

Miami Open presented by Itaú

Friday, March 29, 2019

Felix Auger-Aliassime

Press Conference

J. ISNER/F. Auger-Aliassime

7-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Congrats on this long run in this tournament. Yesterday in the conference, Denis Shapovalov was saying in big part the rising of both Canadians have been the rivalry you have. Do you consider the same, or what would you consider the key factor of Canadian tennis rising?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I don't know, rivalry. We haven't played too many times yet on the pro tour. Obviously his results and mine are pushing each other. I think, yeah, a lot of belief, a lot of positive things happening, and I think it's just pushing us.

But I don't think we're at a point where we have a rivalry, but we have obviously -- we are competitive and good friends at the same time.

Q. Can you describe what it's like playing, as a young guy, having to face John's serve? What was your thought processes going through as you were trying to claw your way back into the match?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I think I did the best that I could. I probably did the best of all the players that played him this week. I just couldn't serve from my part.

It's a chance you can't miss, serving two times for the set, and just -- I don't know. It's just terrible.

Q. Tell us about those double faults, three double faults in the first set. Was it a toss issue? Was it a nerves issue?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Yeah, for sure, nerves. It's like I caught a virus or something. I don't know.

I couldn't put a second serve anymore. Even the first serve, I mean, if you put it in, you don't have to hit the second serve. Yeah, that's just very tough to swallow.

Q. What do you consider throughout the week that was the biggest lesson you learned in this run in a Masters?



FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I think, yeah, starting from quallies, not being sure how far to go. Yeah, the biggest lesson was to stay in the present and believe in yourself, because, you know, you can always dig deep and find resources within yourself. So I think that's a huge lesson to not give up, stay calm, and just work every day.

Q. It's been a great week for you here in Miami. What's next? What's your goals after this?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Now I'm going home for some rest. Then I will start training for the clay season. Start in Monte-Carlo and -- yeah, obviously my goals and my expectations, maybe not my expectations, but I'm aiming high. I want to play well for the rest of the year, but again, just focus on the daily work. We'll see what I can do.

Q. I think after the last match in Indian Wells, I think you said you were considering skipping Miami because you have to start with qualifying. Did you really consider about skipping this tournament?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I never said that.

Q. Sorry.

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I never said that. I said that the plan was going to Miami. You asked in Indian Wells if I could get a wildcard. I said I don't think so. But I said that the plan was to play Miami.

I came here, and I played. I don't know. I never said that. I'm sorry.

Q. I think the original plan was for you to play Marrakech and Monte-Carlo. Are you going to skip the Marrakech tournament?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: Probably. 90%, yeah.

Q. Given how much you have played over these past ten days or so, was fatigue a factor at all, either mentally or physically? Legs heavier, mind and focus hard to maintain?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I think the body felt good, you know, until the end, but, yeah, I don't know. It wasn't clear.

I don't know if it's fatigue that maybe I lost my focus sometimes. I didn't feel like it was the focus or concentration. I just felt like, I don't know, the nerves

got to me a little. Yeah, I wasn't able to do like all the other matches and just focus on what I had to do, and it really got to me too hard.

Q. With John's serve, can you just comment on his serve? Was it tougher than you expected? Easier? What was your impression of it out there? Why is it so hard to handle, apart from...

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I played Karlovic at the start of the year in India, altitude a little bit. I found Karlovic serve was even tougher.

I felt like I was connecting a few good returns. I still broke him twice, you know, which is not easy. I felt like, you know, my return game was good today, but obviously he puts a lot of pressure on your serve. And even on second serves he goes around, hits hard. So I have to figure out a way to get better on that and try to handle him better next time.

Q. You're going to get a lot of attention obviously from now on. Are you ready to embrace that? Do you enjoy it? Do you shy away from it?

FELIX AUGER-ALIASSIME: I'm not sure I enjoy that much. I was always a pretty simple guy. Obviously it feels weird when people start recognizing you. It's a nice feeling, but at the same time, we'll see. I don't know if I really enjoy it that much.