

# Roland Garros

Wednesday, 1 June 2022

Paris, France

## Marin Cilic

### Press Conference

M. CILIC/A. Rublev

5-7, 6-3, 6-4, 3-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Well done, Marin. How does it feel to be back in a Grand Slam semifinal? Do you think your big serve played a major role in the match tonight?

MARIN CILIC: Thank you. Yeah, feels great. Feels tiring, too. Was a very mentally and physically difficult match, and I would say high quality from both of us. Andrey played also a great level. I think, like, he's one of the most consistent guys on the tour, you know, hitting big and serving big. I had to play my big game. Luckily I was serving fantastic today.

And, yeah, what a battle. I can't say anything more (smiling). It was, you know, really, really close at the end, the fifth set. He had a breakpoint at 5-All, hit an ace, and I had a match point there. Really long point.

But, yeah, overall really emotionally draining, absolutely.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

**Q. Right now Casper Ruud is up one set against Holger Rune. I was just wondering what do you think of him as an opponent, if he's the one who reaches the semifinal? How you consider your chances against him?**

MARIN CILIC: I played against Casper twice. We played once in Rome two years ago, I believe. I would say he's one of the best guys on the tour, especially on clay. On clay courts he's having incredible, you know, 12 months, won so many titles on clay. Definitely enjoying to play and feels fantastic on clay. It's going to be absolutely difficult match if he goes through.

You know, for me, try to focus on myself. I'm having obviously a big game, big serve, and I have to do my things well in order to, you know, play against these top guys the best I can.

**Q. You won the US Open back in 2014, and people are saying that the run you are on right now could be the greatest comeback since Elvis Presley. I wanted to ask, was there ever a time in your match when you**



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**were worried and you thought tonight you could be sleeping at "Heartbreak Hotel"? In terms of your ambitions to win your second Grand Slam, do you feel that this year's Roland Garros could be "Now or Never"?**

MARIN CILIC: Fantastic question (smiling).

It's difficult to say. You are immersed in the match completely mentally. You play every single point the best you can. And that was today, and thinking about if I'm gonna go and lose the match. It was very, very close. I would say that game at 5-All was deciding game. Just gave me an opportunity to stay in the match and played fantastic tiebreak.

For the second part of the question, I'm not thinking about anything in front, too far in front. Playing match by match. Guys that I'm facing now, especially, you know, even today, Andrey played incredible match. If I was just a touch below my level I would be going home. So just keeping my head down. I've got to do my own things well.

**Q. No Elvis Presley in this one, but do you have any sense looking at the era you're in, Roger, Rafa, Novak, they have been able to win on every surface at the slams, been able to do well in all four. Now here you are having this run here. How much do you think it's important in this era to be able to say that about yourself and to be truly great? Is that part of the factor, do you think?**

MARIN CILIC: Yeah, I mean, absolutely fantastic achievement for me. To be, I think they mentioned to me, you know, just among them, I'm one of the only active guys with four semifinals or better on Grand Slams.

I would say last few years coming back from 2017, I started to feel great on clay and had some great success. But, you know, in the end it's also such a short season for clay, it's difficult to time everything every single season.

I'm feeling great on the court, enjoying myself, being me, playing my own game. It's paying off, and just, you know, enjoying the run. And, you know, obviously knew with my kind of level, with my tennis in last several years that I have, you know, been playing if I'm, you know, finding good form, good things are always happening.

So, yeah, just extremely proud with that and really happy.

**Q. Do you think that a player like you who made three finals in three different slams, four semifinals, won a Davis Cup, being No. 3 in the world, so not too bad, do you think that you have been a little underconsidered, overlooked, snubbed by the general media somehow? I mean, you belong to the best players of the last 10 years. Do you like the fact that you are a little under the shadow, because there were the Fab 4, Fab 3 or so? Do you like it or sometimes you're a little not happy about it?**

MARIN CILIC: I'm happy with less press conferences (smiling). I'm happy with less media, you know, (smiling). That was fantastic, I have to say, in these last two years, every tournament, easy, no press. I'm kidding.

No, just comes down to the guys who are under the highlights. You know, these guys have been, they are the top of the game so many years. You know, looking at my own career, I had some obviously huge successes and, you know, won so many things.

But also comparing to the top guys, it was not as consistent, you know. Had three, four seasons that were incredibly good, incredibly consistent, but I was a little bit in and out.

I mean, I really don't mind being under the highlights or not. You know, I'm just trying to use my opportunities as much as I can during my career every day, every match to give my best and to, you know, when I go out of the game that I'm absolutely proud. If I do more press conferences, it's fine, yeah (smiling).

**Q. Just curious for you, what do you think the best match you ever played was, yourself?**

MARIN CILIC: I mean, considering everything, against Roger in US Open, because, you know, prior to our match, Novak lost to Kei, and then Roger also hasn't won I think in two years prior to that any Grand Slams, and also the crowd that I was faced against, you know, they were cheering obviously for Roger, full stadium.

And to do it on such a level, it was, yeah, probably the best.

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