

Citi Open

Thursday, August 5, 2021

Washington D.C.

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference



L. HARRIS/R. Nadal

6-4, 1-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Thank you so much for coming to Washington and giving some Grand Slam swagger to this tournament. Tonight, was it a matter of exhaustion for you? You went late last night.

RAFAEL NADAL: Thank you. No, I was ready. The most positive thing is my foot was better today than yesterday, so that's the best news possible. I played against a player that played well.

For the moment, I think I played better than yesterday, but, yeah, I mean, in the third when I had opportunities, the true is his serve was huge and I played this last game really bad.

So that's the sport. You can't have mistakes in the key moments, and in the key moments I think in the last game, yeah, I was a little bit more nervous. My serve was not working the proper way.

And that's it. Yes, well done for him. Is a great victory for him. I wish him all the very best.

Q. What sort of information do you think you got about your level and your preparation for this hard court season? How do you feel about your preparation right now?

RAFAEL NADAL: I don't know. I just lost a match, so sorry for that. I came here with the goal to try my best, and after save the match of yesterday and came back the way that I came back in the second set today was a good chance to keep going.

But, yeah, I mean, all the credit to him that he played aggressive. He played well. He was brave. So, yeah, well done.

Yeah, for me is just keep going. Accept the challenge that I need to keep working, and I have probably another chance next week in Toronto. I going to keep trying my best.

Q. There is no denying that the crowds in D.C. love watching you play. There is a whole group of people who love to watch you play, especially kids, kids who have never picked up a racquet before. What impact do you hope to make on the next generation of tennis players here in the Mid-Atlantic region and beyond?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, is great, the expectation that we have here since the beginning, have been an amazing atmosphere. I can't thank enough all the people here in Washington. Honestly, the support have been huge, and, yeah, the level of energy, too, no?

So just thanks. And for the kids, I don't know. I just try to do the things the best way that I can in all ways. If that inspires the kids to catch a racquet, much better. No, of course we need kids playing tennis as much as possible, so if coming here I helped to add one small kid in the world of tennis, just I am proud of it, no?

So I really hope that the tennis stays on the highest level in terms of being popular, being interesting for all the people, all kind of people around the world.

Q. On yesterday's press conference you talked about two things in particular, your performance on serve and managing the pain in your foot. Curious how you thought you did with both of those two things today.

RAFAEL NADAL: As I said before, best news, the foot was better than yesterday. I was able to move a bit better, so that is very important, especially for me personally, no, to keep enjoying the sport, no, and keep having energy, believing that important things are possible.

And then I need to keep improving. Is true, no? I didn't had honestly two months easy. I had a lot of problems with my foot. I was not able to practice all the days that I really wanted, but I did as much as I could. And I tried hard here, no?



Sorry for the defeat, sorry for the tournament that it makes me feel amazing since the beginning. But that's the sport, no? I try very hard, as everybody knows. But was not enough. Only thing I can do is congratulate my opponent and just keep going. I gonna keep trying to practice the proper way and to give myself a chance to be better soon.

Q. I know you would have liked to win this thing, but you had a great experience here. Looked like on your social media, you had a great time seeing D.C., got to play in this tournament for the first time. Looking back, what are you going to take from this experience? How special was it to get to be here for these few matches?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, have been amazing, no? Be in Washington for the first time, see how passionate the people is here about our sport.

As I said before, no, the most painful thing is not be able to be on court again tomorrow in front of this amazing crowd, no?

But I take a great experience for me, I was able to know a new city. For me a very important one. I enjoyed, and the support and the love of the people will stay for me.

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