

Roland Garros

Tuesday, 24 May 2022

Paris, France

Hugo Gaston

Press Conference

H. GASTON/A. de Minaur

4-6, 6-2, 6-3, 0-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Tell us what happened in your mind during this last set after match with highs, lows, and Suzanne Lenglen that supported you until the end.

HUGO GASTON: Yes, indeed. Right now I'm exhausted, and that's normal. I'm not a robot, but I'm very happy that I got through, because Alex is an excellent player. He's very regular, makes few mistakes.

There was a bit of frustration at the end of the first set because I let him play too much, but I started well, and he was able to win the first set. Then the second and third set were wonderful. The beginning of the fourth, okay, because I had occasions to break, but I didn't succeed. This liberated him, and I was a bit more passive from that set onwards.

I was able to fight back in the fifth set, at the beginning of the fifth set. It was not easy, especially at 3-0, I had to win this fourth game. I was able to win it, did an excellent return game and then I came back in the match very happy that I went through.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

Q. Did you say you did a win a la Gaston because you come to Roland Garros without any past successes, and you play a match which fires up everyone?

HUGO GASTON: Yes, I'm happy. I came to this Roland Garros with very few matches and some questions on myself. But my game level was always good. I felt very well on the court, and I had a few problems that made it so that I didn't succeed. I came on the match. I was well in my mind and physically in my game.

So I'm very happy. If it had been a loss, it would have been difficult to handle, but I gave my best and I'm very happy about the match.

Q. If I'm not mistaken, you're the first French from this edition to win a match at the super-tiebreak at the fifth set. You had difficulty in finishing. You had



ROLAND-GARROS

twice the occasion to finish on your serve at 5-4 and 6-5. You say thank you to the tournament direction to finish the matches with a super-tiebreak?

HUGO GASTON: Yes. It's true that it helped me, to be very honest. But if I had to play on, I would have continued and I would have given it all. I would have given my whole body on the court.

But these are the new rules that are quite recent. So it did help me, and I used it.

Q. Can you talk about your relationship with the Paris crowd, Bercy or here? Each time there are things that succeed, that happen. You don't win all the time, but how does it help you in the difficult moment, especially at the end of the match where you had cramps and you were calling on the public to help you?

HUGO GASTON: The crowd plays an important role, very important role. They supported me right from the beginning. They didn't come back at the fifth set. They were encouraging me right from the beginning of the match.

I like to share my emotions with the audience, so this helped me. This gave me strength, because it was not an easy task at the beginning of the fifth set and even at the end of the fifth set.

But I used the crowd. They were fantastic, so it was a great moment.

Q. Beyond the question of Roland Garros, the crowd, et cetera, you had to play that match at that super level. I haven't seen all your matches since the beginning of the season, but you can't say that you did an excellent beginning of the season. How were you able to raise your level today on such a match against a player who is not giving any freebies?

HUGO GASTON: Well, it's of course the crowd. I know that I had excellent moments on this court and even in Roland Garros in general. So I used the two-year, the edition two years ago to do the same thing, and it was the first time I played on the Lenglen that was full.

So I tried to give my best, to take my chances. As I said, I came to Roland Garros with few wins. It was the only problem, but I felt ready, 100%. I'm in good physical



shape. I'm feeling very well.

So it's partly thanks to the audience that I was able to play such a match.

Q. What do you know from your next opponent, Pedro Cachin?

HUGO GASTON: Not much. First of all, recover. I have to play doubles tomorrow. After the doubles, I will start thinking about my opponent. But I know him because I played on challengers with him.

But will have a closer look with my coach.

Q. What are his strengths?

HUGO GASTON: I don't know yet. I haven't seen him play for a long time, so I'll have to see.

Q. Regarding the crowd with respect to Alcaraz in Bercy, the end was a bit like the same, he started missing. What do you put the fact that the crowd is shouting and destabilizing the opponent?

HUGO GASTON: It's difficult to answer, because Bercy is even more difficult. The crowd is incredible. In Bercy more than in Roland Garros. But today in Roland Garros they were incredible, so I say same as Bercy.

Q. Of course against Stan, there was almost no one, but regarding your feelings, is it closer to what you lived against Stan?

HUGO GASTON: It wasn't that it's close, but it was not the same conditions of match. Today we had the sun, shade, wind. So different types of conditions during the match.

But I would say that it was quite a different match. The atmosphere played a great role for me, and also how I played. Stan is hitting very hard. Alex is less powerful player but who is able to do everything. I knew that there were going to be long rallies and I was able to keep the ball in.

Q. There was this movement of humor when you broke your racquet. Were you able to evacuate your frustration and restart fresh in the fifth set?

HUGO GASTON: Yes, I had to react. If I had been able to avoid breaking my racquet, I would have avoided that, but I didn't control myself. It didn't go too much good to me, because I was broken immediately afterwards.

But sometimes you have to get rid of the tension, to have a fresh start. It was the case, actually. But if I do that too often I will have no more racquets.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. Incredible match. Can you just try and explain your emotions and how you got over the line.

HUGO GASTON: Yeah, it was an amazing match. The crowd was just so good. The atmosphere, the court were full, so I'm pretty happy because it was a really difficult opponent, and match. I'm really happy about the victory.

Q. You had great wins here in 2020, got to the quarterfinals in Bercy. Today what is it about playing in Paris, the home crowd, that really gets you?

HUGO GASTON: Yeah, I love to play in Paris. I play good, so I try to concentrate that. Also, the crowd help me a lot today. So I try to give my best, and you see the result.

Q. A lot of players you grew up with or near, Musetti, Baez, Alcaraz, getting big wins in Grand Slams. Does it feel like a special generation of a group of young players?

HUGO GASTON: Yeah, that's I think there is a new generation is coming. Alex is here like for two, three years. I know it's a really tough opponent, and I'm really happy about this match and about the generation also.

Q. Had you always planned to get the crowd to sing "Happy Birthday" to your girlfriend or was it spur-of-the-moment surprise?

HUGO GASTON: No, it was nice. It was nice for me and nice for her.

Q. Cachin next, your thoughts on that. But also going forward, what would you need for another deep run here like 2020?

HUGO GASTON: I mean, I have just to rest a little bit, to do some physio, and I have the doubles also tomorrow. So first I gonna stay focused on this match and we will see about the match against Cachin in two days.

Q. A lot of players are talking about Tsonga. Can you talk of any memories you have with him, watching, your thoughts on his retirement?

HUGO GASTON: Yeah, that's a champion, an amazing player. I think he played a really good match today against Casper. It was really close. But, I mean, it's a chance to play with him in the same time, and for sure the best memories for me it's in the Australian Open when he made the final.

But that's a good champion and an amazing player and good person also. I'm happy about him and his career.

Q. How do you think, compared to you in Roland Garros 2020, how do you compare as a player and person now two years on?

HUGO GASTON: I think my game, it's better. I feel more strong in my head, in my game, and my physical also. So I think I'm also a good person and a better player, too.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports