

National Bank Open

Monday, August 9, 2021

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Felix Auger-Aliassime

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Fun for you to get together with one of your good buddies and play doubles today in Toronto? Can you talk about what that was like to be out on the court with him against such great opposition? The last time I saw you play doubles in Toronto was Denis. Also a good friend of yours. We haven't seen the two of you play together in quite a while. Does it become more challenging as you guys are, I don't want to say rivals, but both competing on the singles tour for the top of the game?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah, so the first part, you know, playing with Alixes, my long-time friend, one of my best friends just in life in general, he's one of the persons I kept in touch with the most in my life. You know, since he's a good player, he just finished college, I thought it would be great for us to play doubles here, for him to get a chance to play at this stage. And also, for me to play with a good friend, it's always nice.

I thought we played a good match, to be honest. You know, they played good in the first set. We did small mistakes. Then the second set it was, yeah, really unlucky. We missed some crazy shots in the tiebreak that we shouldn't have, but that's how it goes. It happens. But I thought overall, I think he can be proud, for sure. He played a great match. On my part I played pretty good, too.

They are just a good team. I have beaten them with other partners before. I have also lost to them before. I remember in Beijing once. Anyway, it was a good match.

Of course with Denis, we have different schedules. He's played with doubles players. Sometimes I have played with my partners. You kind of just find on tour who you play good with, but of course we will see. Denis and I playing in the future in team events and in other events, it just hasn't happened for some reason lately, but there's nothing behind that. It's just a matter of circumstances.

Q. Like you said, you and Alixes go way back, so I do

want to ask about the start of that friendship. What do you kind of remember from your first junior matches with him? How have you guys really grown over the years together as players and as people?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah, well, it's really fun, because we were actually just laughing. We were in the gym here at the tournament earlier, and we have some memories of being in that gym when we were what, 9, 10, 11 years old. It goes 10 years or more back.

We used to come here to the Aviva Centre, they had national camps, and we used to come, yeah, as early as when we were 9 years old. We go way back. I remember playing him, I don't know, maybe 5, 6 years old, seeing him around tournaments, and early on we became friends. We were, him and other players, we were a good group of players in my generation in Quebec and in Canada.

We also went on at the national center, trained together for a couple of years, and just our routes just separated a little bit when I went on to play as a professional and he went to college, but now it's good to have him on the tour a little bit.

He finished school. Now he's a full steam ahead trying to be a professional tennis player. So it's good to see him in a few tournaments.

Q. Even though the last two tournaments didn't come your way, at the Olympics and Washington, you have great runs during grass season. How much does playing on grass, especially Wimbledon, how it can help you in terms of confidence?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, it was good. It was good. Of course, remembering those good moments, it's always nice. You know, during the season you remember especially those good moments rather than anything else.

So I'm proud of what I have done again this year in the grass season. Had a fantastic Wimbledon. But, you know, every tournament then starts from zero again. There is a lot of matches to play, a lot of different situations to handle. Every week is a fresh start, so I think that's a good thing about tennis. You have many chances to redeem yourself, to play a good tournament.



So now I'm really focused on what's ahead. I just played doubles today. I have my first match here Wednesday. That's what really the focus is on right now.

Q. Last week obviously you played Jenson, and it was a tough match. I don't know how much experience you had playing him in juniors, but I wanted to ask about, for most of your career, you have been the less-experienced player in a matchup just because you're younger. Now you have more experience on the ATP Tour than he did. Does that play into your mind before the match or during the match at all as far as like underdog or not kind of positioning in it?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, no, I never played Jenson. I never saw him much before. I think he didn't play last year, if I recall. I didn't see him at all last year.

Before that, maybe I saw -- I remember he's had some good results at the US Open maybe two years ago, but I saw, you know, a lot of qualities in him. He played a great match, to be honest.

Yeah, of course he was more the underdog on paper, but, you know, experience is not like I'm also a veteran on the tour, so I wouldn't say that, exactly. But of course I see, even though we have the same age, I do see that he's kind of in this position that he just got in the top 100, I think, so it's kind of the position I was, you know, two years ago around the same time. You know, it's different timing, but it's funny that so rapidly things change. I'm now, you know, playing players that were in my position not long ago. You know, all I can say is that there is a lot of good players on the tour, there is a lot of competition. It's interesting for the fans.

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