

# Roland Garros

Thursday, 26 May 2022

Paris, France

## Casper Ruud

Press Conference

C. RUUD/E. Ruusuvuori

6-3, 6-4, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: A very solid performance today. Can you give us your thoughts about the match, please.

CASPER RUUD: Yes, it was high-quality match, I think, from the first to the last point. I think we both played better than what we did in Barcelona. The level was a little bit higher. Emil is playing much better on clay, I think. He's moving better and playing well from the baseline.

It was definitely a challenge. Even though it was three straight sets, it was some tough moments in the match, and some chances I didn't get, but some chances I got. All in all, I'm very happy with the performance.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

**Q. As you have risen up the rankings, I guess more people would be recognizing you. How are you finding that rise, and perhaps back in Norway, an area which may not have been well known in the past as it would be now for tennis?**

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, I think it's obviously a part of the game when you are climbing in the rankings. The most I think giving moments for us players is coming to the Grand Slams, because all the fans and people who come to watch the Grand Slams, they have a good clue about everyone in the tournament. Especially if you're top 10, of course, you will feel a little bit extra love, I guess, from the crowd.

It's obviously a nice feeling. It's not too much either. I mean, you still have bigger stars than myself in the game. People are better players than myself.

But, yeah, I think, here in the tournaments, I will get more recognition than if I'm walking around in the streets of Norway. For me, the most hectic time is here in the Grand Slams.

**Q. Could you talk about your clay court season generally and the sort of progress you have made. I think after Miami, lots of people were expecting you**



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**to really hit the ground running on clay. It was maybe a bit tricky at the start, but now it seems you have found your full form. Is that fair to say?**

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, I think, as we know, clay and hard court are obviously two different surfaces, but I think I have proven, to myself at least, that clay is not the only surface where I can perform and win matches.

Miami was one of the highlights of the year so far. Gave me less time to prepare for the clay than what I maybe thought I would have or expected. Plus I had like small, I wouldn't call it surgery, but removal of my wisdom tooth. After Miami I didn't touch a tennis ball for one week. Monte-Carlo started right away, so it was not ideal way to come into the clay court season.

I think that maybe affected me a little bit in the first tournaments. And it's funny, because you can be on the good run and have confidence in this game, and then maybe one or two bad matches can ruin it all.

It's tough to find the rhythm back after a couple of tough losses. But I think I was doing the right things, playing quite well. Of course, always some things that can be improved and be done better.

But Barcelona I was a bit unfortunate. In quarterfinals I had three match points and lost the match, which could have maybe I had a good opportunity of reaching a final again, which would be a nice result.

Madrid I just played Lajovic who was playing better than me. He was playing well that match. I think when it comes to this level, the margins are quite small, and some matches you will face of course always tough opponents, but sometimes can be a bit coincidental who wins at this level.

Here, we are playing best-of-five sets, so the margins will be a little bit bigger. And I'm just, even though the start of the clay wasn't going well, I still had Roland Garros in the back of my mind that I wanted to be physically strong and ready for this tournament.

**Q. Just on today, in terms of the experience of being out there, must have been a little bit different in terms of the crowd to your opener perhaps, in terms of noise, music and whatever. What's it been like for you in front of the crowds here in Roland Garros, both matches and the different experience?**



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CASPER RUUD: It's been good, because first match was obviously 98% of the crowd was cheering for Jo, but I think they were very respectful towards me, as well. They were not like, you know, booing or they were still cheering for my good points. That was a nice feeling.

You know, they are obviously passionate about tennis here in France, but I still think that they have, they showed a lot of respect towards both players in the first round.

I think as I kind of beat Jo the last time I think maybe I gained some fans here in France, and seemed like some of them came today and were cheering on for me. I have experienced a great atmosphere so far.

Last year was maybe one of the tougher moments I played here when I played against Benoit in the first round, was an incredible atmosphere, and we were playing on Court Simonne Mathieu. That was also an experience.

So I have had some French crowds against me, but I think today they were with me. It goes up and down (smiling).

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