

Roland Garros

Sunday, 11 October 2020

Paris, France

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference

R. NADAL/N. Djokovic

6-0, 6-2, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Roger Federer has already been on social media and described this victory as one of the greatest achievements in sport, to win 13 of these. What say you about this?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, I was not able, of course, to watch anything. But thanks to Roger for the words, no? I think, as everybody know, we have a very, very good relationship. We respect each other a lot. At the same time in some way I think he's happy when I'm winning and I'm happy when he's doing the things well.

In some way for me means a lot the positive relationship that we have together because we have been going through a great rivalry for a very, very long time. Yeah, just can say thanks to him.

Q. You played only nine matches since winning the title in Acapulco in February before the final today. Did you worry at all that you may not have had enough matches to be able to play that well against Novak?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, yes, of course. Doubts are part of the life. I always say the same, no? For me doubts are good because it mean that you don't consider yourself too good.

Of course, the year have been a tough year for everyone.

Of course, my preparation for this tournament have not been the perfect one, but in some way I have been practicing on clay for a while because I didn't play in America.

Yeah, I was under doubt before the match, yes. But it's true that my level of confidence and tennis have been improving every single day during the whole tournament. My feeling on the semifinal have been better. The feeling of the ball, practicing even today in the morning, then the warmup, yesterday, my level of confidence hitting the ball have been going up every single day.



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I was not confident, because you can't be too confident going on court against Novak, but I have been positive thinking I will be able to play a good match.

Q. After your first match you said that the atmosphere with very few people on the stands is a bit sad, and it's supposed to be sad because of what the world has experienced in the past few months. Now that you've achieved such an incredible feat, obviously you must be very happy about this, does it feel a bit sad because of few people on the stands?

RAFAEL NADAL: Of course. Of course, is an important day for me, but I'm not stupid, no? Is still a very sad situation worldwide.

If you ask me what's my feeling, of course I am super happy. In the other hand, I am not that happy as usual because the situation is tough for most of the people around the world.

We didn't enjoy, as always, a full crowd, an amazing atmosphere. So, yeah, not because I won the tournament I change my thoughts, no? The situation still sad. We are lucky enough to be able to practice, to play our sport, to have a tour. We can't thank enough to the ATP and to Roland Garros and to the US Open and to everybody who made big efforts to organize events under these very difficult circumstances.

But I don't forget how tough is the situation in the world. I just really hope that the situation improves very soon.

Q. Novak said you played the first two sets virtually perfect. Do you think those are two of the best sets you've ever played at Roland Garros?

RAFAEL NADAL: Who said? Novak?

Q. Yes.

RAFAEL NADAL: Yeah, well, of course I played at an amazing level of tennis, no? For two sets and a half I played great. I can't say another thing. Is impossible to have this score against him without playing great.

Yeah, played a very good final. I played at my highest level when I needed to play at my highest level, so something I am very proud. The personal satisfaction is big because under the circumstances that we played this Roland Garros, even if I played an amazing match this afternoon, the conditions are a little bit not the conditions

that I will choose, never, to play an event like this.

I was able to adapt well. I was able to, as I say the first day, to be positive in every circumstances that I was facing during the whole event, trying to accept all the challenges in terms of sometimes the feeling on the ball haven't been great because of the cold and everything.

But I take it in a positive way, no? I just tried to work every day with the right determination, looking for my goals. Yeah, I think is one of the Roland Garros that have a better personal value for myself.

Q. Looking forward, one of the only things you haven't done in your career is win the ATP Finals. Is that a big goal? You haven't played much this year, so you have a better chance there because normally you would arrive in London pretty tired after a long year.

RAFAEL NADAL: I don't know. I even don't know my calendar. I don't know what I going to do after here. I can't tell you if I going to keep playing or not keep playing for the next couple of months.

I didn't decide, so I am not sure if I am going to keep going on the normal calendar or if I stop playing until next year. Is something that I have to decide. So don't make sense today to speak about the World Tour Finals because I really don't know if I going to play it or not. Is just conversation I need to have with my family and team especially during the next couple of days. Need to calm down the situation and analyze the future, because we are facing a tough situation, as everybody knows.

In terms of Australia, 14 days of quarantine before the tournament start. Is the moment to be smart and make the right decisions in every single moment. I am just doing my best to not make bad decisions. To make the right decisions, I need to think only about what I need to think.

Now and before this match, I was thinking about Roland Garros. Doesn't matter what's going on later. Probably after tomorrow we going to start thinking about what's the best possible calendar for me.

Q. We've heard you say today on court and over the years that you don't want to talk about the significance of number 20, catching Roger Federer in that number. I'm wondering if you can appreciate and understand why the rest of us think about that and focus on that and consider it a big deal that you did get to number 20 today?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, of course. I never hide that for me, I always say the same, that I would love to finish my career being the player with more Grand Slams. No doubt about that, no?

But in the other hand I say, okay, I have to do my way. I did my way during all my career. Worked well. I'm not going to be thinking all the time Novak have this one, Roger is winning the other one. You can't be always unhappy because your neighbor have a bigger house than you or a bigger boat or have a better phone. You have to live your personal life, no?

Personally that's the things that I did during all my career, just try to follow my road, try my best every single day. In terms of these records, of course that I care. I am a big fan of the history of sport in general. I respect a lot that. For me means a lot to share this number with Roger, no?

But let's see what's going on when we finish our careers. We keep playing. I don't know what can happen in the future. I am just excited and of course is something that means a lot to me. At the same time share this record between us, that we had an amazing rivalry for such a long time, is something in some way beautiful I really believe. Let's see what is going on.

Q. You're also not a guy who has very often got revenge matches or spoken about getting even. Surely during today's match at some point you must have thought about the Australian Open, last meeting with Novak, and how that devastated you at that time, and you must feel satisfied.

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, yes, but as you know, I am not a big fan of revenges, no? I just accept when the things are not going the way that I like. In Australia he played amazing. For me was very difficult to play well because he played too good, just too good.

Today was little bit the opposite, especially for two sets and a half. But I really don't care much. I don't have a better feeling because I won 6-0, 6-2, 7-5, than if I won 6-4 in the fifth honestly. Even maybe is a little bit more beautiful to win 6-4 in the fifth than winning in straight sets, no? That victory normally in terms of personal feeling are more satisfying than winning in straight sets.

Of course, in the other hand to win against Novak with that score is because I did a lot of things very well.

Q. Obviously you're very excited and very happy at winning. Can you put into words what it felt like as soon as that ace happened and you dropped to your knees on the court? While you're always happy to win a title, I don't remember seeing you as excited and as thrilled with what you did today.

RAFAEL NADAL: No, I have been very emotional in the past a lot of times, no? For me, honestly, one month and a half ago if you tell me you're going to have this trophy with you again, I will say, This year will probably be too difficult.

In the sport, the life change quick. I did the things that I had to do with the big support of my team. I had all the time my team next to me and supporting, especially in the tough days because is difficult to work every single day without a clear schedule. Is great to have such great professionals and great human beings next to me to push me and to help me in that tough days, no?

In some way today, playing at that level, is dedicated to all of them that help me.

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