

Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters

Principality of Monaco

Wednesday, 14 April 2021

Lucas Pouille

Press Conference



L. POUILLE/A. Popyrin

7-5, 2-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Questions in French, please.

Q. You won that match being extremely brave. It was a true battle against him, yourself, your body.

LUCAS POUILLE: Yes. I needed to be brave. I'm not even talking about the level of game because this is not what was important. The important thing was to win the match. Although I was not feeling well and I had to fight a lot, it's really important to win that type of match, especially in my situation because these matches give you a lot of confidence and they are important.

If you lose them, you feel down and discouraged. I'm very happy I was able to win this one fighting a lot. After losing a set, I was able to come back into the match.

Q. This is a great event, this victory. It's the first time since September 2019 that you won two matches in a row. It never happened. It must be a relief, something important.

LUCAS POUILLE: I'm not thinking about the round of 16 or the qualify. I'm just thinking about winning matches to be able to become more confident. This is what I'm trying to do, this is what I'm working on in my practice.

Today I didn't play as well as yesterday, but I see the positive in this match because I won in the end. This will allow me to play tomorrow again. As you said, it's good to win two matches in a row for once. It had been a long time since I did that. Now it's done. Now I have to focus on tomorrow. I have to get rid of what was bad today and keep what was good and try to use it for tomorrow.

Q. It's a coincidence we are a hundred days before Tokyo Olympics. You missed Rio. Somewhere in your mind did you think you would not go to Tokyo or now are you thinking about it again? It's a race because you're starting a bit late. Do you really want to play the

Olympics?

LUCAS POUILLE: It's not the dream of my life, but of course I think about it. I missed the Olympics in Rio because of particular circumstances. I was top 25. It was a bit difficult.

I think the deadline is after the French Open, around the 10th of June. You need to be among the top four players in France.

I think about it sometimes. Not while I'm playing. But I really would love to be able to participate in my first Olympic Games. Of course, I'm a bit delayed. I'm late compared with the others.

If there hadn't been this new ranking system, I wouldn't have any points at all. Now I think I'm No. 80 or 90. This allows me to play some tournaments. I need to be in the 50s or the 40s after the French Open. That's the goal.

Q. You're coming back. You need to be very humble because, of course, you had losses that you wouldn't have had before. I saw you were with your coach on the court. It was very strange. How do you experience this?

LUCAS POUILLE: I don't want to blame anyone. I know it was complicated. It's not only me. I saw the match of Karen Khachanov and Busta playing on court nine with a doubles match on the center court, the Court Des Princes. I'm not sure it's normal.

We have the feeling we are playing a futures tournament. I think it's a pity. Today the weather is quite good. The greatest number of singles should be on the better courts. It's not that I'm saying I'm someone, but a match between Khachanov and Busta, two great players at the top for many years playing their match on court nine, where the coach is on a bench on the court, I think it's not that good.

I know it's because of the weather the past days, they were a bit late on the schedule. Maybe they could have done it differently.



Q. Having your coach there was all right for you?

LUCAS POUILLE: Well, it's the same. I tried not to think about it. I was there to play my match. Whether I'm on court 30 or Beausoliel, the goal is always to build up my confidence, to win matches, and come out with something positive.

I don't care to play on that court or not. But it was a bit strange, I admit. I felt a bit isolated.

Q. With a good view.

LUCAS POUILLE: Yes, the view was beautiful.

Q. A question about the serve. It's the most difficult thing because you haven't been serving for a year and a half. Is that shot the most frustrating for you? Is it difficult to accept that you have to do two second serves, for example? Is it the most difficult shot to find again?

LUCAS POUILLE: Yes, it's the most difficult one. When you serve many serves in a row, in practice it's different. In practice I'm serving well. Now the difficult thing is to do it during a match and have the same serve I had before. It's tough for me to find that shot again. It's a bit frustrating.

Sometimes for 15 serves in a row I don't put the ball in. It's frustrating. I try and I can't do it. I need to overcome this problem. This is also why I lost the second set so easily because I was not making first serves any more. It was difficult for me to keep focused. I lost the set.

So when I missed two first serves, I need to try to do a second serve instead. I don't want to miss five or six serves in a row.

Q. Do you know your next opponent?

LUCAS POUILLE: No, I don't know him very well. I saw him play sometimes, a few times. I know he's very intense and he moves well and he plays a lot with his forehand. He's a good clay court player. He uses the angles a lot. His ball moves forward after bouncing. It's going to be a first time for me against him. Excited to go on the court and see how it goes. But what I'm going to try to do, as I said, is try to settle my game and try to make him move.

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