

BNP Paribas Open

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

Gael Monfils

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Gael, the crowd was amazing tonight. What does Indian Wells mean to you?

GAEL MONFILS: Yeah, amazing crowd. It was, as I said couple days ago here, I have been very blessed, because crowd give me all the time great energy, great support. You know, Indian Wells is top-five definitely tournaments in my calendar, my regular calendar, is top-five that, you know, I want to come out and play.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. When you look back at yourself when you broke in on the tour back in 2005, I think it was maybe, skinny young kid, and you reflect on that whole stretch a couple of decades, how will you change the most over that time?

GAEL MONFILS: To be completely correct is 2004, November, you know, in Bercy when I had this wildcard in Bercy, and then I beat Dupuis and Mahut in the qualifier for the Super 9, because it was Super 9 then.

And actually, I was talking with Thomas Enqvist, I beat him first round my first night session. And since then it change, change a late.

Then I play Lleyton, he was world No. 2, and I lost 6-3, 7-6. And then I was, like, I was not far from the world No. 2. And then I was, like, Yeah, maybe I can do some stuff.

I was very lucky. In 2005 got a wildcard as well in Doha, and I could beat my first top 10, a guy that was looking to win in Roland Garros, you know, the year before. It was Gaston Gaudio. And then I could beat him, first top 10.

Since then, I was, like, Wow, I'm in this ride, amazing ride, trying to enjoy every moment. And here I am in '26, still playing. I'm, like, yeah, it's been very blessed and very long run. Bumpy, for sure, with injury, with injuries, but every second, every second I had in this career, you know, I couldn't, you know, dream about it, because it was impossible, you know, for me.

At the end of the day, I'm just grateful, and I say thankful to

my parents, because I have been dreaming, but they have been actually believe in that dream, because no matter what, when you dream, you need some help.

Yeah, the biggest helps till now I have is my parents, so for me it's a big thanks to them and hope they're proud.

Q. Kind of going off of that, the dream and maybe not always believing or knowing that it may have been possible in this career, at what point do you think or did it ever happen in your career where maybe playing and hoping you're good enough started to become you knowing that you're good enough?

GAEL MONFILS: It's a good question. You know, even I was doing semifinals in 2008 in Roland Garros, my mom, she couldn't really say that I was a good tennis player, in a way, because back of her mind it was still, you know, you can get hurt and everything can stop.

So I felt like, you know, I don't really know how to really express it, but in a way, I was very confident back then when I was 10, 11, until now, same confidence but knowing that, you know, you can stop any time because my mom was super afraid of that.

So she always tell me to enjoy, and I feel like, you know, young Gael. Now, you know, I haven't change, I have always a strong belief of myself. Maybe that's why, you know, everything happen to me, but I felt like if you watch when I was 11, did the commentary on YouTube, I was quite confident.

Q. We saw the large crowds out there. Everywhere you go and play, you always draw a crowd of people who love to see you, watch, and the celebration at the end. When you experience these moments, do you still think, oh, maybe I can keep going, or are you pretty much stopped? If you are that, do you intend to find some way, find a way to stay within the tennis community?

GAEL MONFILS: It's just, like, embrace the final love, because I'm telling you next week, when I be home, I have another celebration is waiting for me, and this one is



stronger, that's for sure.

No, everything has a hand, and then I'm just happy that I can feel it one last time, you know, the love of people, one last time I can thank them for being with me for this long ride. And, you know, the next chapter is gonna be, I hope and I'm sure even better, you know, even better.

So far, you know, as I say, normally next year I will work in finance, so completely different work than tennis. Of course I might be involved with some athletes, so I be maybe a little bit around sports. I won't say tennis specifically, but maybe around sport a little bit.

But, yeah, I felt like finance is what, you know, my next chapter so far is, and definitely family.

Q. You've had a lot of great players from France but no male Grand Slam champions since Yannick Noah. And same now in the United States. We've had some great players, but no champion since Roddick. I wonder if you feel that's not a fair standard to judge how a country is doing, and also, why you think the power seemed to have shifted to Europe in the last 20 years?

GAEL MONFILS: Yeah, I don't think it's fair. I don't think it's fair, because in a way, I can just speak a little bit for my time being on the tour.

We had like, as I say, three beauties with us, and then I was there. Let's say three legends and three beauties, to be fair. I feel like Roger, Rafa, and Novak were just incredible where dominate the game, and they were, like, a legend. And they didn't let so much, and, let's say, what they could let a little bit was just three guys who actually were amazing and for me legends, as well, is Andy, Stan, and Marin.

That was the three guys -- and, sorry, Juan Martin. Juan Martin. Those guys, let's say, could pick up a little bit the leftover, if I can say, in a way. They have been legend, as well.

Then for us was hard. We were just under, just under, couldn't find a solution to beat them. Just cannot be as good as Stan, Marin, and Juan Martin, also, because those guys, they were in the right moment. They could lift up the level, lift up physically, lift up mentally.

Yeah, that's not easy. You know, that's not easy, in a way. They were just, like, a better player.

I feel like Italy, they were waiting for a long time for a Grand Slam champion, and now they have Jannik. I don't

think country matters. Of course individual matters. I think you guys in USA, you will have fair shot soon, as well, and Taylor was not far. He was the last one, I think, in the Grand Slam final. Hopefully in France we will have one soon, as well.

Maybe, you know, who knows, in those coming years is not a South American or American who is going to make it tough, to European, like to Carlos and Jannik. So who knows that.

But what I know is that big countries, countries with slam, we always hope, you know, to have one constant winner. It might arrive, but as I always say, you guys need to be patient (smiling).

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