

Roland Garros

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Paris, France

Gilles Simon

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the press conference for media day of Gilles Simon. You have announced that you would actually retire. How do you feel ahead of this French Open 2022?

GILLES SIMON: I feel good. This decision was actually crystal clear. It was logical. I will try to enjoy it as much as I can to give my utmost and just enjoy it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

Q. Why did you make this decision? Was it because of a mental point of view? Was it a physical reason?

GILLES SIMON: Well, everything. Once the level has been going down and down constantly, it's becoming very difficult for me.

I run half the time continuously, I'm never ready. Usually at the end of the clay season, I feel okay. When it's the grass season, I feel okay.

At the end of the season everything takes too much time. Everything is too difficult. Weeks are not good enough. It seems that I don't have enough time every time for each tournament.

This sport is very physical. I need to play every week. I need to be consistent in the way I play. It requires too many efforts, and I do not have enough matches under my belt. I do not manage to get the upper hand. The last logical consequence of all this is to stop at the end of the year.

Q. Two questions, if I may. Do you have any nostalgia somehow to arrive here at the French Open? What about your body? Mr. Tsonga, who is actually making the same decision, stopping at the end of the year?

GILLES SIMON: Well, yes, maybe it's better to ask him the question. Honestly, when I announced it, I knew that I would feel something, because I have been thinking about this for some time now. I knew it would end at one point.

But when we make it official, it's a done deal. Maybe some others have done it, as well, but there is no turning



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back as far as I'm concerned. When we announce it, it's a done deal. I will not change my mind.

I was expecting more feedback, let's say, but nothing happened. That meant that I had made the right decision. I was then afterwards completely at ease with my decision. I had no nostalgia whatsoever. I just had the feeling that I had done everything I could for as long as I could, and now it's becoming too difficult, and I should just stop here.

Not much more has happened, actually. As for Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, each story his own. It was more difficult for him, as well, from physical point of view, but also regarding his personal life, his private life, because since he had his kids, it was more difficult for him to be on the tour.

He loves playing. He loves the atmosphere. He loves the social life around tennis but also watching other players play. He loves also creating academies, tennis academies.

But it's a bit the same thing, and it's a bit on the same wavelength, so to say. At one point it happens. Maybe he hoped to have a comeback. When he played again last winter, he didn't play that badly, but then the results were quite disappointing at the beginning of the season. The ranking is going lower and lower, and he felt maybe it's going to be -- certainly he was thinking it would be harder to come back, and so he knew that physically he couldn't hold his own.

Q. You will certainly leave a hallmark on tennis history. Are you disappointed not to have reached a 500th victory?

GILLES SIMON: I don't know. I actually reached the 400th or the 300th, actually, so it won't change much.

Do I feel able to reach that? That's not easy-peasy. We will see. Honestly, it will not change anything in my life. Whether I reach that goal or not it's irrelevant.

Q. You were always on the sideline when it comes to tennis. Have you thought about a new career, or are you going to stay in that world of tennis? Are you going to change altogether your sector of occupation?

GILLES SIMON: Well, I will certainly have a real break



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for some time. I don't want to carry on. I want to enjoy and have some quality time with my children, because I haven't seen them for some time.

My career has been quite long. 17 years I have been on the tour. It's quite long. So if I could have six-month, one-year break, it would actually be a real benefit for me, but tennis has always been my passion. I will never be far away from tennis. That's for sure. But how and in which capacity, I don't know. I have always wanted to be a player. Everything that I will do afterwards will be something else, something that was not my top priority.

I always saw myself as a player since I was small, since I was a kid. Very often I was asked this question, what would you do as a backup career if you were to stop being a player? I never thought about it really. I never found the answer.

I'll see what happens. There is nothing that motivates me for the moment. We will see. I have no expectation.

Q. Are you proud of your career? Bearing in mind your potential, have you actually reached all your objectives? Have you managed to do everything you wanted to do? Maybe you wanted to have a Grand Slam tournament or something. When you stop now, as you're about to stop, what is your best memory?

GILLES SIMON: You have so many questions at once (smiling).

You know, the answers are quite difficult to convey. I will try to see things in a straightforward way. I did my utmost as best as I could.

Could I have done better? Yes. Could it have been less good? Of course, yes, as well.

I tried to do my best all the time. Have I made always the right choices? Maybe not. Did I manage to be proud? Yes, sometimes. That's part and parcel of a tennis career. 17 years on the tour. Ultimately, as I said, I have been wanting to be a tennis player since I was a kid, so since I was 10 years old.

This is the only thing I did. You're not perfect. You can't be perfect every time. But you try to do your best, and some results were there.

It's not a matter of wins and defeats, of ranking. It's beyond that. If I were to give a judgment on my career, things could have been better. There are matches I could have won, but there are a lot of matches I could have lost, as well. And ultimately, since we actually play for such a long time, this is why it's hard to answer your question, is there one memory? No, there are too many memories.

On the performance, there are performance events. There are bad performance or there are also good events, because emotionally you have great memories because you have a win in Metz, for instance, when I had my first newborn, this was great. It was much better than having defeated Nadal or Federer. We are talking about tennis performance, 100%.

Ultimately there were a lot of things. There were disappointments. There were great memories. There were a lot of U-turns. There were also a lot of nightmares like in Bercy where you actually lead 40-Love and you lose at the end, and you remember that, of course. This is painful. But year after year, of course, you actually live every kind of feeling.

Sometimes you actually lead and you lose. Sometimes you actually are down and you end up winning. So you can have all sorts of feelings. It's not a matter of the biggest tournament won or something. After 17 years, I have done my best. I gave everything I had.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. I think you are on the player council, are you not?

GILLES SIMON: Yeah.

Q. I'm just wondering what the latest situation is about the discussions about Wimbledon and points and what your personal view is on that situation?

GILLES SIMON: My personal view is that it's a very difficult situation, very tricky situation, with absolutely no good and easy decision to make, would have been done already if everybody was agreeing on the situation, so it's a really tough one. It's not in our hands. It's not voted yet. It's on the board level. So we are all waiting for the call to be announced, but obviously some people will like it; some others won't like it.

One more time, it's really tricky. I think at this point we just want to wait, wait to see what's gonna happen and wait for the decision.

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