

# Roland Garros

Monday, 31 May 2021

Paris, France

## Storm Sanders

### Press Conference

E. MERTENS/S. Sanders

6-4, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Well, what do you have to say? I mean, that first set was looking so promising. How are you feeling at the moment? Obviously I would say no doubt disappointed, but in your own words...**

STORM SANDERS: Yeah, I'm definitely disappointed. I felt like I definitely had a lot of opportunities, especially in the first set. I came out playing really well, like being aggressive. Yeah, playing well.

Obviously she was nervous, I think. She was, yeah, just not playing great. I feel like I did really well to take advantage of that early in the first set to be 4-1 up.

Yeah, it was tricky out there, and obviously I'm disappointed because I think if I could have consolidated that first set, I mean, you just don't know what can happen.

But, yeah, I kind of started making a few too many errors, probably trying to press too much, gave her a little bit of a look in, and she obviously started finding her way. I mean, she's top 20, very good player, so she just hung in there and, yeah, changed it up a little bit and was giving me a few balls that, yeah, just mixing up the game and the style of play.

Yeah, it's tough because I definitely feel like if I could have won that first set and I was playing well, who knows? I could have been sitting here with a huge smile on my face and super happy, but, yeah, you know, it's all part of the learning experience.

**Q. Was it a bit of the case of maybe you looked a little bit too far ahead, I'm almost there with the first set in hand?**

STORM SANDERS: No, I didn't feel like that. I actually felt like I was probably more just rushing the points because I'm an aggressive player and I like to look for the short ball and look to take time away. I was probably trying to do that with the wrong balls.



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It was almost like in the points I was rushing myself and I didn't really think about, you know, Oh, I've almost got this first set. I was actually trying to stay in the moment. At 4-3, 4-All, I'm, like, Oh, okay.

The chances -- she started to play a little bit better and I started make a few more errors. You know, I think usually I do a pretty good job of staying in the moment. It was just more within the point I was probably just rushing myself. Yeah, just made too many errors.

**Q. What about this experience of getting through qualifying, making the main draw of the French Open for the first time, giving the No. 14 seed a little bit of a shake?**

STORM SANDERS: Yeah, it's been an awesome, I guess I have been here like ten days now. I'm playing really good tennis, consistent tennis this year, and obviously qualifying for the French Open was an amazing achievement for me.

Yeah, I'm still hungry. I want to keep feeling this. I want to be playing main draws of slams. For me, it's given me this extra motivation that -- you know, I've got Wimbledon qualifying in a few weeks, and hopefully by the U.S., if I'm in main draw on my own ranking, that would be a huge goal for me.

Yeah, I'm just motivated more than ever to keep working hard and backing myself and trying to have these experiences against the top players as much as possible.

**Q. You were saying yesterday that you actually embrace playing these top players and having that challenge. What's it taught you about yourself, that you can actually compete with these guys?**

STORM SANDERS: Yeah, 100%. I think, you know, I'm an aggressive player. I'm also left-handed. I think that can give a lot of players a lot of trouble, and I think even today being 4-1 up just shows that if I'm playing well and super clear with my game I can, yeah, definitely match it with the best.

That's the thing. I want to keep playing these girls and challenge myself and try and get better. I think you can only get better if you're having these opportunities and these experiences.

For me, yeah, I'm clearly disappointed, but I'm going to rewatch the match and try and learn from it and use it the next time I play a top-20, top-10 player. I have had this experience and I'm ready for the next opportunity.

**Q. Do you think that she was a little surprised or a little shocked at the way you went for the winners, particularly in those first few games where you were sort of hitting her off the court?**

STORM SANDERS: Yeah, I'm not sure. I felt like she looked a little unsure with what she was doing and she was maybe missing a lot of first serves and just maybe was unsure with my game. A lot of these girls probably haven't seen me play because I haven't played that much at this level, and there is probably not that much footage on me and notes and whatnot. So I'm sure it might take them a little bit to just figure me out.

Yeah, she's a top player, got a lot of experience. So I knew eventually she was going to start figuring it out and it was going to be up to me to play my game and be consistent and convert. I didn't actually do that today. So next time.

**Q. You were saying that you wanted to make everybody proud. You're a proud Australian, Queenslander. Do you think you did that?**

STORM SANDERS: Yeah, I hope so. Yeah, I gave everything out there. I don't give up. You know, I try to have a really good attitude on court.

I've got heaps of messages from home. Everyone is super proud of me. I hope everyone can keep following my journey. I want to keep going. Yeah, this isn't the end. This is the start.

Yeah, I'm hoping to, yeah, keep it going for the rest of the year while I'm away.

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