

Rolex Paris Masters

Wednesday, 4 November 2020

Paris, France

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference



R. NADAL/F. Lopez

4-6, 7-6, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Just wondering just basically how did you feel your game is developing this week? Were you top standard?

RAFAEL NADAL: Sorry, I can't hear you very well.

THE MODERATOR: (Translating.)

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, a tough start, no? Against a player that is a great player on this surface. He had a lot of great results and who knows me very well. And for me the first match on hard court is a long time, especially indoors.

So I started the match the worst way possible, especially against a big server like Feli. After that I played under a lot of pressure the rest of the match, but I found a way. That's the main thing honestly, no? First round to win and I hope to be ready to play better tomorrow.

This victory is one that I am very proud. The personal satisfaction sometimes is bigger when you win these kind of matches than if you go on court and you win 6-3, 6-3.

Q. Can I ask what it felt like playing behind closed doors, no spectators? Seemed particularly strange watching it during that energetic second-set tiebreak.

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, nothing new. We played in Rome like this for me. Second tournament that I play like this. Of course it's sad, the level of energy is difficult to compare. At least in Roland Garros we had around 1000, maybe in the final was couple of more.

So the feeling, even if 1000 or 1500 or 2000 is not a lot, the real feeling, the personal feeling is completely different, no? It makes a big difference that the court is empty, no?

But that's how it is today, and in some way I enjoy the

battle. I try to play with the right attitude when the things were not going the right way for me and I found a way.

Super happy for that. That makes me play again tomorrow and another chance against a tough opponent.

Q. 1000 career victories, what does that mean to you? What continues to motivate you to excel?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, that means that I am old (smiling). That means that I played well for such a very long time, because to achieve that number is because I have been playing well for a lot of years and is something that makes me feel happy, no? I just can say thank you very much to all the people that helped me and all the people that in any moment of my life helped me to be where I am, no?

So, yeah, just is have been a special moment. I know is a very special number, 1000. Even if it's not the same to celebrate something like this without a crowd, I enjoy it with ATP, with the president of the French Federation, Guy Forget, supervisor and the ball boys.

I enjoy it and just can say thanks to all of them to make this moment a little bit more special.

Q. You mentioned the longevity of your career, which is something perhaps not many people expected when you were younger. But since you managed to sustain your level for a very long time, how much does the longevity of your career in particular mean to you compared to all the other things you have achieved?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, I am proud about a lot of things in my career, no? But of course I faced issues in terms of injuries during different parts of my career.

I always hold the passion and the love for keep doing what I do. That is play tennis, no?

So of course is something that I'm proud to even after achieved a lot of things in some of that moments I was able to keep being hungry to keep going and be enough humble to accept the challenges, to accept that in some moments things were not going the way that I expected.

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

I always had great help with great people around me and great family. So, yeah, without them, of course, would be impossible.

Q. Indoors, especially the serve and the return, become much more important. How satisfied are you with those two aspects of your game? You hit 16 aces which is a pretty good number.

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, the match was long, too, no? I think for moments I served well. For moments a little bit less well.

I lost the first serve, and then I never lost my serve again, no? So that's a good thing. I think I can serve better. I have been practicing quite well, honestly, on the last days, no?

I felt well with my serve, well with my shots. Today is always tough, the first match in indoor and against an opponent that is very difficult to play on this surface. So is an important victory for me, as I said before, no?

I think the return was better and better when the match was coming, and that's the way. I am confident that I gonna keep improving for tomorrow, and I hope to be ready to play a good match.

Q. What is it about playing indoors on hard courts that presents the greatest challenge to you?

RAFAEL NADAL: No, I have been playing well on this surface a lot of times in my career. Last year in the Davis Cup I played an amazing event.

Here I was playing great last year, but I had strain in the abdominal, I had to retire in the semifinals. And in the World Tour Finals I think I started the first day with not my best shape after the strain in abdominal, I arrive, I didn't have the chance to practice as much as I would like. Then I played well against Stefanos and Daniil.

So if I am playing well, I think it's a surface that can work for me, because I think my serve is working better today than years ago, and that's a big help in this surface.

Q. This is kind of a general question as this year comes to a close. What are you giving thanks for in 2020? I know it's been kind of a difficult year for everyone.

RAFAEL NADAL: Can you repeat that?

Q. As this year comes to a close, I'm just curious,

what are you giving thanks for in 2020? I know this has been a difficult year for a lot of people.

THE MODERATOR: (Translating.)

RAFAEL NADAL: Have been a very challenging year and sad year I think for everyone, no? A lot of people lost members of the family. Is a tough year, honestly, no?

I thank God people next to me still healthy. But the world is suffering, and of course the only thing that we can do is try to be responsible, as I said a lot of times, and expect a medicine to finally go over the virus, no? To win against the virus. Hopefully 2021 will be the year and hopefully sooner than later.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

