

# Roland Garros

Sunday, 22 May 2022

Paris, France

## Gregoire Barrere

Press Conference



**ROLAND-GARROS**

G. BARRERE/T. Daniel

3-6, 6-2, 0-6, 6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: (In French.)

We would like to have your feedback after this riveting match. We have heard also the public hurrying you. Thinking about the next match. What are your first feelings after this huge victory.

GREGOIRE BARRERE: I'm very happy. I didn't expect three weeks ago to be part of the draw, so winning a five-setter was great. Also, the public was supporting me very much. So it was very nice hearing also The Marseillaise was wonderful. They were really supporting me.

There were ups and downs but I managed to get the upper hand, so I'm delighted.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. How did the public support you? Was it an added value for you?**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: When they say your name, when they sing The Marseillaise, the National Anthem, of course it's hard to focus, but it also gives you extra energy. For the opponent it's not easy. The public was really hot. It actually pushes you to go further, to give the extra mile, and to push the opponent to make errors.

So this helped me also for the second set to outplay the opponent. They supported me throughout the match, and I really thank the public for this.

**Q. You said that you didn't expect to play. You have had a wonderful season. You have had Aix also, which helped you to grab this wildcard, and also the third round that allows you to go further in the draw. It's a wonderful streak, isn't it?**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: Yes. It's also a holdup, if I were to say, because when I arrived in Aix first round and there was this serve, my opponent was from the same academy, so I knew it would be hard. But I never felt that I would finish here.

I'm delighted, I have to say. I also play carefree. I take one match at a time. I try to play loose. So it's wonderful what's happening right now.

I also had a lot of practice. At the beginning of the season was quite hard, but ultimately I stepped up my game, and I hope that it will actually pay off for the rest of the tournament.

**Q. I think you had an important discussion with your staff at Split. Maybe it was not an easy moment. Did it help you to have a comeback, so to say?**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: Well, that's one of the important discussions I had. I was a bit lost. My practice sessions were not very successful. The intentions were not where they should have been.

My coach actually told me off very much, as he knows how to do it when needed. I know that when he does that, it means that I'm not playing well. He was really supporting me these last weeks. We went back to practice. It didn't pay off at first, but then afterwards, I managed to have a three-setter. I was more the fighter, and I managed to win matches. I managed to win in self-confidence, to win self-confidence, as well.

Everything comes from this conversation, I think, because he managed to tell me off and to make sure that I have a U-turn in my career to change my game.

I tried my best. I practiced very much these last days. I'm very happy, because it's paying off right now. I didn't think that it would actually pay off so quickly, and for the French Open. But if I carry on like this -- had I carried on in the wrong direction, then I wouldn't have won any matches.

**Q. I don't know what your mindset was, but it seems that at the beginning of the year you were unlucky, right? You had a problem with cars, if I'm not mistaken, from the social media?**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: Yeah, in the parking. Someone actually bumped into my car. But I was not the only one. There were 10 other cars.

That's not the only thing. I had COVID during Christmas. I was positive for 15 days. The Australian Open was telling me that I could leave, and then I was told not to by

the air company, then I managed to leave.

I need to practice a lot, because I was not in great shape. And because of the jet lag, I was really low. Then I came back to Europe. There was one week in Quimper where I felt better. I played better. I don't know why I play better there. I always feel at ease in Quimper.

There were some nice moments, and then it was hot again. I had problems again with the next tournament. There were some changes made.

Now I'm here. I'm quite surprised, I have to say, but I'm delighted by the outcome.

**Q. It's the second win in the French Open as opposed to 2019. How wonderful is it for you?**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: Well, Daniel Taro is much more of a clay court player than the other opponent. This is a five-setter as well. It's wonderful to play on Court 14. It's a great court.

Honestly, three weeks ago, a month ago, you would have asked me, I would have said it's impossible for me to win any match in the French Open. I'm flabbergasted to be here right now.

But I feel good right now. After Aix it was still a little bit tough, but after Bordeaux I would say that I play well because I had a lot of matches under my belt. I managed to step up with my game. I knew that I could win today.

I haven't played a five-setter for quite some time. That was actually what was daunting me, I have to say, when I was thinking about the possibility of a five-setter.

But I'm delighted, because I managed to win. I can say that I won a five-setter in Roland Garros once in my life.

**Q. We often talk about the new generation, and even more this year with Tsonga and Simon who are ending their career this year. You are not the brand-new generation but you are next generation after Tsonga. What do you feel about...**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: I'm not the next gen. I have been here for quite some time now. Since I was 18. I did the futures. No, I don't consider myself as the next gen. I don't feel at all concerned by these discussions. There are a lot of young players who are pushing hard. This is not a wonderful time right now, because we had four great players before.

They have achieved wonderful results. It's not only for the French tennis actually. It could happen for any country after you have had four great players like this. It's incredible.

Now we have great young players. I hope they don't feel too much pressure on their shoulders with that type of discussion, because I never thought about it myself. I couldn't be in their shoes, really.

I hope that they do not think about this, that they do not read too much about the next gen, and I'm sure that they will be very good players coming up really and taking over.

**Q. You said you were positive at Christmas, and then you had problems with Australia and your trip. When you came in March for the challenger in Lille that you had won twice, you actually had to stop quite early. Were you down? Did you have a big low at the time?**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: Yes. Usually I actually have great results. It was actually I felt really down when I didn't go further in the draw. It was really hard.

I had to decide to carry on. This is why we had this discussion in Split. I would have liked to be back on track earlier on, but now it's time for me to be back on and I'm ready.

**Q. You are very close to Jo. On Tuesday we will have a great match. Maybe you are in the know because you are close to him. Will it be a great party or do you feel that it will be like a burial? Are you going to attend this farewell match?**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: I want to be there. I hope it will be a great party. I hope that the crowd will support him, because we have to take into consideration the great career he's had so far.

With us, he's been always great. He's always giving us tips and advice. He always has helped us when we had terrible moments. So I hope that it will be a party. It will not be an easy match. I hope it won't be his last match. We'll see.

I hope that he will play Carefree, that he will enjoy it. He's usually a party-goer, so I hope that he will play with the public, because he deserves for this match to be great, for us to attend it, for the public to support him, and to have a great moment.

**Q. I have a question on Wimbledon and the points. Do you feel concerned by this? Do you think that it's worth it going there?**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: I thought that it was Mbappe for the other piece of news that was important. I'm quite sad by your question.

Well, it will be strange. I will be there no matter what. So

it's irrelevant. Even this week I'm going to have some money, thanks to the first round. For the quallies, it's for sure we don't have a lot of money, but I still will play the quallies. I will lose 35 points. I managed to win qualifying rounds last year.

It can be difficult on both sides of the controversy. I think we should have kept the points, but I will be there. I don't know who will not attend, because winning Wimbledon is still a piece of glory. It's wonderful.

You know, even if there are no points to gain, I am sure that many players will want to attend. I love playing there, personally. I hope that I will actually get out of the qualifying rounds again.

**Q. So we will talk about other news, because you are often at the Parc. [Question about football.]**

GREGOIRE BARRERE: I'm relieved, I have to say. So today I felt good. My fitness coach is for Real Madrid. I said, Okay. We could have a celebration for Kylian at the end. He would have liked it.

I can't do things like that. This is not the way I am, but I'm delighted, I have to say. He's the best world player with Karim Benzema and their French players. I hope for the World Cup this winter it will actually pay off. But I actually bought my T-shirt, my football T-shirt.

THE MODERATOR: We're not talking about the next match? Not yet? We can plan ahead, can't we, or we just enjoy it now?

GREGOIRE BARRERE: We will enjoy it now. I saw that Quentin lost unfortunately against Isner. We are very close friends, you know. We have been practicing together since we were young. I would have loved to play him for the second round.

John Isner is a wonderful player. He has a great serve. I have a good return game. I have to prepare on this, but I have two days to rest, and then we will think about this match.

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