

Roland Garros

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Paris, France

Roger Federer

Press Conference

R. FEDERER/M. Cilic

6-2, 2-6, 7-6, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You seem to have been in a real good place for many years, very happy. But we know the tour is just a really tough, tough place, sort of a Darwinian world. You win, are happy; you lose, really rough. A lot of money at stake. Careers. What would your advice, if you were asked, be to younger players in terms of their mental health, their happiness with themselves? What can the tour do in these areas?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, it's a good question. I think it depends on a little bit, well, how old you are. Obviously like you said, this is about the younger players. I think it's very important who you surround yourself with, clearly. I think for me having that older brother early on, having somewhat of a close relationship with my parents, but they gave me the distance and freedom, was important to me.

I mean, how do you stay happy on the road? Because you're waiting a lot. You are, what else is going on? You lose some, and then you train. You lose again, you train again. You're supposed to be happy, upbeat and, like, living the dream, which it is, but losing ain't fun.

So you've got to find your way how to actually still take joy out of practice or being at a new place or just staying home for a while, you know, I think is okay.

The only problem is that the way sometimes the things are set up is that if you feel -- this is where I think the team comes in big, you know -- everybody else is playing and you're sitting out and you're practicing, you feel like you're missing out, you know. That fear of missing out can drive you.

And this is where I'm thankful I didn't chase, I didn't just go and play all the time. I always looked at the big picture that once you feel like you're gonna make it on tour or you're gonna have a certain level or can always attain that, that you are not in a stress per se and don't let yourself get lured in by all the stuff that's going on and what people are saying. You know, follow your path.



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But definitely takes some getting used to and obviously I think it's helpful when you have mentors, as well. And the older generation like us, you know, welcoming you and making you feel like you can find your groove quickly, you know, because you don't want to feel like the outsider, you know, for too long. You want to feel like welcomed.

The tour can obviously help with legends in some ways. The women's tour does very well. I don't know, but I guess the men's would be open to take a second and chat to everybody, but we don't have an official role for former top guys, which I think is a bit unfortunate because I think a lot of them would be willing to help.

I think the tour should clearly also take its responsibility, maybe tour, ITF, Grand Slams, we have so many things going on, but I think there is enough people that should be and can be helpful.

Q. You have been playing down your chances over here and made it clear that the goal is Wimbledon, but you were obviously very happy with today's result. Can you just touch on that and the way you played? And also against high-profile player like Marin.

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, very good match for me, I thought. A bit of up-and-downs in the second and third sets.

The good thing, I feel like I come out of a match like this and I know why it was up and down, you know. And then that I was able to attain a solid level once he did break back in the third set and things were looking dangerous for me, that I was able to step up a gear, stay with him, and then pull away from him, I think that gives me a lot of confidence.

So I think that fourth set was really big and nice for me, because it's hard to replicate those kind of pressure moments like tiebreaker third set, one set all, and then sort of everything goes flat, you know, beginning of the fourth set. But you have got to stay on top of things and I was able to almost find another gear, which he couldn't, and I think that was very nice for me. So I'm very happy.

Q. You have seen most things on a tennis court but I imagine you haven't been warned for taking too long on returns before. What was that whole situation

like?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, first I didn't understand what was going on until I figured, like, he must have said something to me about a warning, and then I tried to understand why, you know, like I don't stall.

I didn't feel like I was making him wait, until I realized, only when I sat down, it was not even during the conversation I had with him at the net, is that actually Marin had hit a serve once, you know, while I wasn't in position yet. And I thought he was working on his serve, which I thought was really odd, but it dawned on me that he must have been upset for a while and I told the umpire, Why didn't you tell me? I did not know that he was upset. He goes, Well, I figured you knew. I was, like, Okay. Here we are again in a place where you think that I know, and then we, nobody knows. It's a misunderstanding there.

I didn't feel like I was playing particularly slow, and with the towels, quite honestly, if I want to go to the towel, now I can't go to the towel anymore, it's okay, I get it. But I really struggled with the idea of, well, I understand playing to the server's pace, I have done it in hundreds of matches, and I always feel like I don't make my opponent wait very much, but clearly Marin wanted to go faster.

Now, I didn't realize that. I think I told him, I also haven't played so much lately that I'm not quite understanding the rhythm.

But the thing is also obviously when he sets his foot down to get ready for the serve, he's not quite ready yet. He still takes 10 bounces. I'm not in the mood to stand there and just be his, you know, sort of, Here I am so you can get ready. Start bouncing already, and I rock up when I feel like it's also I'm ready to go.

So I just feel like it was a misunderstanding on many levels. I didn't understand it and figure it out, and I guess I'm just "new" to the new tour. (Laughter.)

It was quite interesting to live through it. Got a little energy to the match, which I liked.

Q. I'm curious what's harder on your knees, playing on clay where the points can be longer or a harder surface where things happen more quickly?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, don't know. Look, here I feel like -- obviously if you're playing a player like Cilic who can take the ball very early and keeps going big, we saw the rallies weren't extremely long. I mean, my rallies in Doha, when you can neutralize each other, were slower, were longer.

I don't know how to explain it to you, but sometimes people still think clay is slow. It's not that slow. It's

actually mostly faster than hard courts nowadays unless you go to Cincinnati and Shanghai potentially and a couple of indoor events. But other than that I feel like if you're playing on a day where it's actually quite warm, clay can actually be somewhat on the faster side.

Now obviously what comes into play is bad bounces and sliding and you can go far back, especially on center court because there is so much room, so things can change there.

But for me, my knee, the good thing is that I got a lot of information out of a match like this. We will keep on getting information tomorrow and the next day, so I hope I can back it up with hopefully another good match. And whatever the outcome is, I know it was definitely the right choice to come here to Paris, which I'm very happy about.

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