

# National Bank Open

Tuesday, August 8, 2023

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Felix Auger-Aliassime

Press Conference



M. PURCELL/F. Auger-Aliassime

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FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME

THE MODERATOR: Can you just sum up in your own words how you think things went tonight.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah. Well, tough first game, which is understandable with the circumstances. I haven't won a lot of matches lately. A bit of tension, that is normal.

But then I thought from that point, he was playing well. Like, for his game, he was serving very well, high percentage, precise. So then it was tough for me to be kind of -- I was lead the whole first set and try and find my way back, but couldn't find a way.

And overall, I think I wasn't serving really well, especially on the first serve, which is a big strength for me. Because I feel like from the baseline, of course, you can look at a couple points here and there, but I can't redo the whole match.

So I think in general I need to serve better. I need to find a way when guys are serving like this to return better.

So in terms of the tennis, that's what I think right now.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English first.

**Q. You played Max before a couple of years ago at the Olympics.**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah.

**Q. What makes his game in particular a difficult challenge?**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I guess he likes playing me. I don't know.

Yeah, I don't have good memories from that match. I

thought I played much worse at the Olympics. I thought that -- I mean, I felt like -- I don't know. I didn't prepare well for the tournament. It was different for me. And I didn't have my normal setup and the coach and everything.

And I just felt like I didn't play good at all at that time. So not really a good memory where I felt like I played far from the level that I can play at that time. But it was two years ago, so it's tough to remember exactly.

I was more confident today and more positive coming into the match. I felt like I was practicing well the last few days in the practice sets and, you know, the drills and everything. So I had higher expectations in terms of the result.

But, again, I thought he served really well. I feel like -- I don't know. The pace of my ball suits him, I guess. I felt like I have to do -- yeah, I had to do really well to put him in a bad position.

So he's a tricky player. I was expecting him to miss a bit more and to give a lot more free points, but he didn't.

So credits to him and good luck for the rest.

**Q. In your pretournament press conference you mentioned the match in Washington, how you were fairly happy with how you played with just a few points that were the difference. How do you compare your level tonight to that match last week?**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I thought I served better. It's way different. We played in way different conditions and different opponent. I thought I served better in Washington, and I was far from that today. But, yeah, to be honest, it's disappointing.

But I'm training well. Of course, I'm feeling good physically. So I try to think it's just a matter of time. It's tough with tennis. You get one chance from the first match. It's not like you have set matches the whole year and you can go out and just try to play.

You have to win the first match, and I haven't been able to do that the last two weeks. But I'm confident that once I'll get a first win, then I can go further in the draw. It's just



that it hasn't happened yet. It hasn't happened for a while.

So I'll stay positive and try to keep working well.

**Q. How would you describe the challenge of trying to get in a rhythm when you're not getting the matches that you kind of need to get into a rhythm?**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah. Yeah, it's funny because -- well, it's not my first time, even though, like, every year if you look, I mean, I've had -- like, I don't know, a month or two where things weren't going my way. I was losing matches. But it's part of tennis. It's okay.

But every time it feels like the first time. I don't know. Even though I turned 23 today, I still feel like when I was 18. You still have the same feelings inside, you know.

When you go on the court, you're not so confident, and for some reason things are not turning your way and you're wondering why, and you're trying to stay calm, find solutions.

But I don't feel like -- of course, I'm a better player, but I don't feel like, oh, I have all of the solutions all of a sudden and it's just going to go away.

The reality is you need to go out there and show up. Like, don't, you know, shy away and be scared. I need to -- I don't know how to say. Like, be a man and show up, you know, and not be scared to lose. And just whatever happens, try my best, and yeah.

**Q. So as you mentioned something like this has happened to you before during your career, and I wonder if you could look back a little bit and talk about sort of what changed sort of at those times to help it turn around. Because like maybe a year ago I recall you added that Davis Cup tie to your schedule and the US Open and that seemed to turn it around for you.**

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah. I mean, there's been different turnarounds. Last year, I had a stretch between Indian Wells and Monte-Carlo. Estoril I didn't win. And then from Madrid on, I started playing better until here in the summer, until US Open. I was winning a lot of matches every tournament.

And it feels different every time. That's why it's tough to really go back. I mean, there's different circumstances every time. And that's behind anyway. So for me, it's like, okay. Just focused on what's to come.

You know, now the match is over. The best thing I can do is try to practice well. And the next day that I'm practicing,

try to see what I can do better from this moment on.

But I think it's pointless for me to look back in the past far because it was just -- it's different circumstances. I think I just need to focus on what's happening right now.

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