

Roland Garros

Wednesday, 31 May 2023

Paris, France

Lucas Pouille

Press Conference

C. NORRIE/L. Pouille

6-1, 6-3, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: First question in English for Lucas.

Q. Can you just say what you thought about the match? You kind of gave it a really good effort at the end there and nearly came back.

LUCAS POUILLE: Yeah, yeah. It took me some time to adapt to the condition. The Lenglen is a bit different than the Court 14, so it took me some time.

Yes, it was a good battle. But, yeah, Cameron was playing good, and I think, yeah, I just need to go back to work and keep working hard to get back to this level. It showed me today that what I need to keep working on. It's good to know now.

Q. What was your thought about the ball that maybe didn't bounce -- or did bounce twice?

LUCAS POUILLE: I haven't seen the video yet. For me it bounced twice. I was pretty sure. It was right on the net.

But, yeah, well, there is nothing to say because it happened. You cannot change it. If the umpire made a mistake, she made a mistake. But, yeah, there's nothing else to say.

Q. Just on that, should Cam Norrie, your opponent, have an obligation to call it when it's a double bounce or --

LUCAS POUILLE: Obligation? You have no obligation. You do whatever you want. But when you play -- when you run to the ball and you hit it, sometimes you don't know if it bounced twice or not.

I was pretty sure it did. Maybe it didn't. I don't know. We have to see the video for that. But, yeah, the only thing I can say is that I think today we have so many options to check if it bounced twice or not. It's easy with the video. You show it on the screen, and you see straight away if it bounced or not because apparently they showed it on TV.



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So you can see it, but the only problem I see in that is that it's okay to make a mistake, but then you have to -- for the players it's okay to make a mistake as well

Like when you feel the tension and, I don't know, at the end of a set you break your racquet or something, you should not be fined 10,000 or 15,000 because you make a mistake. It's the same for the umpire.

The umpire can make a mistake. It's human. It's normal, but I'm not sure she's going to take -- if she did a mistake, I'm not sure she's going to take 15,000 for that.

For me it's the same for the players. We should stop thinking that we are robots, and it's okay to make mistake. But stop saying push it about giving fines like it's a Christmas present.

Q. Lucas, you're the only one of several players that I've heard make that point in the recent weeks about the lack of accountability for umpires. Is it something that players talk about in the locker room?

LUCAS POUILLE: Not really. I haven't been in the locker room for a while, so I don't really know what they talk about. But the only thing for me that not fair is that we have so many emotion on the court that sometimes you don't control them.

I mean, I don't know if you miss a forehand at 30-All in the fifth after four hours of play, and by mistake you -- it's a mistake. You don't control, you break your racquet. Is it worth, like, 15,000? I'm not sure.

But for an umpire there's no consequences. Like, it's okay. She made a mistake. Maybe she changed a match. It's okay; next day she's going to be on the chair no matter what.

That's why for me it's not fair. It's okay. We all do mistakes. They do mistakes. We do mistakes. Sometimes we think the ball is good, but it's out. We are not always right, but at the end you have to understand that we are not robots, like they are not.

For me the double bounce with all the cameras there is on court, it should be easy to check, and that's it. Then there is no problem.

Q. What do you take home from this Roland Garros? You put one foot in the great world. What do you need to put the second foot in it?

LUCAS POUILLE: Well, to get back to playing matches at that level with that intensity. Today Cameron is a player who has very few misses. He is very solid, so I see the progress I still have to do.

But after five matches here, this gives me confidence. I'm happy if when I came back from the U.S. a few weeks ago, if you say I will qualify and be in the second round on the Lenglen. Honestly, I would have signed right away because it's great to get back to that level and to be able to do what I thought I couldn't.

So not everything is to be thrown away. I'm proud of the efforts I've made over the past few weeks, proud of what I did on this tournament, and very happy about the emotions and the feelings I had with the public, and it makes me want to go back to practice, to work harder, and to get back as soon as possible on this kind of tournament.

Q. Today we saw the margin between qualifiers and top players. So obviously with this you are going to rank much higher. So what do you think you're going to work on to get back to that level you want to have, and are you going to change anything in your schedule now that you change your status?

LUCAS POUILLE: Well, I'm not really going to change. I'm going to go from 700s to 400s, so things are not going to change, but what is going to change is that I have to renew with the habit of playing at that level with that intensity.

I'm still good at a forehand. I still can play a backhand, but tactically I have to renew with the habit of playing with that intensity against that kind of player.

And, also, to play one match after the other. This was my fifth, and there were a lot of emotions over the past ten days. Some fatigue even though I had two days to regroup. It's still like you're in the washing machine really.

But today the bar was too high. He was stronger than I was, but it makes me want to continue working hard, regaining the physical capacity I need.

Q. We saw Thierry a few weeks ago in Lyon, and he said this Roland Garros could be your trigger to convince you that you could play at that level and even more.

LUCAS POUILLE: Well, that's what I said. I don't know after which match, but I said it made me believe again that I had the level to play in and win this kind of match

and play in this kind of tournament and have victories one after the other. So this was important for me.

Now I'm going to have to take one after the other throughout the summer. Not every week, but almost. And hope not to get hurt and to be able to play week after week, month after month without stopping, without breaking, and to regain the rhythm.

Q. You talked about your tour in the U.S., which wasn't that good. Now you played in certain conditions with the public behind you and certain conditions. Do you think you can go back to the anonymity of the secondary tour without this public behind you?

LUCAS POUILLE: Yes. Well, there's no choice. But the fact that I had a taste of this again makes me want to get back to it as soon as possible and to make all the efforts I need, but it's quite clear. I have to go back to challenger, and I'll have to battle because there every player is hungry, every player wants to win.

And I'm ready to give 400% of what I can to reach the highest ranking possible by the end of the year and reach my objective, which is to be in the draw in Australia.

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