

# Roland Garros

Sunday, 4 June 2023

Paris, France

## Karen Khachanov

### Press Conference

K. KHACHANOV/L. Sonogo

1-6, 6-4, 7-6, 6-1

THE MODERATOR: Karen, well done today. Second quarterfinal here in Paris. Do you think the difference today was mental or physical? What was your feeling about the match?

KAREN KHACHANOV: I would say thank you very much. Yeah, I would say, you know, those matches in Grand Slams, especially on clay, it's everything, you know, mental, physical. So today was a little bit of everything. Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English.

**Q. Seemed like Lorenzo had a really good start to the match. Curious how you dealt with the frustration of that to put together a good win?**

KAREN KHACHANOV: Yeah, it's true. He was 6-1, 2-1, and I think that was a long game on my serve. What to do? I was thinking, how can I start playing better or, you know, to change something, because he was really -- yeah, I was a little bit surprised, because he was so energized, putting all the balls in, aggressive, dropshots, serves, returns.

And, yeah, I just had to stay into the match. I had to stay focused and to try to change something and basically to maintain the level and see if he can continue playing like this during, you know, three consecutive sets or not.

That was the goal in this moment there.

**Q. Karen, congratulations. I know you enjoy playing chess. Could you tell us how the strategies of winning a tennis match and the strategies of winning a chess match compare, and what will be your next moves to try and secure checkmate here at Roland Garros?**

KAREN KHACHANOV: I mean, there are a lot of matches in Roland Garros, so a lot of checkmates you have to do. To be honest, yeah, there are some parallels, it's true.



**ROLAND-GARROS**

I like to play with my other coach, you know, José Clavet from Spain. I used to play a lot with him, even a few matches during the day, you know, in the morning to start the brain working and going. I think there are some similarities here.

I think when you open your head and you are really full into the game, you see the field much bigger. You see the possible shots which you can make troubles to the opponent.

I think, yeah, there are some similarities. Maybe it helps me.

**Q. Some of the other Russian players have been saying they have been having issues getting visas to get into the UK for the grass court season and Wimbledon. Tell us what your experience is. Are you okay? Do you have a visa? Have you heard of other people having problems?**

KAREN KHACHANOV: Yeah, I heard that they're just longer, no? Takes much longer time to issue the visa with documents.

But I'm all set in this case, so for me, there is no trouble so far.

**Q. Can I ask how long in advance you applied?**

KAREN KHACHANOV: I had it from the previous years.

**Q. So you're okay?**

KAREN KHACHANOV: Yeah, yeah.

**Q. You play against Novak. It will be your 10th match. He won a bit more. What are your plans for the match against him and maybe some chess moves for that match too?**

KAREN KHACHANOV: I'm not going to tell you my chess moves, no? Because you're going to tell him straightaway (smiling).

Yeah, against him, you need to play really good chess, I mean, I guess to beat him. But definitely I will prepare tomorrow. You know, it's one day between, like always, to analyze with your team what you can do better, let's say. We will watch some points, some matches from him, and then make a plan basically.



But of course, you know, he's one of the toughest tasks, toughest opponents, and, you know, you cannot count him out. So at the same time I have ultimate respect, but I'm focused, you know, I'm pumped to do well, and let's see if I can make it or not this time.

**Q. Karen, the last three majors now you have reached the quarterfinals or better. What do you think has maybe clicked even more for you with these major tournaments?**

KAREN KHACHANOV: My brain clicked, you know (smiling). That helped, no?

To be honest, I said it last year, I think after reaching the first semifinals in US Open, you know, a lot of things changed in my head also. And in my mental part, you know, I saw that I could do this step forward, you know. After playing quarterfinals, I could do this step forward to make semifinals first time.

And, you know, sometimes you're confident, sometimes you believe in yourself, and you know how to do it, but you still want to see the result to approve, you know, that you can make it.

So I think saying this helped me a lot to kind of do these next steps what it takes from me to try to play more consistent, better tennis during longer period of time.

I think, yeah, this self-belief and confidence, they just stay there no matter, not matter depending on the results, you know.

So it's really this step forward that I felt after US Open.

**Q. Reaching the second week and going into a quarterfinal of a Grand Slam is a big deal. Can you allow yourself to think that it is a big deal, or do you just have to think it is another match?**

KAREN KHACHANOV: No, I admit that, how to say, that things are getting better and better, right? As soon as you win more matches, you're just passing through and you're in the next stage.

But at the same time, I think you cannot be satisfied with any result while you're in the tournament. At the same time, I know that I won some good matches, I'm going forward, but at the same time, I think you have to relax only when you finish a tournament. Once you are in, you just focus on the next matches, next opponents, and just try to do the best you can.

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