

Roland Garros

Sunday, 22 May 2022

Paris, France

Elise Mertens

Press Conference



ROLAND-GARROS

E. MERTENS/E. Ruse

6-3, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Your match was rather short, so, I was saying a little over an hour, two sets, is it the dream start in a Grand Slam, especially here in Paris?

ELISE MERTENS: Yes, of course. In the beginning I was somewhat stressed because it's first round, Grand Slam, but it was okay, I played well, I'm happy.

I believe I was at 0-1 and 4-1 and I didn't make any real mistakes, she was a bit aggressive, but then afterwards I was not so stressed and I played well and she dropped somewhat in the second set and I was so motivated because I wanted to win.

So it was a little over an hour, but it's good because I could keep my energy for the future.

Q. Can you just talk through a little bit just the decision to come back, like when you decided that you were ready to play again and how are you feeling and just the injury that kind of kept you off?

ELISE MERTENS: Yeah, so the injury came in Istanbul where I played like, well I had to give up unfortunately, but it was in the first set I felt like a little thing was in my leg, I didn't officially know what it was, but it was a little tear, half a centimeter, they normally say, like one centimeter, a week, but I felt like it was not really recovered yet and there was a little interruption in the muscle, so I decided not to play Rome because this one was coming up and it's much more important, if I can say so. But, yeah, I decided to play Strasbourg before trying to get some matches in, find a rhythm and everything. I played singles and doubles there, you know, you never know what's going to happen.

But, yeah, and then in the planning I had to play today on Sunday, actually I was pleased about it because I lost my match on Thursday, I felt like, okay, I'm still in this rhythm. Otherwise, if it's Tuesday, then you almost have a week in between. So I was kind of pleased that I played today.

Q. Where in the leg was it?

ELISE MERTENS: It was right upper leg. Right in the middle.

Q. How are you feeling then as you get back? You're a player who likes matches, who gets into matches and tournament rhythm, so do you feel that you've lost that or how sharp do you feel?

ELISE MERTENS: Well, I feel the same injury right before the Australian Open, but I didn't really have the time to relax there and try to take my rest. So I think it's maybe why it came back a little bit. But that's also why I took a bit longer now.

And of course in the first match in Strasbourg I was really nervous like, oh, am I going to play well and everything.

But I know I put the hours in at home, I did a lot of fitness to make myself stronger, the day after I felt like once that first match was over or in the first match I felt like my rhythm was back there. And I missed a lot, that's for sure, I'm very motivated and still am, but I really lost it like not completely I think because I still had some matches I played, I won, and this one today felt like a really good one.

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