

# Roland Garros

Sunday, 5 June 2022

Paris, France

## Rafael Nadal

### Press Conference

R. NADAL/C. Ruud

6-3, 6-3, 6-0

THE MODERATOR: Well done, Rafa. Can you say that among your 22 major titles the last two in Australia and Roland Garros are probably the most unexpected, given everything that was going on?

RAFAEL NADAL: Yeah. Well, but is not the day to talk about the match 22. Is the day to talking about Roland Garros because here we are. For me have this trophy next to me again means everything, no?

So, yeah, have been emotional victories, without a doubt, unexpected in some way. Yeah, very happy, no? Have been a great two weeks, honestly, no? I played since the beginning, improving every day. Finishing playing a good final, no? Super happy and can't thank enough everybody for the support since the first day that I get here, no? Yeah. Very emotional.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

**Q. Congratulations, Mr. Nadal. Obviously you have played Casper in training many times. I was wondering, has he ever beaten you, or is he a victim also there?**

RAFAEL NADAL: I don't remember, no. Sorry (smiling). I don't know the practices.

But Casper is a great player. He's gonna be the fourth in the race now. Very high position in the ranking, improving every year, because in the past have been only a great player on clay. Now he's winning titles and fighting for the most important events in the other surfaces too.

That's, for me, that's the most important thing in the sport, no? The value of the daily work. He has it. He's improving all the time, and even if today probably was a tough day for him, I'm sure that he's very proud and his team is very proud of him, no? All the things that he's achieving are huge, no?

So very happy for him, for his family. We know each other very well. I know how healthy and good people



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they are. I would love to see him with a trophy in the future.

**Q. Can you give us an idea of what your mindset is right now about your future? And also, can you give us an idea of just how difficult things were with your foot during this tournament and what you needed to do in order to be able to keep going out on court?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, my mindset, nothing change in my mind, no?

As I said in the previous days, it's obvious that with circumstances that I am playing, I can't and I don't want to keep going, so the mindset is very clear, no? I gonna keep working and to try to find a solution and an improvement for what's happening in the foot.

Have been an amazing and very emotional two weeks. But it's obvious that, and I didn't want to talk about the foot during the tournament, as everybody knows, I said I'm going to speak after the tournament, and now I can speak because I want to be focused on my tennis and to respect on the rivals, I don't want to be clear about what's happening, no?

I was able to play during these two weeks with extreme conditions, no? I have been playing with an injections on the nerves to sleep the foot, and that's why I was able to play during these two weeks, no, because I have no feelings on my foot, because my doctor was able to put anesthetic injections on the nerves. That takes out the feeling on my foot.

But at the same time, it's a big risk in terms of less feelings, a little bit bigger risk of turning your ankle or have produce another stuff there.

So of course Roland Garros is Roland Garros. Everybody know how much means to me this tournament, so I wanted to keep trying and to give myself a chance here.

That's was the only way to give myself a chance here, no? So I did it. And I can't be happier and I can't thank enough my doctor for all the things he did during all my tennis career, helping me in every tough moment. But it's obvious that I can't keep competing with the foot asleep.

So now is the moment to go back. We have been talking

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a lot about what's going on and what the possibility is. So now knowing that if we are able to sleep the two nerves that creates an impact on the foot improves that much, then we can try to make a treatment to try to create this feeling in a permanent condition, no?

So that's the thing that we are planning to do the next week. I don't know yet when. And then I don't know how to say in English exactly the treatment, but gonna be a radio frequency injection on the nerve and trying to burn a little bit the nerve and create the impact that I have now on the nerve for a long period of time.

That's what we are gonna try. If that works, I gonna keep going. If that not works, then gonna be another story. And then I gonna answer to myself, I gonna ask to myself about if I am ready to do a major thing without being sure that the things are going the proper way, for example. A major surgery that don't guarantee me to be able to be competitive again and it gonna take a long time to be back.

So let's do step by step, as I did all my tennis career. Next step is that. After that, let's see how it works. Hopefully, and I am always positive works more or less well, and can take it out a little bit the pain that I have. If that happens, let's see if I am able to keep going for grass season.

**Q. Just to clarify, please, how many injections have you had at this French Open? Did they require TUEs? And secondly, by what you are saying, does that imply you're potentially out of Wimbledon because you have these meetings with the doctor post the French Open?**

RAFAEL NADAL: I'm going to be in Wimbledon if my body is ready to be in Wimbledon. That's it. Wimbledon is not a tournament that I want to miss. I think nobody want to miss Wimbledon. I love Wimbledon.

I had a lot of success there. I live amazing emotions there. So full credit and respect to the tournament. A player like me, I am always ready to play Wimbledon.

So if you ask me if I will be in Wimbledon, I can't give you a clear answer. If I want to win Wimbledon, of course. Let's see how the treatment works. I don't know.

I don't want to talk about how many injections I had, because as you can imagine, I had to take a lot of anti-inflammatories too. But before every single match I had to do a couple of injections too.

**Q. Congratulations, first of all. I heard you said to Justine Henin that you could barely walk after your match with Moutet, and you had many injections in the nerve. I was wondering, do you ask yourself sometimes is it worth it? Not only as a champion, of**

**course it is, because you won today, but also as a man, thinking about after your career, do you have a limit? Do you have a line you don't want to cross?**

RAFAEL NADAL: It's very clear what I have on the foot will not be worst after the thing that I did, but there is a risk to have another problems when you play with a part of your body with no feelings, of course. It's a risk that I wanted to take to play here. Is not a risk that I want to keep taking to keep going on my future.

It was amazing. I won the title. I lived incredible emotions that going to be in my memory forever, and for me it makes sense. What I have on the foot is not worst after that, but of course gonna be my decision about what's the next step in my future.

My clear position is always prevails the life more than another stuff. Of course my tennis career have been a priority during all my life but never have been a priority over my happiness of my life.

So things going to keep going that way. If I am still able to be happy playing tennis with the things that I have, I gonna keep going. If I am not able, I gonna do another stuff.

**Q. Congratulations on your win. Just wondering in terms of future motivation, are there still goals you have in the sport? You have done so much. You have won 22 Grand Slams, 14 of these. In terms of pushing through the pain and the uncertainty and the risk with the injuries, what is in the future that keeps you driving forward?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, is very simple to understand for me. I don't know, sometimes for you it's a little bit different. It's not about being the best of the history. It's not about the records. It's about I like what I do, you know. I like to play tennis. And I like the competition.

As I said couple of times in the past, and is not a thing that I repeat, is not the thing that I don't feel for me, we achieved our dreams. Me, Roger, Novak, we achieved things that probably we never expected.

For me, what drives me to keep going is not about the competition to try to be the best or to win more Grand Slams than the others. What drives me to keep going is the passion for the game, live moments that stays inside me forever, and play in front of the best crowds in the world and the best stadiums.

That's drives me, no? And the passion for what I do. Then of course if I don't feel myself competitive, I don't enjoy. So that's it.

But is not about, you know, is not about the goal about winning more titles. It's about a goal to give myself a

chance to keep doing what I like to do.

**Q. You have spoken about passion, dreams, emotions. You have achieved so much. In one sense, does it surprise you what you have done? Do you pinch yourself that you keep on going? What it's like when that last point is played in a final of a French Open or Australian Open, anything like that?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, for sure surprise is surprise. If don't surprise you win 14 Roland Garros or 22 Grand Slam, is because you are super arrogant. Honestly, no, I am not this kind of guy. I never even dream about achieve the things that I achieved. Honestly, no, I never considered myself that good.

So I am just honestly keep going step by step, practice by practice, and always with a clear goal to improve something.

That's my mindset all during all my tennis career, no? Go on court and every practice with the goal to improve something in my game. I don't understand the sport another way.

With that philosophy probably and with a lot of help from a great team next to me and family and friends, everybody who support me and help me during all my tennis career have been important for me, no? All the coaches, all the people that have been next to me in some moments, no? I learned from every situation, and not only in a tennis world. I learned a lot in terms of life.

So that's all the experiences help me to grow always.

**Q. Can I just clarify one thing on Wimbledon. If the treatment you are having later this week doesn't work immediately, would you consider taking more injections, more anesthetics in your foot just to be able to play Wimbledon?**

RAFAEL NADAL: No. I said, I was clear maybe, maybe my English was not clear enough. Sorry for that, no?

No, I don't. If I don't have -- yeah, Wimbledon is a priority, always have been a priority. If I am able to play with anti-inflammatories, yes; to play with anesthetic injections, no. I don't want to put myself in that position again. Can happen once, but no, is not a philosophy of life that I want to follow.

So let's see. I am always a positive guy, and I am always expect the things going the right way. So let's be confident, and let's be positive. Then let's see what's going on.

**Q. Congratulations on your achievement. Thank you for sharing so much about your medical challenge. My question is about the match today, actually.**

**From 1-3 down in the second set, could you just explain a bit about what changed in your mindset, your tactics to not lose another game, to finish the manner you do?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Thanks for asking about tennis (smiling). Because at the end, we are here to talk more about tennis than other stuff, no?

So I think I started the match playing very well first couple of games. Then I played a very bad game with 2-Love at the beginning, two double faults, and then a mistake with my forehand. So then I was able to have the break again. I was a little bit nervous at the beginning.

My serve didn't work as well as other days. So I had to play a little bit more safe with my serve, no? But then I was able to stabilize a little bit the feeling on my serve, and then I think I taked control of the point a lot of times with my forehand against his backhand.

But then I think that the key today was my backhand, cross-backhand, no? I think that creates a lot of damage on Casper today, because I was able to open the court very well to that way, and make him play with a bigger court, no?

I have to run more to cover his forehand, so then hitting that shot he was not able -- I was not able to be that predictable. So he was not able to move around and hit his forehand very often from his backhand side. That's a big danger on a forehand like his one.

In the second set, I think was a tough moment the beginning, because I had a 15-40 at the beginning of the second set that I missed a volley, I don't know, very strange. Then I hitted the forehand down the line. That was a winner, went out just -- I missed just for a little bit but was a good hit.

Then I played a very bad game with the 2-1. So that was the toughest moment on the match, in my opinion, because 3-1 for him. Then if he is able to hold serve, 4-1, you are in trouble, no?

But I was lucky that he make a couple of mistakes. I make some good points. I was able straightaway to have the break back, and after that, everything changed, no?

I think the momentum of him, I was able to stop his momentum, and then I started to hit very well the backhand cross. I was able to play solid, not many mistakes, take the control on the point. Of course after that moment, everything went very smooth, no?

Very happy.

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