

Roland Garros

Tuesday, 1 June 2021

Paris, France

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference

R. NADAL/A. Popyrin

6-3, 6-2, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. I just wondered, conditions, a lot was made of the weather conditions and everything else last autumn. I wonder just how much more comfortable you are with the conditions now that the French Open is back in its normal dates.

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, of course the conditions of last year for me at the end have been good because I won (smiling). That's the thing, no?

Another thing is that is not the ideal situation to play tennis with 3 or 4 degrees or sometimes 2 degrees like some night matches that I played. I feel like I was a little bit scared to get injured, no? But that's past. This year, we come back to a normal date.

So, yeah, warm conditions. I think for everybody is much more comfortable to play under these conditions than in the other ones. That's what we are used to play here in Roland Garros. Yeah, I am happy for that.

Q. You have played Alexei twice now in the last month or so. After this match he had you at set point in the third. Can you give me your thoughts and your opinions on Alexei after this match?

RAFAEL NADAL: I repeat the same. With this serve, with this kind of shots from the baseline, you have everything to become a top player.

Then you really want to do it. You need to really want to do it. If he want to do it, of course he gonna have his chances, because he has a lot of very difficult things in his game. So he has everything to become a great -- well, he's already, no, to become, but become a fantastic player. Let's see. Let's see what is going on in the next couple of months, years.

Q. When you face set points like you did there in the third today, does your approach or mindset change at all when you go to play points like that where if you lose it the set will go to your opponent? Would



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you compare it to match points, or is there a difference there?

RAFAEL NADAL: Yeah, no. No, because even losing the third set I have been in a very good position to try to win the match. Match point is a different story. You lose the point, you're over. You are back home.

No, here you lose the set. Okay. We are playing best-of-five. The other player needs to win two more sets to beat you, and I know I gonna be there fighting for every single point.

So of course I don't want to lose the set at all, but that's part of the game. You face a player that he's decided to go for every shot, so you are in trouble. If he's having success like he did with his serve, then it's difficult to have breaks, and then you are in a tricky position.

So that's it. But here, especially on clay, the matches are best-of-five, the matches are long and it's difficult to hold that kind of level for such a long time, playing with this kind of risk, yeah.

Q. I wanted to ask about your seeding. You're the third seed, which I appreciate is world ranking, but given your record in Paris one would assume you warrant being No. 1. Just your thoughts on the fact that you've got yourself and Novak and Roger in the same half for the first time in your careers at a Grand Slam.

RAFAEL NADAL: That's part of the game, no? That's how the ranking works. I mean, there is no one sport that is more fair than tennis on that. There is a ranking. The seededs are made with the ranking that you had during the last year, during a year. So that's how it is.

I mean, you need to find a way to do it fair, and probably that's a good way to avoid any discussion or -- you know, that's it, no? Fair enough, I am the third, Medvedev is the second, Novak is the first. No problem with that.

I am here to try my best, and when I am the third, you know that you're gonna have the chance to be in the same draw, part of the draw than the No. 1 or the No. 2. So this time was with the part of the draws of the No. 1.

But still remain a lot for me to face that match, semifinals. I just won my first match, something that I'm happy with and I'm focused on try to go for the second one. That's



it. No, no, other stuff don't worry me much now,
honestly.

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