

# Davis Cup Finals

Monday, 18 November 2024

Team Spain

Captain David Ferrer

Rafael Nadal

Carlos Alcaraz

Roberto Bautista Agut

Pedro Martinez

Marcel Granollers

Press Conference

RAQUEL MARTIN: Good morning. Thank you to the members of the Davis Cup Spanish team.

As I said before, we're going to start with questions in English. Please raise your hand so we can pass the microphone.

**Q. Hello, Rafa. I know you've got used to the idea of retiring from tennis, but now that the week has arrived, could you tell us how you feel today?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Hello, good morning.

Good. I mean, something that I have been thinking for quite a long time, you know, some on-and-offs during the season. But I tried always to give me one more chance.

But, yeah, something that I decided with time. So I'm enjoying the week. No, no, I'm not putting much attention to that. I know it's going to be a big change in my life, but that's going to happen later after this week.

Now I am here on the team, and I am very excited. I am happy for that.

**Q. Morning, Rafa. It's going to be a very emotional week. How do you think you're going to feel on the court for the last time? Do you think you'll struggle to contain your emotions out there?**

RAFAEL NADAL: I mean, I don't know (smiling). I cannot predict what's going on.

If I am on court, hopefully not, no, because at the end I am



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not here for retiring. I'm here to try to help the team. Then it's of course going to be my last week on the professional tour, but at the end, we are here in a teams competition.

The most important thing here is try to help the team and to stay all focused on what we have to do, that is play tennis and do it very well, no? Because the rival is going to be difficult, and the conditions are difficult, too.

So then the emotions going to be for the end, and before and during, it's to be focused on what we need to do.

**Q. How have you been feeling in practice? How do you feel your level is if you are potentially going to play singles?**

RAFAEL NADAL: I mean, that's a question for the captain, not for me (smiling).

Well, I just tried to work as hard as possible the last month and a half, then here, just trying to do my best every single day. Of course when you are not competing very often, it's a little bit more, you know, difficult to hold the level in a constant basis, but have good moments, more difficult moments. I think the improvement is there every day, but, I mean, we have a great team on Spain.

So the thing is all these players on the tour are playing very well, having great seasons. Then it's the work of the captain to decide what he feels it's better for the team.

**Q. Hi, Rafa. As your retirement approaches, I'm wondering if you could tell us what you're happiest about and what you're saddest about?**

RAFAEL NADAL: About what?

**Q. As you prepare to leave playing professional tennis.**

RAFAEL NADAL: I mean, everybody makes mistakes. Everybody when arrive the end of a long career, of course, at the end I will change things that I did, I will do things that I will change to try to be better and to try to avoid things, but at the end, I achieved the most important thing for me,

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no, because arrived this day and I am in peace that I give all what I had, and I played and I practiced since I was eight years old, seven -- I mean, I started at three -- but in that age, I started to work more and more with passion, with love, and with the determination to be as good as possible, no.

I am not the kind of guy that I will say, no, I will not change things, because for me it looks arrogant. Of course I will change things, but one thing have been so important for me, because I gonna leave this professional tour with the calm and with the personal satisfaction that I give my best almost in every single moment.

**Q. This is a question for the captain, David. What are your thoughts on where Rafa's at? Do you think he's ready for selection?**

CAPTAIN DAVID FERRER: I don't know yet. You will know tomorrow. For the moment, I am not decide the players that are gonna play tomorrow.

**Q. What will you miss the most about no longer being a professional tennis player, and what's something you will not miss about the life?**

RAFAEL NADAL: I mean, I am not worried about the next chapter in my life. I have been always happy without tennis, and I had a lot of moments in my life that I was not able to play tennis because of injuries, so I spent a lot of months doing other things. Is true that during recovery so now is a different approach.

But at the same time always accept the challenge of an important change in my life that for everyone, when you have important changes in your life, you need to accept the process and accept that the things at the beginning gonna be a little bit, I don't know if difficult, but different, and you need to respect the process, no? So I don't know how the things going to be.

But in the other hand, you said about -- say again?

**Q. What's the thing that you will miss the most?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Yeah, exactly, sorry.

I mean, probably the feeling of competition, go on court and see the fans out there, the atmosphere when you play big matches. And at the end of the day is about the adrenaline that you feel before, at the end, and during the match.

That's something that in life you have, I probably gonna have things that gonna make me happier or give me

different and more important feelings, but this kind of feeling, adrenaline, it's difficult to find outside of the professional sport, I think.

**Q. Rafa, I just wondered, was it a new injury that made you decide in September that this was your last tournament, or was it that you just decided that your body could not go on into next year and play maybe on clay one last time?**

RAFAEL NADAL: No, no, not new injury. It's about the things that I went through, and, I mean, with the surgery last year, and I don't gonna add the rest of the things that I had, but a few ones, make me feel that I cannot be enough competitive, and I am not able to enjoy my daily basis the way that I need to be competitive at the highest level, no?

So at the end of the day, all relate to the question of myself is about, okay, I can hold for one more year, but why? To say good-bye in every single tournament, I don't have that ego to need that.

So at the end is about a feeling that I have been thinking for a long time. For me, today don't make sense or to keep going knowing that I don't have the real chance to be competitive the way that I like to be competitive, because my body is not able to give me the possibility to do that very often.

**Q. I just wanted to ask you, what is it that you find so special about team competition and about the Davis Cup in general and representing Spain?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, when we play by teams, we always represent Spain, no, because we don't have team competitions in our, I mean, in our professional tour, like besides Laver Cup now last few years, no?

I mean, the feeling to play for your country, the feeling to play for your teammates, and if you have a good relationship with the team, something that happened I think 99% of the times of our careers, with David, with Carlos before, I mean Moya, and now with all this team, have been 20 years of playing this competition.

So I went through a lot of different generations. The big success in our country is we always had a familiar relationship, no? And that helps to have the feeling that at the end when you win, everybody wins. When you lose, everybody loses, no?

So have been not issues on the team, and I think the colleagues that I have have been great. Normally we try to make the things easy in general terms and create the right atmosphere. I love that. And to share the good and bad



moments is something different than in our daily basis of the tour that is a very individual sport, yeah.

**Q. Wondering if you could sum up the significance to you of you finishing your career here in Spain.**

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, I mean, yeah, I had that possibility and something great. Everybody knows how much I love my country in general. I haven't been able to move from the country ever, so I enjoy living here.

And play my last event in Spain, it's something that I am very happy with, no? Thanks to the work that they made in Valencia to qualify for the Finals, I have the chance to enjoy this last moment of my tennis career. Being with them, being with the team, and playing in Spain is something very special, no? Because I will never have the chance to thank enough everybody here in Spain, the support that I receive and the love that I felt always, no? The media, the crowd, the kids, always had a great connection with them.

So I have been very fortunate to enjoy all what I enjoyed and feel myself the way that I feel during all those years, no? Is a very special thing that I felt very well loved. So have been very special.

**Q. Carlos, you have had the chance to play with Rafa at the Olympics, and you saw how emotional it was there. I'm curious, how emotional do you think you'll get this week, and what does it mean for you to be part of his last tournament?**

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Well, yeah, as I said, for me, it was a dream, you know, be able to play in Olympics games. It was more special, you know, playing doubles with Rafa.

Yeah, representing Spain here in the Davis Cup, you know, being with him, share a lot of moments off the court, on the court. And his last moments on court probably is going to be super special. But not for me but for everyone.

Right now I'm trying to feel it natural. Let's see tomorrow. I think that the emotions is going to be there, so I don't want to put expectations on it. I just want to go there, see how it's going to be feeling it, and let's see. But it's pressure that for me, for the team, and for everyone here in Spain, it's going to be an emotional day.

**Q. Rafa, there is a World Team social media about will Roger Federer come to Malaga to watch your farewell? Curious, have you contact with Roger? Is he going to come? Because Novak said he will come to see your farewell. Have you talked with Roger? Just like you see his farewell in Laver Cup two years ago.**

RAFAEL NADAL: Different situation. I was there to play. There we were teammates. Here we are in a Spanish team.

I didn't talk to Roger. I think Roger have busy schedule. By the way, of course that's going to be my last week on the professional tour, but I don't think going to be my last good-bye. So gonna be another chances to do something.

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