talking about the variations in the service. There are different ways of playing and different ways of positioning yourself. Sometimes you were even between the lines. Is it something you have changed lately? Is it especially for indoor matches?

UGO HUMBERT: I don't know. I was in Tokyo. I was training and exercising, and sometimes at one point I thought I'll position myself from the left. I saw that I was making 80% of the points doing this. Then guys are doubting, because they think, well, I get them on the T and then they say he'll never do that.

I realize that the strength of a great server, and I'm far from being it, the great strengths is to vary your shots. So this is also what I felt in the first set. As soon as you vary, you don't serve in the same way, you vary the area, the spin, et cetera, it makes a difference, because when I play against a good server, when I find my position and I know more or less where I have to position myself and which side to cover when they always serve on the same side, you only have two options. But when you change your serve, it's more difficult for them and it's fun.

Q. You'll do it more and more often, especially on this diagonal?

UGO HUMBERT: I don't know. I'll have to work on it to see what are the possibilities and different options, but I like to be on that side and to change that.

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