

August 19, 2011



N. DJOKOVIC/G. Monfils

3-6, 6-4, 6-3

An interview with:

GAËL MONFILS

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Looked like you were cruising after the first set. You were up and the momentum changed. What happened?

GAËL MONFILS: Well, I think maybe I played a bit less aggressive, and also I think Novak, you know, started to be in the match. Like his focus was more in the game, you know, and then he was tougher.

Because he's been good, and I think in the first set he was a bit up, down in his concentration, and then got in so it was tougher.

Q. Seems like the beginning of the third set you had some like breathing problem, something.

GAËL MONFILS: Yeah, I'm a little bit sick, so I had a bit of frustration. You know, my nose is a bit blocked, so both mixed. So just get a bit like dizzy for a few moments and then it was better.

Q. What exactly did you do to your foot? Did you just ram your foot into the camera?

GAËL MONFILS: I hit the sides of the stuff.

Q. Did it just...

GAËL MONFILS: It hurt for like three seconds, one minute. Just you have the impact, and then I think it was okay.

I hope so.

Q. You had about 44 unforced errors. What was driving that? You feeling pressure to end points early so you were going for too much?

GAËL MONFILS: Well, against him I don't think it's too much. I think if I just want to rally him he is better than me. I think he blast me last week, so for sure I had to take like more shots, so it's means for unforced errors.

So that's why I think I made a lot today.

Q. Toward the middle and end of the third set you were really trying to fire yourself up.

GAËL MONFILS: Yeah.

Q. What were you pumping yourself up with?

GAËL MONFILS: I was trying, yeah, because sometime I'm a bit down and I know I can just listen to myself, like, Oh, you know, you're in the third set and you're a bit sick.

You did a great job. I just try to reminded me. My dad was very high cheering for me in Caribbean language, so I was try to be pumped up and speak Caribbean, try to stay in the game and keep my aggressivity.

Q. There was a moment at the beginning of the third set you got broken. What happened there?

GAËL MONFILS: I think it was mix of like precipitation sometime and a bad frustration as well. Because I think I had an opportunity in the second set maybe to have a good lead at 4-All, and I think I rushed this game. My mind was still not in the third set, I think.

So that's why I think I get tough moment to breathe, because I had the frustration and then I was running as well and I was defensive. So it was a mix of everything.

Q. You recently split with Roger Rasheed and your physio is now working with

you. Any changes to your game plan going forward?

GAËL MONFILS: Yeah, think like everyone knows I need to reach a bit more than that and maybe be a bit more aggressive. I tried to do it a couple times, and I think I did it tonight also a bit.

But, you know, day after day I try to work on it, and I hope one day I will be like natural.

Q. Novak has only lost one match all year. What makes him so difficult to play on court, and how has his game changed this year as opposed to previous years?

GAËL MONFILS: I mean, I think mentally he's tough, he's very strong. Even you know his body language in the first set was not too good. But after you can see like during the point you can feel it's tough to move and he wants every shot.

Today, I think he missed a lot today. In Montréal he wasn't missing. He's not missing at all in big moments. He's more aggressive. You cannot move him at the baseline.

So I think he did a great job, and that's why I think he's very tough to beat. And also, he's a great defender. Great defender. He move fast, so I think he's very solid.

Q. So off to New York for the US Open, or will you play next week in Winston-Salem?

GAËL MONFILS: I'm going to New York, yeah, I think to practice for a week. I think I will take a few days off to recover. I'm not playing a tournament. Have a few days off so I will be good. We will have a good practice session in New York for the week and get ready for the US.

Q. How close were to you retiring from Dodig a couple rounds back?

GAËL MONFILS: Far, I think. After I saw the physio and he told me it seemed to be all right, so I trust the physio. He told me to try, and if it's sharp pain stop. If not, should be good.

I keep going and it was all right. I had the pain, but not too bad. It was okay.

Q. Did your confidence change during the match? You started out like you had nothing to lose, just going for everything. Then as the match went on seemed to drop a little.

GAËL MONFILS: I think also today Novak miss a bit. Obviously he was a bit hurt also with his shoulder is not that good. And I think also he

miss a lot of forehand and he seems a bit like not nervous, but like a bit not in a good day.

So in my mind I want to go for much, but then I saw maybe also if I put the ball in the court he will miss. So it was tough to find a good balance.

Q. You played him twice in one week. This time you won one set. You said he was mentally a little bit out of the match. How can you beat him? Not just you, but anyone else right now. What's the strategy?

GAËL MONFILS: To be honest, today was maybe one of the best opportunities I think, because to be honest, Novak didn't play that good. I think today was a good Novak, but I think it was a day like -- I just miss maybe just something, because to be honest, in Montréal it was impossible to beat him.

I think when you get the good day, the opportunity, you know, keep aggressing him and, yeah, definitely you have to come forward a lot and try to move in and read the net. If not, from the baseline I think he's very strong.

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