

April 2, 2009

Sony Ericsson Open

J. DEL POTRO/R. Nadal

6-4, 3-6, 7-6

An interview with:

RAFAEL NADAL

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You're usually a favorite here. Have you ever heard a crowd pull for the other guy? Was a lot of Argentine fans out there.

RAFAEL NADAL: No, the crowd was good, no? That's good for tennis have a crowd like this. Sometimes a little bit too much when I was close to some guys.

No, it was really nice atmosphere.

Q. Did it affect you at all? It was just a wonderful match. How did you feel out there?

RAFAEL NADAL: Maybe wonderful for the crowd. Terrible for me. Yeah.

Q. You came back very strong and won the second set. Up two breaks in the third. What happened in that moment?

RAFAEL NADAL: No, I didn't come back very strong, no? He start to had a lot of mistakes, no? I think I played really bad all the time. That's the true of the match.

Later when I have 3-0 in the third I played worse. So, yeah, I have the match -- it's 6-4, 2-1 I playing terrible. Later he have mistakes and I was there. And later with 3-0, it was amazing disaster. Yeah.

Q. What was the problem for you? The feel of the ball or...

RAFAEL NADAL: No, you know, this maybe was the -- I didn't was all focus like usually. Yeah, it's not usually I lose a match with two breaks in the third in hardcourt.

So, yeah, I didn't play well during this tournament. A little the first day against Gabashvili, but, no, I played bad all the time.

Anyway, champion in quarterfinals is a good result. That's the positive thing of the American hardcourt season.

Bad thing is I didn't adapt well to this tournament this time. Yeah, I played really bad.

Q. Mentally hard, or...

RAFAEL NADAL: You never know. Maybe. But, yeah. I started the season very well. I had a lot of the matches, very concentrate. Yeah, the last two matches wasn't really good.

But anyway, I want to congratulate for my team and Del Potro. Yeah, he started the season playing well. It's a good win for him. Yeah, congratulate him.

Q. Did it kind of feel like a Davis Cup match to you?

RAFAEL NADAL: No.

Q. 40 some unforced errors and the whole tournament was kind of iffy. Are you going to take a break?

RAFAEL NADAL: Two days, three days, yeah. I have to adapt to clay another time. I have to be 100% ready mentally, physically.

The most important thing, playing well, so for Monte-Carlo, Barcelona, Rome, and Madrid maybe.

So, yeah, no, I am really happy to come back to clay. I am excited to start to play on clay, try to play good matches on clay another time.

Q. Two questions: What makes De Potro so tough? Obviously his serve and forehand are effective. And does Indian Wells carryover just eventually wear you down when you go to the finals every year at Indian Wells and win it and then come right here?

RAFAEL NADAL: No, no, no. I don't know. No excuse. Last week I played much better than this one.

Yeah, and maybe it's one month, Indian Wells and Miami. One month is a lot, because when you finish Indian Wells you have one week practicing here.

So after I came back from Australia I have Rotterdam after three days. Later, Davis Cup. So

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it's a long, long time.

But anyway, you can say one thousand things about this, but in the end, the important thing is I didn't play well. I lose and he play better than me.

Q. And Del Potro again, what makes him so effective?

RAFAEL NADAL: I think he didn't play one of his best matches, no? That's what I feel. I don't know. You can ask him later maybe.

But I think he played well. His level is 7 of the world, no, so he's very good. I think he didn't play an unbelievable match, but I didn't play on my best level today.

Q. How many days would you wish to rest before the clay court season in the ideal situation?

RAFAEL NADAL: You never know.

Q. How many days will you rest before working?

RAFAEL NADAL: Maybe I gonna arrive Saturday Mallorca, so I start Monday.

Q. Are you mystified or puzzled by how you played during this tournament, or do you understand why you didn't play well and know what to do next?

RAFAEL NADAL: Always is a reason because you are not playing at your level during the tournament. No, I am calm. I am happy about myself, about everything this year, yeah. I don't know. Always is a reason, but it's personal.

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