

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Roma, Italia

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference

R. NADAL/N. Djokovic

7-5, 1-6, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: We are here with the 10-time champion. Questions in English.

Q. Congratulations. This must be such an incredible moment for you to win the 10th title in Rome and the fourth time you have won 10 or more titles at an event. Can you just provide us with your feelings and emotions following this victory.

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, of course it's, yeah, it's a very satisfying one. It's amazing, have the trophy with me again one more time here in Rome. The 10th, I really wanted this 10th here in Rome, no? It was one of the first important titles that I won in my career.

After achieving 10 in Roland Garros, 10 in Monte-Carlo, 10 in Barcelona, I really wanted this one, no? Yeah, super important tournament for me. I went through a lot of things during the week. Some positive, some great moments, some lucky moments, suffering moments. At the end I think I played a very solid week of tennis, no?

Very happy. The trophy means a lot to me. At the same time, it's the right moment to win an important title.

Q. You hit so many forehand winners today, especially in the first set. Was the forehand feeling especially good today, or has it been that way all week? Did you feel like you could really hit the winners when you wanted to?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, I think I have been playing better and better with my forehand the last couple of weeks, getting to the confidence point. Yes, today have been a positive day. I think for moments I could change more times down the line than what I did, something that I can't keep doing and I can keep improving.

But the positive thing is the winner and the solution with my forehand have been much better than the last couple of weeks, no? So that's a huge improvement for me, very



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important shot. Especially on clay it's give me confidence. I think my serve is working better, too.

Yeah, I think I had a great week. I played plenty of hours, so I feel good, I feel tired, but, yeah, very satisfying victory.

Q. I'd like to know, what happened in the second set? Because after I saw you winning the first, playing so well with the forehand and so on that nobody would ever expect you could lose the second set 6-1. Then on the third, he had a forehand chance to go up 3-2. What were you feeling in that moment? Were you really worried or still confident or what?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, these kind of matches have a little bit of everything always, no? You play against one of the best players, and, you know, normally you're gonna suffer, no?

I feel that I was a little bit better than him at the end of the first set. At the beginning of the second too. But then I didn't convert my chances in the first two games that he served. Then I played a terrible game. Against the wind, but I played a terrible game that then was 4-1. I lost a little bit my concentration there and it was 6-1.

I think I had to come back again to the feeling that I had at the beginning of the match, and I think I played even better the third than the first one.

In the third set is true that he had the breakpoints, but is something that can happen. I was serving against the wind, and against the wind is always a huge disadvantage, no? So even if losing that game, I accept that you can lose your serve against the wind. The big problem if you lose your serve with the wind helping, no? But against the wind, you lose that game but you know you're going to go to the other side and you can have the break back with the wind helping, no?

That's what happened. I saved the game, and then I had the break with the wind helping, and then I suffered again the last game against the wind. But is always the same, no? Is a little bit of up-and-down when you are playing with windy conditions. Especially when the wind is going all the time one way, you need to save that games, because when you return with the wind helping gonna be a huge advantage.

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Q. You mentioned just before that you really, really wanted this title. That's not something we hear you say very often. Is that extra pressure? How do you handle that? Does it make you more nervous, less nervous, more excited? How does it affect you?

RAFAEL NADAL: Oh, I really wanted, but, no, I don't put myself extra pressure at all, no? I want to win every day and every tournament that I am playing. Something that I know not gonna happen. But the passion and the motivation to try it is always the same, no?

So here everybody knows is one of my favorite tournaments, without a doubt, and I always had some positive feelings here.

No, no, no, I mean, how to handle the pressure, I know it. I have been going, have been around for almost 18 years on the tour, so, yeah, always the pressure is there but I have experience on that, no?

Q. When you tripped over the line in the first set, how upsetting was that? Did you hurt yourself at all? What's the problem with the lines here? It's the second time this has happened. Should they be making the lines in a different way? I think they are different in Paris and maybe some other places, they don't have the nails.

RAFAEL NADAL: Yeah. No, no, no, I don't want to create a problem. But it's dangerous. That's it. No, I was upset because the other day was close to have an important injury. Today was the same.

So when happen two, three times, because the other day was twice, too. The second one I didn't fall down, but was close to turn my ankle. And today the same. The line was higher than the clay. Then you're right there with high speed, and in tennis is brutal. Anything can happen, no?

I was lucky that I was able to throw my racquet very quick so the hands were free to avoid a problem there. But I was upset, yeah. The problem is clear. No, the lines are plastic, are plastic lines, and sometimes the lines are moving around, no, and they are a little bit higher than the clay. That's it.

Q. You have the biggest tournament of the year for you just two weeks away. You have spoken so often for your passion for Roland Garros. What will you now do over these next two weeks to prepare for Paris? How excited are you about getting to Paris?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, is always a very special place, of

course, for me. Everybody knows that probably is the most important place in my tennis career.

Well, I need to go back home. I need to rest a little bit. I played a lot of hours this week. So couple of days off and then start working. I think I can work in a couple of things that I can do a little bit better or I can keep confirming that I am on the way.

I think I have been improving this week, but I need to keep going with that improvement, because when you improve and you're able to do it every day for longer time, then it's more confidence and you feel more confident and more safe, no, that you want to do it on the next tournament.

So I just need to keep going. I know what I need to work for the next couple of weeks, and I gonna do it. That's it, no? Work, relax mentally, and work the right way.

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