

Rolex Paris Masters

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Paris, France

Giovanni Mpetshi

Perricard

Press Conference

G. MPETSHI PERRICARD/F. Tiafoe

6-7, 7-6, 6-3

(In French.)

THE MODERATOR: Congrats, Giovanni. How did you manage to have your victory in Basel and then just this first match here?

GIOVANNI MPETSHI PERRICARD: Well, it went so fast. I took the train after the final, and I had to switch directly to the following tournament because I was playing here today.

I'm glad that I found a good level of play despite my lack of preparation.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Congratulations for your ATP ranking and your win. This was a service match early on. But as soon as the rallies dragged on, it was harder for you. How can you prep to play top-5 players like this in the future?

GIOVANNI MPETSHI PERRICARD: I have to work on a lot of things regarding my level of play. When we have three-, four-shot rallies, it's not obvious for me to move around. Even though I actually managed to do it quite well, I will need hours of practice.

I'll need to improve the way I hit the ball, the way I manage my forehand, my backhand. I think I'll get it, I'll get there. I'm sure I'll improve. Manu is doing a very good job with me. He knows what we'll work on, and I trust him.

Q. Giovanni, after the difficult weeks that you had after Wimbledon, are you surprised by such a winning streak and to win again today?

GIOVANNI MPETSHI PERRICARD: Surprised? Well, yes and no. I didn't set any objective to myself. When I went



to Basel, I tried to play one match at a time. I knew that I would do it well, because I knew that I could be fearsome on the hard court. It worked well. It suited me. I served well all throughout the week.

I'm not saying that that's the week when all the stars were aligned because I managed to do that with a five winning streak, but I practiced this morning on the center court, just half an hour this morning, and yes, obviously we had expectations at the beginning of the season, and then after Wimbledon it was hard to set new goals when we have a letdown like this.

But after a lot of work, Manu was here, Seb was here backing me up, supporting me, and they told me it will pay off and it did pay off.

Q. Do you think that after Wimbledon will help you to deal with the media coverage? We can see that there is so much attention on you, so much limelight on you from the crowd and the media.

GIOVANNI MPETSHI PERRICARD: It will help me. I did learn from it. It was not obvious after Wimbledon. I tried to shut myself out, to block out the rest of the world and focus on my tennis.

Here it's different. I didn't even have time to make a break after Basel. I just started the tournament right after winning another.

Now I feel more mature after Wimbledon. Wimbledon was unexpected, because I was not in the draw when it came out. Things like that happen. I'm 21. It was brand new for me. Now I'm still 21 (smiling), and it's less new, let's say.

Q. You're saying yourself that you are a newcomer, but you have impressive stats. Does it give you hope, seeing that you win against such top players? It seems that you still have a margin for improvement.

GIOVANNI MPETSHI PERRICARD: Yes, when you win against top-20 players and after riveting matches you manage to get the upper hand, well, it means that there is a lot of doors to open yet.



And of course it boosts my confidence, my self-confidence, and then we can have new objectives. But I have to remain reasonable. I know that I can be very dangerous, because I have nothing to lose on such matches like this one.

And players start to fear me, but I have to remain focused on my level of play, on my tennis, because I'm the one dictating the outcome of the match. If I don't play well, then it won't work out. It's not the same thing on court and on paper. I need a solid mental state, not only mental but also physical state.

Q. You were playing the quallies in Australia, and you said that you wanted to play Grand Slam main draw matches. It seems that it is possible now. Have you ever thought that you could reach this goal so early?

GIOVANNI MPETSHI PERRICARD: I'm not thinking about the ranking. I was thinking rather about tournament wins. I was focused on winning matches. I was focused on how my level of play would improve, how I could beat top-20, top-30, top-40 players.

Ranking is rather second in my objectives. This is what Manu taught me. It's the way in which you think on and off court that is important. It has changed completely my mindset. Now I'm focused more on improving rather than on getting results.

Q. 13 double faults today. However, you had one ace and then two aces to win the match. Do you manage the risks that you take when serving? How do you approach that?

GIOVANNI MPETSHI PERRICARD: The way I play tennis is risky, I have to say (smiling). Sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn't. But it will never change my way of thinking. It's not because the score will be different that I will take less risks. This is where I won't do more double faults.

I did 13 double faults, okay. We're not in Basel. The court surface is completely different. The balls were completely different. I didn't have a lot of preparation. I never played on this surface. I hardly prepared this morning. Last year I didn't get used to the surface.

For this one, it's good to hit an ace when you have a breakpoint, but when you make a double fault and you lose the first set, it's a tossup. But I'm ready to take risks, no matter what, till the end of my career. I'm sure I will get more points than the opposite.