

Omnium Banque Nationale

Wednesday, 10 August 2022

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Felix Auger-Aliassime

Press Conference



F. AUGER-ALIASSIME/Y. Nishioka

7-6,6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English, please.

Q. Are you feeling a pressure because of this situation you're in right now? How is it playing with that?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: For sure the nerves were there at the start of the match. Even though I started well on my serve, I felt like I was in control of what I was doing. Like the first game was excellent.

After, yeah, I think I had the right ideas. I was coming in with the right mindset, the right tactics. Just was not executing as well as I could in that first set, not serving quite well. It was just a tight tennis set in the first one. But normal against an opponent like Nishioka.

The second set, yeah, of course it's unfortunate that I couldn't convert on a lot of those break points. I felt like I had many chances. Some points he played well, some points I didn't. That's how it is.

I'm happy with the way I stayed composed, took care of my serve and finished the match in straight sets.

Q. You touched on it a little bit, but you got Norrie tomorrow. You played him the most recent one last week... How do you approach that match?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, with confidence. With confidence, optimism always, with a positive mindset.

I mean, yeah, we have history. I mean, but that goes behind us. There's no need to think about that too much starting tomorrow.

I just go in with a lot of belief. I mean, at the end of the day I did lose last week, but I think it's just good we played last week, period. Some good things worked. I'm going to try to do that as much as I can and try to repeat the things that worked well last week, and the outcome can be on my side tomorrow.

Q. Once you got through the tiebreaker, did you feel more comfortable?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: For sure it's a big relief whenever you win a first set in tennis. It's super important. Especially in these conditions. I think it was a 1 hour 15 first set. You for sure want that set to go on your side. It was a big relief.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

Q. Before the tournament you were saying you were ready and calm, but you felt the butterflies when you came on center court with the noise.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: It's difficult, indeed, to prepare for that. This morning I woke up well. I felt rested. I was talking with my family quietly. My warmup was very good. Everything seemed normal.

But when you go out there, after going through the tunnel, you feel vibrations and an excitement that I feel nowhere else. So I felt the butterflies. I think anyone would.

Q. Many unforced errors in the first set. There were many ups and downs for both of you.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yes, the first set was difficult. It's not new. It's the beginning of the tournament. I was playing a difficult opponent who pushes you every time and makes you make mistakes. But I had good ideas, good intentions. My execution was not so good.

I was lucky. He made a double-fault at 2-3. Played one or two easy shots, I was able to come back to 3-3. I started playing better then. It was more important.

After this, in the second set, I felt I could put into the ball more speed, then it was 6-4, which is good. It could even have been 6-2.

Q. I would like you to talk about the last game of the first set. You sort of took on the energy of the crowd. Can you talk about that moment.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I played a very good



tiebreaker. Unfortunately I was a bit unlucky on my first set point. He was able to return my overhead. The situation was a bit tough, there was a lot of tension.

But winning the set on the point I made, it's incredible. I really hit a beautiful shot at the right moment. The noise was incredible. The energy I felt was unique. I didn't have any more energy, I just could expose myself to the crowd and appreciate the moment.

Q. Some seeded players lost today. You are the favorite of the crowd. Is it important for you to keep a cool head?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Of course, you shouldn't listen to what is said outside. You always try to see the future. I do that, too. But what a player has to do is to keep a cool head because every point you play, you must win them by yourself. You have to win each match you play and start again every day. So nothing is easy.

Indeed, there is an opportunity. Like every week, there are always draws that open up. I was hoping before the tournament I would be able to play better and better match after match.

Q. Can you talk about the match against Norrie. You played him recently. Is it a good thing that you will play him again so quickly?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Win or lose, the fact that I played him recently, I have some references against him because I lost. But some things worked out well. This is in my mind and in my memory.

We had played together in the beginning of the year, but it was a long time ago. So although I lost last time, I think it's a good thing it was recent because he's a very tough player, one of the best in the world right now. I always have had difficult matches against him. I know what our head-to-head is.

But tomorrow will be another match, a new match.

Q. You had a big week in Los Cabos. What is your energy level right now and for the following matches?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I feel good. It was physically difficult today, but I'm used to it with all the years. I know how to recover and prepare for the next match. The match was tough physically because of my opponent. But I'm ready for tomorrow.

This is really a tournament where I am ready to do unlimited efforts. I always try to do my best here in front of

this crowd. I feel they are supporting me. I want to give them the best performance possible.

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...quand tout est dit, nous avons terminé.