

Rolex Paris Masters

Tuesday, 1 November 2022

Paris, France

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome back. How do you feel about the last two tournaments of the year and your push to try and finish once again No. 1?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, good. Happy to be on the tour again after a while. Yeah, excited, no? I was not able to play much the last five months. So, yeah, always happy to be back in a city that everybody knows how important is for me, even if it's true that at the same time that in this event I never had a lot of positive things in my career (smiling).

But as always, no, very excited to be here. Yes, just trying to put myself in a position to be competitive.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. How tough was it to leave home with a child behind you?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, different. Yeah, different approach to usual. Always have been tough to leave home, honestly (smiling).

Yeah, it's quite interesting how even after two or three weeks, leave your son at home and not be able to see him, it's something quite interesting how even with this after only three weeks knowing him, you start missing him, no?

Yeah, new experience. All the changes are difficult in this life, and you need to adapt to it. But, you know, it's at the same time is true that we are lucky today that with the technology, everything, we can do video calls any time that you want, so it's always that helps.

Q. You played here in 2007 the final against Nalbandian. Now you are still there with a completely new generation of players, and you are fighting for to be No. 1 at the end of the year. What are your feelings about this?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, the feelings are that I am proud about all the things that I was able to still be here in 2022. Something that says that I did a lot of things well in my life, not only my tennis career; to hold the passion, to hold the

love for the game and the spirit of fighting every day, every practice.

So, yeah, proud about that. Just hope that I can enjoy again the last two events of the year.

Q. You played many, many times for the year-end No. 1, for finishing the season No. 1. I wonder if you remember the first time you had to fight to finish No. 1, what kind of different pressure that was? Thinking of Alcaraz for the first time. Is it something that is an added pressure, or is it more of a challenge compared to winning a Grand Slam title? Is there a way maybe to make a difference the first time that you have to fight for it?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, to be clear, as I understand, it's an interesting point for you, because you are talking about fighting for be No. 1. I don't fight to be No. 1, you know? I just fight to keep being competitive in every event that I played.

Something that I said since long time ago: I will not fight anymore to be No. 1. I did in the past. I achieved that goal a couple of times of my career that I have been very, very happy and proud about achieving that. But I am in a moment of my tennis career that I don't fight to be No. 1.

Q. The first time...

RAFAEL NADAL: Yeah, but the question was if that add pressure for me today. Not anymore, but in the first time? 2008? I don't think so. No, at the end of the season was clear that I would be No. 1, I think, if I am not wrong. I don't remember very well, honestly (smiling).

No, I mean, when you are having a positive year, be No. 1 or not is consequence of all the things that you did well during the year, no? It's obvious that when I was No. 1 for the first time in my career in 2008, I really wanted to be there, because I felt that 2005, '06, '07, including '08, I was doing amazing results, winning a lot of tournaments, having a lot of points on the ranking system. I had somebody in front of me like Roger, no? So in some way I think I had been very consistent.

I think I deserve to be there, no, because it's nice to arrive to No. 1, takes some time, and you need to fight for it, and that helps to be even more consistent, no?

Today is a different story for me. I don't know how many events I played, like ten, and I finished eight. Difficult to be No. 1 like this. But happy to be in that position that says when I was playing I was playing well.

Q. How do you feel, how does your body feel at the end of this season since you had a few problems during the...

RAFAEL NADAL: I don't know. Let's see on the competitive level how I manage. It's always an issue when you are not -- I mean, in older bodies like my one, it's easier to know how the things are going when you are playing tournaments in a row.

When you are coming back from a period of time outside of the competition, it's difficult to know how you're going to be playing, how your body gonna respond, because it's obvious that the tour level is different, that the amount of practice that I can have at home, no.

It's true that have been an amazing year in terms of results, but at the same time is true that have been a tough year in terms of injuries.

Just excited to be here. I am here to try my best. Then accept the things how the things are coming, no. Hopefully I will be ready for tomorrow, and I gonna try to be competitive. Let's see. I am excited about it.

Q. Just for the conditions of play. Do you feel it's really faster here this year? Do you like it or do you think it will make it a bit more difficult?

RAFAEL NADAL: I don't know. I like if I am playing well (smiling). I like to play well. If I play well, I like more or less all the surfaces. If I am not playing well, sometimes I even can like clay (smiling).

But this is difficult, no. I think if you are not playing well, especially in these kind of surfaces, it's impossible, no, because you need to be confident. You need to play aggressive. It's a surface that if you are not serving well, that's the toughest part of playing in this surface after a long period of time, because you need to have automatic things like this, because a couple of mistakes is not like clay that you can have time to come back here. If you lose your serve, then you are in big trouble, no?

Let's see. No, I mean, as you know, I improved a lot my

tennis in the surfaces the last couple of years. Yeah, why not I will be able to play well, no? But day by day.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

