

Roland Garros

Monday, 29 May 2023

Paris, France

Luca Van Assche

Press Conference

L. VAN ASSCHE/M. Cecchinato

6-1, 6-1, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Your first win in a Grand Slam. 6-1, 6-1, 6-3, 16 unforced errors in two hours. Not bad, eh?

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: Yeah, well, it's not bad. I think it was a great match on my end. He was in the semifinals in the last years. You know, I knew I had a big fight to put up, so I'm glad I won.

Q. Well, you knew the credentials of your opponent. Weren't you scared? Did you manage to focus right away?

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: Well, you know, it was my first main draw here at Roland Garros, but I had a good start to the match.

It's always easier for us as French people because we get the support from the crowd, and I managed to just relax and really play a good match.

Q. You've heard the crowd cheering and saying, "Luca, Luca." What did you think? We had the feeling that you were getting goose bumps.

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: Yeah, of course, it gave me the goose bumps. It's always something that really helps us, and they keep pushing you harder and harder.

It was my first senior tournament here; and, of course, I was a little bit stressed out, but then I managed to relax a little bit and play correctly.

Q. I have the feeling things are going really fast for you this year. You've ticked so many boxes.

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: Yes, well, it's true many things have happened. I would have liked to win a match at the Australia Open, but I've managed to do that here, and I'm really looking forward to the future. I'm aiming way further now.

Q. In the second set it got a little bit tighter, but it's



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true that in the first one it was easier, so how did you react?

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: Well, you know, he is a very experienced player, and it's true that when someone loses 2-0 sets, then it gets more difficult, but I tried to stay calm and keep my composure in winning straight sets.

Q. It was quite an event for you and for your family and for the people who have known you, for the people at TC16, and you have invited somebody called Yann [ph], and he didn't come for your juniors final in 2016, but he made it today. So was it important for you?

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: Well, you know, Yann is one of our stars at the club, so it was great to have him today. When I play tournaments like that at Roland Garros, it's so nice to have all the people who supported me over the years in order to be able to thank them. So, of course, there was my family, my coaches, my friends that I have known for many years.

Q. Arthur Fils said that he was a little bit ahead of you because he has won in Lyon, but now you went ahead of him by winning. But jokes aside, what can you tell him?

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: Well, you know, I haven't come across him yet. I don't know if he is playing doubles tomorrow. But, anyway, I'll talk to him if I see him.

Davidovich Fokina is a player that I know that I've played a few weeks ago. I know him well, so I can still ask him a few questions to know how he played today. But, anyway, I'm going to watch his match, and I'm probably going to ask him for some tips.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit what the competition is like between Arthur and yourself. Of course, you are going your own way and going down your own path, but how do you interact with each other?

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: We know each other really well. We've known each other for years. I'm happy for him and with all the results, and the title in Lyon last week. And I'm happy to see that he's improving, and he's a very good friend of mine.

So we push each other up first thing because we get



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along really well and we very often practice together. We know we've got pretty much the same level, and we've known for some years that if I play well and I manage to perform well on a tournament, it means that it's possible for him and vice versa.

So when I saw that he has won that ATP title and getting to the semis, et cetera, since the start of the year, it means that I can do that as well. I hope it's going to carry on like that.

Q. What are you going to do tonight? Are you going to enjoy your victory, or are you going to focus on your next victory because you seem really poised? Is it something you want to celebrate, or do you want to focus on the next match?

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: Of course, I'm going to enjoy the victory a little bit. I have time to celebrate after the tournament, but, you know, tomorrow I've got my doubles match to play. Not really late, so I need to recover from today's match, and I need to be ready for tomorrow's doubles and also for the singles match of Wednesday.

Q. Concerning your match against Davidovich in Estoril, so you had a set point to go one set apiece. Is it something you are going to analyze?

LUCA VAN ASSCHE: Boy, it's an advantage to know him and to know that I can play at the same level, but I'm going to start by focusing on my doubles match for tomorrow and then we'll see how things go.

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