

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

Saturday, 15 May 2021

Roma, Italia

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference

R. NADAL/R. Opelka

6-4, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Your take on what it was like to face Reilly's serve. Was there anything different that sets him apart from guys like Isner and Karlovic?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, when you play these kind of matches, you know not going to be a beautiful match, not going to be a match that you like to play against a player like Reilly or Isner or Karlovic that you not going to find rhythm on the match. You're going to have just a few chances of have a break or even no one. Depends on the court.

Is a match that you need to be focus, you need to be with high energy all the time, and try to produce some important moments on the return, be very focus with your serve. It's important not to suffer much with your serve because if you are suffering a lot with the serve, you feel the stress all the time. So positive thing today I think I just faced breakpoints in one game during the whole match. That was important for me.

I think I played the match that I had to play, no? I saved that moment. I had two breaks, two sets. That's a positive thing for me. Be in the final again here means a lot to me.

Q. If we look ahead to tomorrow's final, if you potentially face Novak, talk about how important a test that would be for you at this stage.

RAFAEL NADAL: I always say the same, no? What happens here not going to make big impact about what can happen in a couple of weeks. If you ask for that, you play a final here, you want to win. Is one of the most important events on our sport. That's it. You want to win, no? You don't want to win because in two weeks you're going to have an important event, no?

For me, I am take one at a time. Rome is such an important tournament for me. To be in the final again is so



INTERNAZIONALI
BNL D'ITALIA

BNP PARIBAS

important for me.

In terms of preparation for Roland Garros, I consider the job done. Tomorrow is not at all preparation for nothing. Is a final, an important one, and I want to be competitive. I want to play a good match and let's see.

Q. You feel like the job is done. Does that mean you're extremely pleased with where you're at?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, I consider done because I have been through positive process during the last month, no? I played four events. That's the main thing for me. I was able to do my full schedule. I played two quarterfinals. I won a tournament. Now a final here.

For me the only really negative match was in Monaco against Rublev. That was a very negative match for me. The rest of the things, Madrid is a completely different story with altitude, very difficult to control. Especially a player like Sascha. I accept that defeat like something that can happen. The match decide just in a few balls. I make a mistake in the first set.

The rest of the things I have been playing better, worst, but always in a positive line. I mean, playing better when the weeks are coming. Here I had I think a very tough draw and I was able to find a way to be in the final. I know I had to face some very critical moments in my second round against Shapo. That's like this. I fought.

I played a great match yesterday. Today I think I played the match that I have to play. I spent plenty of hours on court. In terms of preparation, I consider done. Then I have to adjust a couple more things, but I have two weeks to prepare.

In terms of Roland Garros, is not the moment to talk. Is about Rome, one of the most important events in the history, my history, the history of my career. Excited to be back always. Has been a very special place for me. Tomorrow another chance to play in a big stage, in a big final.

Q. Another question about Roland Garros. Last year you won your 13th title there. A lot of people say that's an unlucky number. Do you ever think about things like that? Are you superstitious at all?

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

RAFAEL NADAL: If is unlucky and I stay with 13, I think it's enough. 13 titles in Roland Garros is not a bad number at all.

Q. A question about Roland Garros. We all know the Philippe Chatrier court is your second house. If you play in the first week in night session, it will be without crowd. Would it be a problem for you? Would you prefer to play on court Suzanne Lenglen?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, I don't know about that. Let's see about how the situation evolves the next couple of weeks in terms of the recommendation in France. We need to be patient. We need to follow the rules. As everybody knows, I prefer to play day session than night session, without a doubt.

But, yeah, I am a player. I going to accept what the tournament decides.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports