

F. AUGER-ALIASSIME/C. Norrie

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR (In French): How do you assess your performance tonight against a player that beat you last week?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: It's a very good performance on my part from the aspects of the game that I was in control with, especially on my serve games. It doesn't happen all the time, so I'm enjoying it.

I hope I will be able to keep this up for the rest of the tournament. It's a good performance compared with last week's match in Los Cabos.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French.

Q. Can we say it's one of the three best matches of this year for you?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I had others in the Australian Open, at the ATP Cup, in Rotterdam. There are some good matches. But it's true that that match is part of my very good performances, especially at this stage of a tournament against a player who is almost top 10 or 11 or 12.

Norrie plays very well. He wins many matches every year now. So in an important tournament like this one, it's a very good performance.

Q. Losing against such a player last week can happen, but what did you do this time to avoid repeating a defeat? Did you change things up? You seemed to be very confident you were going to do well.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: As I said before the match, the fact that I played him recently, last week, made me see that I had done many good things. I won a set, then the next two sets were very tight. I did serve well last week.

I wanted here to start serving very well. I was trying to move him around all the time. He was doing the same to

me.

In the end he was the one who yielded at 4-3. I played a very good point, and he made an unforced error on the break point. It was very little difference for it to turn my way.

After that I was confident I could do it. The fact that I played last week against him helped me to adapt very quickly and adjust.

Q. Your serve was impressive, winning 90% of your first serve points. How can you explain that compared with yesterday?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: To be honest, yesterday the light on center court bothered me a little. It took me some time to get used to it. The conditions were a bit tough. I was not used to them. I hadn't played for a long time on center court at night. It took me a couple of games before I got used to it. After I started serving well.

It's difficult to explain because more and more I'm becoming a good server. On grass I served well. I was able to play good matches, playing tiebreakers in third sets. I proved today I can serve well again.

Q. Nishikori three years ago said that it took him several years before he felt comfortable on the tour. Do you believe today is a good step in this direction?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, the first year I came here, I felt much at ease in the first match. It was a high-level match. I was able to pull it out. I was playing well. I had good feelings. The fact that I won that match yesterday, the first match, relieved me a lot. It took away a lot of pressure.

Imagining I would come here after three years wanting to play as many matches as possible in front of the Quebec public meant that it would be really a shame to lose the first match.

Now that I did that, it's behind me, and I can really focus on the rest of the tournament.

Q. You won two matches against good players.

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

Around you many seeded players are losing. It's the first time that the three top-seeded players in a tournament are losing first round in a long time. How can you explain that?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, every year we see in some tournaments draws opening up or seeded players losing early, thinking about Cameron who won Indian Wells last year. Many seeded players had lost before.

It can happen in Montreal also. It's the first hard court tournament for many good players. I'm thinking about Carlos. Many players played on grass or clay in Europe, and they are not yet used to the conditions here. There may be surprises.

I need to stay focused and do what I have to do here. But my draw is tough because I'm going to play Casper, who played a very good match. I watched him earlier today. He made it to the final of a Grand Slam this year. He's a very complete player, overall player. It's going to be a very good test tomorrow.

Q. You were saying that you were worried about the first round. It took some time before getting into the rhythm, but you pulled it off. Today from the first shot you were into the match.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yes, it's true. From the first point on, I felt good. I felt a lot better than yesterday. This was important for me.

At the beginning and up to 3-3, 4-3, he was playing really well. I was not sure I could win in two sets like I did in the end. But at 4-3, after winning this first set 6-3, I felt a lot more confident. I felt better than yesterday, although I finished the match yesterday very well. This was promising for today.

Q. Norrie let you serve first. This is unusual, isn't it? How did you interpret this? Did you think he was going to be nervous?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Well, given the quality of my serve, I prefer to serve first. Even if things don't go well in the first game, I know it's better to serve first. If you're up 2-1 or 3-1, it's a lot better than being always behind in the score.

But I think every time we played he preferred not to serve first. He's like that. Others do differently. Maybe today it would have helped him to serve first. I don't know.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. When your serve is really cooking like that, how does that open up the rest of your game?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: For sure it loosens me up a lot for the other areas of my game. I mean, on the return, for instance, I can try more things, change my position, try to let's say risk a bit more, then I got rewarded at times. That's something positive.

When you're serving well, you put the pressure on your opponent. As we saw at the end of the match, of course I got a bit lucky. He can hit double-faults, but I've never seen him hit three double-faults in a game like that. That was a bit fortunate, especially at that time in the match.

The overall pressure in the match of me serving that well, he just knew he had the pressure to hold his serve. Of course, when you play big servers, not like me, but Isner, Opelka, some of these guys, Milos when he was playing at his peak, it's tough, puts a lot of pressure on the opponents.

I'm glad I was able to do that. I feel like I'm one of those guys now that can serve that well. Hopefully I can keep it up.

Q. You got Casper Ruud in the next round. A little bit of a surprise. He's the highest seeded player left in the tournament. You're No. 2. What do you expect tomorrow?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: He's a tough opponent. He's one of the most solid and consistent players we have right now on the tour.

Of course, we all know his quality on clay, but I feel like in the last year he's improved tremendously all his shots. The forehand has always been good, the backhand has improved a lot, the serve as well. He's very good physically.

I'm expecting a tough match. I've known him for a while. I remember us playing in Miami years ago. He beat me on the clay in Madrid.

No, he's not an easy guy to beat. I think he's 5 or 6 in the world now. Finals of French Open. It's not a surprise. He didn't get there by accident.

I'm going to have to be ready for a tough match tomorrow.

Q. How important is it to recover against the same opponent you just lost to a week ago? What were the key differences between that match a week ago and today?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah, I mean, I try my best every time to bounce back whenever I lose against an opponent, even if I don't win, but try to show a good level, try to show I'm trying to respond to what happened, I'm trying to change things. I don't want to do the same mistakes back to back.

I have a good record against him. Definitely it was very positive for me, against a player of his caliber, to be able to get back to winning ways against him and to win in straight sets like that, which actually every time we had pretty tough matches. That was a very convincing win.

Like we talked about of course a lot, I served really well. But I felt like I was also putting a lot of pressure on him with every opportunity I had. I tried to stay close to the baseline. Every forehand I had I tried to move him around. I tried to come to the net as much as I could. I think those are the few differences that I did, or the things that I did better than last week, which made the match fall on my side.

Q. When it was 3-4 in the first set, it felt like you kind of flipped a switch or just decided that you were really going to dig in and try to get a break there.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah.

Q. I don't know if I'm reading that right. Maybe you could comment. Then you were in almost every service game of his after that. I wanted to know what you were thinking at that moment and also how much fun are you having doing this on home soil here?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah, changed my position slightly on the return of serve. At 4-3, I felt like at the beginning of the match I was giving him a bit too much space, he was opening the court really well with his serve. It was a bit of a struggle. I had to do a lot of running. Once I changed my position, I was able to kind of dictate the points a little bit more.

I hit a few good shots. The point when I hit two slices really well, he missed that forehand, I think I hit a good passing shot in that game. I can't remember. Then I was helped by a mistake of his on the break point.

Sometimes, yeah, when it comes to a point later in the set, I try to change things, I try to see how I can put pressure on my opponent. Definitely I tried to do that today.

Then, yeah, of course, the pleasure of playing in Montreal in front of the home crowd is something very unique. I don't get that anywhere else. I feel very lucky and

privileged to get that type of support here. That's why I want to play as many matches as I can.

If I can play the whole week, that would be perfect.

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