

Nitto ATP Finals

Sunday, 13 November 2022

Turin, Italy

Pala Alpitour, Torino

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/R. Nadal

7-6, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Tough luck, Rafa. How do you assess your performance overall tonight?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, I think was a decent first set. It's true that Taylor played unbelievable, so well done for him.

In the second, yeah, very disappointed about the second break. First break, okay, can happen, but not the second.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You said before that tennis is mainly about positioning and getting in the right positions. Did you feel in the first set you were getting in the right positions, then not being able to hit certain shots? Is that what was happening in the second set?

RAFAEL NADAL: No, no, I don't think I was getting in the right positions in the first set. I think that my serve worked well, then he was hitting the ball very strong.

I need more matches to play at this kind of level, even if I am practicing well, much better than how I am competing, without a doubt. That's normal.

At the end is not the ideal tournament and probably part of the season to come back after a couple of months without being on the tour because you don't have time to get confidence.

In the beginning you have very tough opponent in front, in a surface that very small details make the difference. These small details probably goes the way the player who are under better confidence.

That was not my case last couple of matches, and that's it. Accept, keep working, that's the only way. I know I am practicing well and with the right attitude and doing the right things. In the matches I not improve without a doubt.

In this tournament I still have a chance. But of course not happy about the beginning, no? That first match was very important for me.

Q. Compared to Paris, do you think you are still in lack of rhythm here in Torino? What did you improve the last two weeks between Paris and today?

RAFAEL NADAL: Looks like not much (smiling).

I don't know. I mean, I just felt that in every single set I played on practice, I was competitive enough. As I said, competition is another story. Sometimes, no? Most of the times when you face top-level players, matches are decided in small details.

He played aggressive, serving huge, hitting every single ball. Was not an easy match during the whole match. Couple of easy balls that I had, you don't expect an easy ball because every ball that he was hitting, going for a big shot.

Well done for him. At the end all credit to him. As I said, something that normal that is happening to me after the last five months I had. But even if it's normal, that's not avoid that I am disappointed, that is not avoid that I think I can do better things on the competition, no?

I am going to keep trying, without a doubt.

Q. Your next match is against Felix Auger-Aliassime, which you played in Roland Garros. Can you give me your thoughts about your next match against him?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, it's a match like a normal tournament already, no, because the loser will go out of the tournament normally. Just accept that I need to do better things. I hope to be ready to make that happen.

He finish the season playing unbelievable, winning tournaments in a row, playing so well. Another big challenge.

Q. You were saying about some of the finer points in



today's match could have made a difference. You also made the point about you haven't had that many matches under your belt over the last couple of months. If you had to go back on this match, was there one particular aspect of your game that you were not satisfied with, or was it just the fact that you haven't played enough to get into those sorts of rhythms you're used to?

RAFAEL NADAL: Easy: it's about time. Tennis and the sport in general, it's about time. I have less time than him to do what I want to do on the ball.

I felt that everything was going so fast. When that's happen, normally you are under stress and you don't have the time to play the kind of shot that you want. In most of the points of the match, I was in a defensive position and he was in an offensive position. That's what happened.

That's something that was difficult to avoid for me because you need to be quicker on your legs, quicker on your mind. It's something that even if you work, you need to win matches to make that happen, no, even a lot of times happened the other way.

But every single time I came back from injury, don't happen that way playing against top players since the first day, you know? That's what's happening when you are coming back, playing Masters 1000s and World Tour Finals.

Normally when you come back from injuries or time outside of the competition, it's much better chance to raise your level because your level is raising when you are winning matches, no? Especially you need matches when you are off the tour for a while.

Normally I try to come back in lower events. Normally you don't need to play at your top to win couple of matches. Then if you made that happen, when you face the top players, you are more ready, no?

Doesn't matter. We can find different ways to explain what happened. At the end, Fritz played very well. I was not able to handle his power. It's obvious that in this kind of surface, you need to play very well. You don't have time to think for a tactic because you can't have a tactic in terms of going back, playing different way. There is no time. The things are going so quick.

Serving like Fritz served, then you are under pressure all the time, no? When somebody is serving that way, on the return he is going for every shot.

Just well played from him, not enough from me.

Q. Despite the result, how did you find it out on court in Torino for the first time playing at this arena?

RAFAEL NADAL: The event is fantastic. The arena great. Great crowd, yeah. The only negative thing was the result.

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