

Rolex Paris Masters

Saturday, 2 November 2024

Paris, France

Ugo Humbert

Press Conference



U. HUMBERT/K. Khachanov

6-7, 6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

Q. Ugo, what does it represent for you? I imagine in a career it's an important threshold. This is something you have been waiting for for a lot of time.

UGO HUMBERT: Well, it happened because I was expecting nothing. It was tougher today. I felt less good. Everything required more tension.

For me, it was a real victory, because when you don't feel good, you don't play well. You manage to dig deep, to clinch a victory, and there is nothing better.

Q. Congrats. There was a huge atmosphere today. You managed to whip up the crowd every time. Is that a way to find acknowledgement with the public? How do you see it?

UGO HUMBERT: For me, it's genuine happiness when you have 10,000 people behind me. Of course I draw upon them, because it's a major asset.

As I said from the beginning of the week, I play with my heart, I want to share this moment with them. I want to give something to them. They are here also to help me, to push me further, because today it was tough.

There were times when I was really at the borderline, physically speaking, and when I saw him cramp and the public that pushed me, I felt good all of a sudden. This is what helped me to edge through and manage to have a win.

Q. Congrats. A small question on your serve. Did you have a game plan in terms of serve? For your first serves you were less efficient than usual, and you would actually change your position. Did you change your strategy, depending on your opponent?

UGO HUMBERT: This is what I have been doing since the beginning of the week, but I served less well. I was pushing too much. I wasn't serving with my hand enough.

I was trying to get an ace too much. I was trying to find hitting areas to put some spin, to have a good first serve.

I tried during the second set to play loose. This is how I managed to serve better. I also do my lefty serve. I managed to shift towards the end, and he was tired towards the end, so I managed to profit from it.

Q. You haven't spoken a lot about this, but you have had a lot of physical glitches. Did you manage to find the time where you can play loose completely? Is it finally what you always expected, what you have always waited for?

UGO HUMBERT: It's completely different. When you know that you can push to the limit, you have no physical glitches. I have had hip problems throughout the season, and when you have such problems, you don't take any pleasure.

But I feel good now. I regroup well. I have a good recovery with my fitness coach, with my nutritionist. I managed to focus on this a lot, because it's very important to recover after such a match. You have to do things well and what I'm doing, and this is good.

Q. Jeremy was talking about the match against Zverev last year. You will play him tomorrow. We often talk about encouraging losses. In what way was this loss a lesson? Did it help you? Will it help you for tomorrow?

UGO HUMBERT: It's a good question. The match against Zverev last year was crazy. The level of game was very high. It was amazing. It boosted my confidence.

There are some matches where there are very good top players and I didn't win, but I was not far. This is what I said to myself, that I was not far. This is where the stars align, because this won't happen tomorrow.

So I just want to recover, to prepare as much as I can.
This is the only thing that is in my control for tomorrow, and
I will do everything I have for the next fight.

**Q. When Karen is asking for medical time, you spoke
with Jeremy. Why is it important to chat with him?
What did you need to hear?**

UGO HUMBERT: He coached me a lot, especially towards
the end. I felt that he was tired, that he started cramping.
It boosted my confidence.

At the beginning of the third, I was very much tired, and he
would push very much on his external slice. He said to
close the angle more, to block the serve, and when I felt
that he was wearing out, I said, wear him out, make him
run back and forth. And afterwards, it was pure happiness.

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