

Roland Garros

Sunday, 28 May 2023

Paris, France

Ugo Humbert

Press Conference

U. HUMBERT/A. Mannarino

6-3, 6-3, 6-1

Q. So that's your first here in Roland Garros. You lost in the previous years in the first rounds, and so it's a good momentum you're building on. You've been working a lot, and you've had good results lately. So I think it's very special for you.

UGO HUMBERT: Well, you know, it's really special. I've been trying for four to five years, and I've never managed to actually relax on court here until I was very first on center court, on Philippe-Chatrier court.

I had a wonderful time, and I'm really satisfied with my first match.

Q. At the beginning of the match the fact that you were playing here on Chatrier and the fact that you were playing Adrian that you know really well, did that make you tense a little bit?

UGO HUMBERT: Yes, indeed. You know, it was really difficult to find my marks on court. I can feel the ball really well when I first played here, and this morning it was different when I started practicing and today when I played. So I think I managed that, I handled that really well.

I think it was one of the toughest things to do because when you play on Chatrier, you can get a little bit tense, but I took it as a reward after the tough months that I've been through.

So it was really incredible to play on this court.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about how much you've improved on clay, and it's getting visible here because you've won in Bordeaux, in Cagliari. Frustrating losses in Madrid and in another tournament. Can you tell us a little bit more about how much you've improved and what the process was.

UGO HUMBERT: Well, you know, it was a mental process. Jeremy, my coach, tried to convince me that I could win. In the previous seasons I had only had two to



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three wins on clay. And so he told me, All right, well, trust me. You are going to try to play differently, and even if you're not going to succeed at the beginning, that's what I did in Cagliari, it implied some questions about my game and how to adjust it to play on clay and to protect yourself on clay. It's crucial.

I'm really enjoying it out there. Now it's the surface on which I've won the most points, so I'm really glad.

Q. Without unveiling any secrets, what have you changed in terms of tactic and technique?

UGO HUMBERT: Well, you know, I've got more. I can vary a little bit more, vary the height a little bit, and respect the game.

I was really tense. I was hitting the ball quite hard, so I didn't have any time to get back to my position, so that was the first thing on which I've improved. I can move better. I can slide more because it was a little bit like Bambi on ice at the beginning, but now I've improved.

Q. So your next opponent will be Sonogo that you have played against in Monaco that you could have won against and you should have won against. Can you comment on that?

UGO HUMBERT: I'm really glad that I'm playing against him again. That would be my revenge. That's what Jeremy told me. I'll be playing here at Roland Garros in France, and he is a great player. He has a very aggressive game.

Last time in Monte-Carlo it was really tight. I had some match points. I couldn't convert them. I've had some opportunities, but I'm going to give my best for the next match.

Q. Just to get back on how you have improved on clay, your case is comparable to Medvedev, who has had that mental block in the past, and he has explained that he had worked hard to change things mentally.

So did he inspire you? He explained that he wanted to work on the trajectories, the heights of the balls. Were you inspired by him?

UGO HUMBERT: Well, no. Each day is different, and I think he had that mental block. I don't want to speak on



... when all is said, we're done.®

behalf of him.

What I'm interested in is what I'm doing now, what I'm doing on my team. I'm improving on clay, and I've managed to improve this year on clay, and that's thanks to Jeremy.

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