

Roland Garros

Thursday, 3 June 2021

Paris, France

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference

R. NADAL/R. Gasquet

6-0, 7-5, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You have played Richard 17 times now, but that first set, is that as good as you have played against him?

RAFAEL NADAL: I think I played a great first set, one of the best of the clay court season, in my opinion. No mistakes, high intensity, winners, playing long.

I don't know. Have been a great first set. Then in the second, still good. 5-2, set point for 6-2. I didn't convert that one. And then I had a very bad game with my serve in 5-3, missing a couple of backhands and then forehand in the 30-40, no?

Yeah. Then of course Richard is a great player. He had some good serves on the next game, and then was tough, no? But I was able to find a way to win that second set, and then in the third, even if I had a mistake with the 2-1, 15-40, passing shot that I could make it, and then forehand that after a great return down the line I had the other side open and I repeated and he made a good passing shot.

I had to work a little bit more then, because I had to do the break on against the wind. But I did it. I resisted well that game. And finally I had the break, and then couple more games in a row, no?

Positive feelings. Of course better playing with crowd, but for the rest of the stuff, I think for the most of the match I have been playing a very good level of tennis.

Q. I know you never underestimate anybody, any opponent. You have respect for anybody you play. But when you go into a match against somebody who you have beaten already 16 times, is there a little bit of extra confidence with going into a match like that for yourself?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, of course it's better to win 16 in a row than lose 16 in a row, no? When you go to the match and you have been winning all the last 16 times, of



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course the confidence is a little bit higher than when you have a tougher head-to-head, no?

Being honest, no, I respect, I know how good is Richard. I know he's coming back after a tough period of time. I think he played smart, playing aggressive. I don't know. I just went on court with highest respect, with the highest focus possible, and that's what I try to do every day against everyone.

Q. You're playing Cam Norrie next. This will be the third time you have played him this season. What have you learned about him in the previous two matches, and what makes him tricky to play?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, he's a great player. He's winning plenty of matches this year, no?

Every week he's making good results, winning against very good players. I know gonna be a tough one. I need to be ready to play my best. I know he has a style of game that is not easy to play against. I need to play well.

So let's see. I hope to be ready to play at the level that I need, and I gonna be having a good session of practice tomorrow and trying to be ready after tomorrow.

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