

Adelaide International

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Adelaide, South Australia, Australia

Felix Auger-Aliassime

Press Conference



F. AUGER-ALIASSIME/T. Paul

7-6, 3-6, 6-4

Q. Felix, congratulations. What's the prospect of another title leading into the Aussie Open, what would that mean for you?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah, well, it would be the perfect way to start the year for sure, first single event for me. The plan, yeah, in the past I haven't played every time the week before a slam. I feel like the first years I would play more than around '22, '23, '24, not as much. But the ranking being a bit lower now days, and having not won a lot of matches in a row lately, I feel like the goal here was to just compete, play more matches, give myself a chance to win matches, and so far it's been good. Now there's one more to go. I know finals are always important, very motivating, so I'm going to give it my all, and then after focus on Melbourne.

Q. Curious what you're feeling like physically at the moment this week. I know you had that sort of back injury toward the end of last year. The Aussie summer can be a bit grueling, so how are you holding up at the moment?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: So far, so good, but you do the work, you do what's in your control between our preparation as a team, the treatments, the ice bath, the eating, the recovery, the sleeping, and after you don't control everything, not everything is in my hands or in my power. I hope this keeps going, but right now I'm feeling good.

Today was a good test, playing a guy like Tommy, where, you know, ups and downs in a match, difficult conditions with the lighting and stuff. Just, yeah, him being the great athlete he is, and myself matching up with that was an important test for me.

Q. I wanted to ask about that last set, obviously you dropped that second set, how did you sort of turn things around, and then you had to dig quite deep in service a couple times. What did you go through mentally, and how did you pull that one out?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, the second set, yeah,

was odd, because I had a great start, 2-0, and I felt like it was a solid first set overall because I got the break early, he played great game to break me back, played great tiebreak. So I thought, Okay, 7-6, 2-0, this is so far a good match. And then, yeah, things turned around, and I had a bit of a dip in focus and effort physically. So it was important, I think, that break, to get out and give myself a bit of time, and just mentally prepare myself to play, try to play a great start to the third set, which I did. So, yeah, it was key to get that break early to have that margin because he was still in every return game and he was putting pressure, but I think having that margin with the early break was crucial.

Q. How much do you enjoy playing Tommy, because the two tour-level matches that you've played have both been pretty tight, three-setters.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah, even more the first one. I had to save I think six match points. Yeah, he's been, how do I, I enjoy playing him because I like him as a person. I think he's a great guy. He's always very respectful, and with everybody around, and, you know, we played in some team events and Laver Cup together, we had some good moments. Every time we practice we're in good spirits, so he's a good guy. I think when you play somebody like this, you just feel like you're both competing at your hardest, but with a lot of respect and sportsmanship. So, yeah, I do enjoy those matchups, and he's one of the top players in the world also right now, so it's motivating to see where your game matches up against a guy that's in form lately, and for me, yeah, it was an important win for sure at the start of the year for me.

Q. Starting the year with at least a final, how much encouragement does that give you for at least the early part of the season, and helping to get that ranking back up?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, it's great, that's what I came here for. And there's one more to go tomorrow, we'll see, I'm not trying to think too much ahead. There's still some tennis to play tomorrow, and then with the Australian Open, so, and we'll see.

But I've been training well, I've been putting in some good work. I think the off-season was beneficial for me, and we've done some good work, so I trust that we will get rewarded. If I do good things, if I play good tennis,



and if I stay consistent, my ranking will get back up. But right now the focus is really on being consistent with what's in my control and how well I do my work.

Q. When do you start considering Melbourne? You wait until the end of tomorrow?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah.

Q. Has it entered your mind at all as yet? Have you looked at the draw?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I haven't looked at the draw, I don't want to know.

Q. I shouldn't tell you.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: No, you shouldn't. Look, if I find out, I find out. But I don't want to know, I'm not going to go look for it. I know my next opponent is Sebastian Korda or Kecmanovic, so that's what I know. And then after that match I will then for sure look at the draw. I know that I play Monday there, that I know of, and obviously we look with the team just for the schedule of planning things ahead, not to be rushed once we get there. Obviously it's a quick turnaround, but Melbourne is not so far from here. At least I have matches, I have rhythm, so the plan we know already, I mean, it's to play tomorrow, try to win, and then Sunday travel there in the morning, get a hit late in the day there, and then just get ready for the Monday match.

Q. Looking ahead to the Adelaide final, your thoughts first on if it was to be Sebi, and then secondly if it's to be Miomir.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well Sebi we've known each other for quite some years now, we're the same year. We played a bit, and even, not even juniors, but under-16 events with Canada and U.S., since the beginning we've played like in these matchups, playing for our country. He's been a great opponent to have. I love his improvement over the years. I feel like it's always been steady. He's had some struggle with injuries, which is unfortunate, but he's always had steady progress. He's got great game, great technique.

We played in a final before, and it was a tough one, I won in straight sets, I played great, but I know he's a tough climb. He's beat me one time on clay pretty badly as well, so he'll be a tough one.

Kecmanovic, same thing, I've know him for a long time, same generation, same thing. We practiced together here and I thought he was playing great, so I'm not surprised to see how well he's played in the first two rounds. I think just winning in straight sets, pretty straightforward, so he's been playing some good tennis this week. So it's going to be I think a pretty tight one

tonight. Let's see.

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