

Roland Garros

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Paris, France

Rafael Nadal

Press Conference

R. NADAL/B. Van de Zandschulp

6-3, 6-2, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. Obviously your uncle is coaching Felix, and that's going to become a huge attention when you play. Will it be awkward for you and the family when that happens? As a matter of course will you not talk to Toni in the buildup because you are in separate camps?

RAFAEL NADAL: No, I already talked with Toni after my match. No, no, no, I don't have -- I know you are going to ask, or you guys, gonna ask the question, but for me it's very simple. He's my uncle. I don't think he will be able to want me to lose, without a doubt, but he's a professional and he's with another player.

I don't know what's gonna happen, if he's gonna stay in the box or not, but I don't care. I have zero problem with that. So it's not a story at all for me. I know what's the feelings that we have between each other.

I know he wants the best for me. Now he's helping another player. But honestly, for me, it's zero problem, and I know he wants the best for me.

Q. As you said on the court after the match, it was a very impressive victory. As far as your next match is concerned, you have only played Felix once. You have played him on the clay in Madrid. You won in straight sets in 2019. Has his game improved a lot since that time? What do you expect from that match?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, he's one of the players in better shape on the tour, without a doubt. He's the fourth in the race, that tops myself, and he's a top-10 player in the ranking.

It's a round of 16. I know I have to play at a very high level to have chances to keep going. Gonna be good test. In some way, that's what I need.

Today have been a very good test, too, and very positive test, because I was able to play my best match of the



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tournament so far, without any doubt. For two sets and a half I was playing at the very positive level.

That's very good news for me, no, you know, going on court tomorrow, my practice session, knowing that today I was able to raise my level a lot. It's the moment tomorrow to confirm that on practice and keep working on specific things. Just try to be ready for after tomorrow. That's it.

Q. You have been here obviously for many, many years. You have won here for many, many years. You have seen the evolution of Roland Garros, the new stadium, the new site, the new courts. Can you comment on that also now with the night sessions? What do you like and maybe not like about this whole change?

RAFAEL NADAL: I don't like night sessions on clay. I say the other day. I am very clear with that. I don't like to play on clay during the night, because humidity is higher, the ball is slower, and can be very heavy conditions especially when it's cold. I think that makes a big difference on the way who played tennis on clay during the night and during the day.

The rest of the things are simply amazing. The work that Roland Garros did and the French Federation did to raise this tournament at the highest standards possible are just fantastic. So just well done to all of them, and thanks for create a constant improvement during these years.

I think the new center court is amazing. The Simonne Mathieu court is so beautiful too. And the plan to keep going is there. Yeah, I am just very happy to see the most important tournament on the clay improving that much. That's great news.

Q. Just getting back to your next match against Felix and your uncle's relationship with him. I just wondered, before they started working together, did Toni talk to you about potentially working with Felix? Did he ask your opinion on Felix as a player?

RAFAEL NADAL: No, no, he really don't need to ask me anything (smiling). He's old enough to make his own decisions, no?

For me, I can't thank enough all the things that he did for me during so many years. I don't have any problem with any position that he's making. I want the best for him,

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and he wants the best for me.

We are family more than anything else. Not only family; we are a family that we stay together all the time. We are in the same village. We spend time in the academy together. We lived incredible emotions together.

So he's not only an uncle. He's more than that.

Q. Did you see that Zinedine Zidane was watching your match today at Suzanne Lenglen? Did you maybe even meet him afterwards and talk to him? Will you go to the Champions League final tomorrow?

RAFAEL NADAL: I didn't see him, but I knew it was him, I knew he was there because I was listening the crowd naming him all the time. So I imagine he was there, but I didn't had the chance to see him after my match or talk with him at all.

Tomorrow, let's see how I wake up tomorrow, because, you know, you never know with my body how the surprises are there. But if nothing happens, and I expect nothing happens, and if I'm able to have the right practice tomorrow, yeah, my intention and my goal is be there.

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