

Roland Garros

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Paris, France

Juan Carlos Ferrero

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Juan Carlos, welcome to Roland Garros. This is a special year for you, because it's 20 years since your title. Can you believe so many years already passed by?

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: Absolutely not. I mean, I remember that it was yesterday, it happened yesterday. Yeah, it's a tournament that I have really good memories since the first time that I came here, even playing the quallies.

But, yeah, it's a tournament that I came with my father when I was 14 to see some matches, and definitely coming later and play a tournament and, you know, won the tournament. It's gonna be like super special for me for the whole time.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

Q. How would you compare Carlos Alcaraz to one year ago? How has he developed as a player, also as a person?

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: I thought...

THE MODERATOR: We're mostly here about his 20 years.

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: We can make it, but I thought it was the other thing (smiling).

Q. So another question.

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: I mean, I don't mind to answer...

THE MODERATOR: We are not going to do the whole press conference...

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: What was the question? Sorry.

Q. The question was: How would you say Carlos is compared to one year ago as a player, as a person, how has he developed?

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: As a person, I would say he's more mature. He's 20 now, and of course also



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when you are on a team that people are older, I think you grow up a little bit faster than maybe with other people that are the same age as you.

Yeah, as a player, I think he grows up like super fast on the court. He can, let's say, read the matches a little bit better. Even before the match, like talking about the match, you can see that he's more mature on all kind of areas on the court.

So, yeah, I would say he's better than last year. I think he has more experience. The experience that he's won US Open and, you know, live the experience on the court that he did I think makes him grow faster than maybe other people, so definitely he's a better player.

Q. When you won in 2003, can you remember how nervous you were in that tournament? Because obviously what had happened the year before. You wanted to win so much. And the pressure that you were under to try to win, what was that like dealing with that?

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: It was there, absolutely. Obviously when you played like semis, semis, and final, next year you want to win, of course. And start the tournament, yeah, I remember that I had a good feeling. Physically I felt 100% to try to make it again.

Of course you go step by step, match by match. Definitely I remember even, let's say, feel it like in the final, because I remember that I play against someone maybe he wasn't the favorite to be on that day, but at the same time, I remember that he beat Coria and Moya, so in my mind it was a mix of thoughts that could make me doubt a little bit.

But no, I think that I remember that I went for it. Of course I was nervous. I think being nervous is good, you know, being a little bit concerned about what's gonna happen, it's good to make you, you know, pay more attention.

Yeah, it was great, and I think I play the level that I needed to to win the title, finally (smiling).

Q. Can you explain the learning process of learning how to play at Roland Garros? People talk about learning how to play at Wimbledon, learning how to play on the grass. Is there a same process here in terms of it being a unique place to play and win?

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JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: I'd say you have to learn how to win a tournament, like that one. I think Grand Slam always it's so much more difficult than the others, because you have to play seven matches, you have to play best-of-five.

And, yeah, I think Spanish players, we have it more on the hand because we, let's say, live this tournament since we were so young. So we had the examples like, you know, I'm talking about my example, that you had Bruguera and you have Corretja, or you have other players like Moya, the example to win here. That makes you believe that you can do it as well.

But I think it's different than maybe Wimbledon, because on grass it's a different surface, a surface that you only play let's say two or three tournaments a year so it's much more different than maybe play on clay court that you have more matches on yourself during your career. So I think it's not the same.

But obviously it's the same about the experience and the preparation mentally to win a tournament like this.

Q. Since you won this tournament, many things have changed, for instance, like the press conference room has changed, No. 1 Court has gone, and Philippe Chatrier has a roof. How do you see the change or improvement of the site and the atmosphere of this tournament, organizing everything?

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: I think the tournament improve a lot. I think maybe needed, because we need a roof on the tournament. We need even reset the court and the locker room and maybe press conference and everything gets a little bit better for the players.

Yeah, I think the atmosphere and people maybe is the same, but the tournament of course gets so much better than when I was playing.

Q. How much is your experience and the experience that you have been through here in particular important for you when you're coaching Carlos, what you went through?

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: I mean, I think it's not only important about here. I think playing the tour, knowing the players, knowing the experience that maybe he's gonna have, it's gonna help a lot to, let's say, advise him with what's gonna happen, how you're gonna feel it in that moment or how you're gonna play.

Definitely it helps a lot, coaching like this, and I think we are taking maybe advance on that maybe to other coaches.

Q. Carlos already won a Grand Slam in New York. Nobody was so young winning a Grand Slam in men's tennis since Rafa. Do you think it will help him to have already one slam, one title? Could it add some more pressure on him because now, maybe except in Wimbledon, everybody expects Carlos to win everywhere, he can win everywhere. You won the Grand Slam here. Do you think the second one is maybe as hard as the first one to win?

JUAN CARLOS FERRERO: Pressure is going to be there always. I think people expects a lot of things from a lot of players, so I think we try to go our way, you know, believe in ourselves. I think of course won a Grand Slam already, 19 years old, now 20, is gonna help him to believe that he can make it again. I think it's all help, not more pressure. So that's what we believe, and I think we are prepared to make a great tournament.

Of course everybody can lose in first round, you don't have a clue. But I think we play a very good clay season at the moment, and, you know, this is the last one, so we are gonna try to give our best to make the best tournament possible, for sure, with no pressure.

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