

Davis Cup Finals

Tuesday, 19 November 2024

Team Spain

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference



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B. van de ZANDSCHULP/R. Nadal

6-4, 6-4

Team Netherlands - 1

Team Spain - 0

THE MODERATOR: We will start with English questions for Rafa.

Q. Hi, Rafa. Bad luck. First of all, before the match, there was a very emotional moment during the anthem. Just wondering how you were feeling and what was going through your mind at that point?

RAFAEL NADAL: Of course have been an emotional day, nerves before what can be my last singles match like professional. That's the way that I felt that.

And then, yeah, of course the emotions, feeling the National Anthem for the last time like professional have been, you know, very special. And then of course a little bit of mixed feelings makes the things a little bit more difficult.

But that's it. I mean, we went on court. We live that moment. I tried to do my best. I tried to, at the same time, to stay as positive as possible in every single moment, to play with the right energy.

Was not enough. Congrats to Botic. That's all. He was better than me. And, yeah, nothing to say, no. It's not necessary to analyze match anymore (smiling).

Q. I just wanted to ask about the process leading up to the match and the team selection and those discussions. Did you always feel that you were going to play? Was it a last-minute decision? When was all of that made?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, I mean, what's internal, it's internal in that matters (smiling). But of course haven't been an easy decision to the captain.

But at the end, I really believe that David put on the field the player who he feels that had better chance to win. That's the true, no? Because I give him, since the beginning, the input that he doesn't need to feel any pressure to put me, honestly, and I was not sure to play. That's the true, no (smiling)?

So have been, yeah, a lot of conversations during the week. So on and off I was not sure, because I knew that something like what happened today could happen. But like this, I mean, after the practice of yesterday, that it's true have been quite positive. I practiced quite well. David was confident that I was the player to play.

I mean, things can go well, can go bad. Of course putting myself on the field like to play the first match was a risk, of course. But that's the work of the captain, no? At the end of the day, he has to make decisions, and David, I'm sure he make the decision thinking what's the best for the team, not for myself.

I respect that. I try to give him all the time the easier input to make him decide the way that he feels. I even give him more chances to put Roberto on the field than me during the whole week, but, I mean, he had the confidence to put myself, so at the end, I have nothing, not an injury, nothing important to say I'm not ready to play.

If he watch both of us playing on the practices and he decide that, I respect it and I went on court, I try my best and thanks for the opportunity.

Q. How would you say today compared maybe to what you might have imagined it would be like?

RAFAEL NADAL: Sorry?

Q. If you had imagined what today might be like, what perhaps your last match would feel like, would be like, how did today compare to that? And if Spain does win, would you want another chance to play later this week?

RAFAEL NADAL: I say the same than before: Is not my

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decision. That's why we have a captain on the team, you know. I am not the captain.

But, I mean, he make decision today. Hopefully we have the chance to go through. And probably watching that today what the decision that at the end to put me on the court like second player didn't work, probably the easy move and maybe the right move is to change. No, that's the true.

For me, that's the way that I think as if I, I mean, if I would be the captain, probably I will change, I don't put myself the next day (smiling). If we go through, that's my feeling.

But at the end, is not my decision, and I'm sure that he will make the best decision possible for the team. By the way, it's in some ways good maybe if that was my last match that probably that was my last match is nothing happens. I lost my first match in the Davis Cup, and I lost my last one. So we close the circle. (Laughter.)

Q. In case this was your last match, was it satisfying? I know it's difficult to plan exactly how someone leaves a sport, but given how everything went, is this a satisfying ending for you?

RAFAEL NADAL: That's how it is. No, satisfying is give the point to the team and help the team to be an advantage on the competition, no.

Was not the case. I lost my match. I mean, as I said, I went on court and I came here with the goal to help the team the way that I could help. Today I was selected to be on the court, so I tried to help the team to put a win out there, but was not possible.

And that's it. I mean, I can't -- I mean, in that moment of my career, I can't complain much. I go there, I try my best, I try to enjoy and play with the right energy, with the right attitude. Just didn't work. And was a possibility that that would happen.

I really hope that Carlos gonna win his match, and then the doubles too. So hopefully we can keep going and I will keep working hard every day to be on the team in case that the team needs me one more time. If not, just support from the bench.

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