

R. FEDERER/J. Benneteau 4-6, 6-7, 6-2, 7-6, 6-1

ROGER FEDERER

Q. How did you feel when you finished that match today?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, I felt great, obviously. It's always one of the best feelings coming back from two sets to love in a Grand Slam, I guess, and in particular here at Wimbledon where I have been able to do it before.

So I have been there, but obviously not with the roof closed. That made the atmosphere very special out there.

I really thought the crowd really got into it. For the players it was obviously great to be part of such a match. When you come through, it's even a better feeling because your spirits are lifted up and you're still in the tournament and you'll get another chance.

Q. If you had the opportunity to watch it last night, what were your thoughts as the Nadal match unfolded under the same conditions under the roof at least for the fifth set?

ROGER FEDERER: The beginning of the answer?

Q. The Nadal match yesterday. What were your thoughts as that match unfolded?

ROGER FEDERER: Last night you mean?

Q. Yes, yes.

ROGER FEDERER: So nothing about this match. What did I think? Obviously I didn't see everything, but I saw some of it, the first set; I saw pretty much everything at the end.

Yeah, I mean, it does play different indoors. Obviously that's a bit of getting used to. Indoor grass obviously not something we're quite familiar with.

Obviously with a player ranked 100 in the world you figure, like, okay he'll throw in one, you know, maybe awkward game. He didn't, which was very impressive to see.

Obviously a tough loss for Rafa so early in the tournament. But then again, you've got to give credit to Rosol. He stuck around and gave himself the chance with the conditions what they were at the end of the match.

Q. What do you think you brought tonight to bring the victory? What do you think the keys in that marathon were for you to emerge on top?

ROGER FEDERER: Probably having been there so often, down two sets to love; knowing how to handle the situation; not to panic; knowing that once I broke the beginning of the third set that this match is completely open, and I'm only going to get stronger from here.

Physically it was not going to be an issue at all. It was more mentally just knowing that I cannot make -- I cannot afford any more mistakes. That's the problem at two sets to love down, because I did have my chances, particularly in the second set, which was a tough set for me to lose.

Obviously in the third set I sort of felt it was going to be a nail-biter finish in that set because I did miss a Love-40 situation early on in that set.

So that was the toughest moment obviously, seeing him come back from Love-40 down, you know, and staying in the match and coming so, so close. But I did start to play better and better as the match went on, and that's kind of what I expected of myself once a set down or two sets to love down.

That I guess comes with experience, but also experience alone is not going to win you the match. I had to push deep and extremely hard, and I'm very happy with the way things sort of happened at the end.

Q. What are the biggest differences between playing on grass indoors as opposed to outdoors?

ROGER FEDERER: You just don't have the elements. You just don't have the sun setting, which can be tricky at times.

From the one end it's easier; from the other end it's tough. You have the wind swirling. It was particularly swirly today. When I was warming up I was thinking that's going to be a big factor for the players out on Centre Court if they're going to leave the roof open or not.

Don't know if it would've favored me or not even more so, but it changes everything. So then does it play slower indoors? I would think so, a little bit, right? But then at the same time, you can really play yourself into like a trance-like state like I thought Rosol was in in the end of the fifth.

That's harder to do outdoors with the elements, I would think.

Q. You said you played better in the third, but still in the fourth you were five times two points from defeat, if I'm not wrong.

ROGER FEDERER: Yes. I don't know.

Q. So were you worried how much, and so on? And then do you know that today you've beaten also a new record, which is you have won 5,459 games in the history in a slam, and you're beating Agassi who is behind 5,438.

ROGER FEDERER: You see. That's your battle out there, you know.

(Laughter.)

Because I knew it. I knew that that record was on the line. I knew that.

(Laughter.)

That's maybe why I couldn't get it going early, because it's such a big record for me. (Laughter.)

Q. 29 games today, that's why.

ROGER FEDERER: I thought playing longer might make me really break it. (Laughter.)

No, what do you do? I don't even remember the question. I just remember the record, which was so great, you know. (Laughing.)

No, the fourth set, yeah, how close it was. I mean, you figure that one service game at least is going to get close. This is where you hope you can clutch serve on the big points, that hopefully he'll miss a few, but that's not what you rely on. You have to rely on your own strength. I guess we were both at our very best deep into the fourth set, so it felt obviously great. I knew the importance of that particular game, and then also the tiebreak.

Yeah, obviously I missed a lot of opportunities out there today, but at the same time I also made some big plays when I had to. I tried to stay calm in the moment and in the eye of the storm, really. I was able to come through. So it was a fun match to come through, obviously.

Q. In the beginning it didn't seem like you were yourself, you know, just not playing that well. Then you got better, you know, the third set. Did you feel like that, too?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, I mean, I don't think I should have lost the second set. I mean, credit to him. At the end, once he got the break back and he was in the match again, obviously I think he almost might have had a few more chances earlier until I did have set point and I hit a great return.

I mean, things just didn't work out for me in the second set, but myself to blame to give the break back. That's where I'm most upset with my performance today potentially, because that was probably the moment where it got me down two sets to love and put me in this extremely tough situation.

Normally I hope I can stay ahead by at least two games with the break all the way through the second set, and then, you know, we start the third on even terms.

That wasn't the case, and that's what really got me in trouble, actually, in hindsight.

Q. When you were at the net with Benneteau, what did he say to you?

ROGER FEDERER: At the net?

Q. Yes.

ROGER FEDERER: Well, we're very friendly. I know him since I am 12 years old, I guess. First tournament ever I went to in France I remember seeing Julien. So he's about my age, and we spend a lot of time on tour together.

We respect each other a lot, you know. Obviously we knew the moment, that it was sort of a magical moment for both of us for the rest of our lives, I guess. You appreciate that.

Well, he hoped that I win the tournament now and wished me well. I congratulated him for an awesome performance and that he deserved it. It was a tough loss for him.

But, yeah, he's a very friendly guy. Obviously felt a bit for him at the end.

Q. As you can see, you are breaking records every day. So when you went there, which is the toughest opponent: the one that's at the other side of the record book, the history books?

ROGER FEDERER: I don't know. I guess the everyday grind is tough, you know. Traveling the world, you know, the practice. I make it sound bad now. It's not. It's the best thing in the world.

But at the same time, the best thing in the world can also be the toughest. Just being able to, you know, do it time and time again. I don't know how many five-setters I have he played. I don't know how many times I have come back from two sets to love down or been on the Centre Court at Wimbledon.

But it's also worthwhile, and there is so much pressure that surrounds every single match I play. I'm happy that I handled the situation so well these days. Yeah, I don't know what's the toughest. I mean, every week is different. Every opponent is different. That's the beauty of it. I quite enjoy that, you know, instead of talking about potential rivals who have about been the hardest. We all know who those were.

Q. You spoke of how the absence of the elements with the closed roof sort of allowed Rosol to get in that trance-like state last night. Did you feel like that in the fifth set?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, no. He was not at his best in the fifth. So, I mean, but then again, you don't know if he's just not feeling great for game. Is it two games? Is he going to retire in the next minute? Is he all of a sudden going to be serving bombs again and playing great?

You don't know. So you try to play point for point and stretch the lead once you do have an opportunity. So I was happy with my focus level, particularly in the fifth.

But I do go into a trance-like state I guess at times. I did feel that midway through the third, fourth I was in control, things were clicking for me, and I knew that it was going to be hard for him to come through.

But he did great. I thought he played a wonderful match from start to finish, as well. Obviously could have or should have gotten me, you know, today.

Q. Can you explain what you were feeling two sets down and how worried you were at that point?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, I was actually calm, to be quite honest. I was more panicky sort of midway through the second set. Because once I gave the break

back and I had the 6-5 great return situation, I just kind of felt that the breaker was going to be a rough one for me.

So not that I expected to lose it, but I guess when I sat down, I said, All right, here we go now. Match has only just started.

I tried to stay calm, and I was. It was like he's still such a long a way from the finish line that there is no reason right now to go crazy about it.

Let's see how the third starts and then we'll take it from there. Like I said, I have been there so many times that I also know how to handle the situation. But on grass I knew it was going to be a different animal, and I'm happy to weather the storm out there today.

Q. A lot of us have not seen a guy play the way Rosol played last night, especially in a pressure situation. How much sympathy did you feel for Rafa going down that way?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, this is not against Rafa, but it was nice to see it's still possible. I think 15 years ago you had matches like this so much more often on the faster surfaces, that a guy could catch fire and just run through you.

Today it's virtually impossible because you make so many more returns these days and conditions are so much slower with the elements. It's so much harder to be, you know, in that state, I think.

Whereas it was just amazing to see that it was possible. Okay, he didn't play like that for five sets, but in the fifth it was just a joke. I was laughing because of his performance for 10 minutes after that. I couldn't believe that he pulled it off the way he did.

Of course I do feel bad for Rafa because it's a tough loss; it's Wimbledon; it's the way things happen. You figure he was not the overwhelming favorite going into the fifth outdoors, but we have all been unlucky and lucky over the years playing in tough, better, or worse conditions for yourself or for the opponent that they just equal out over the course of your career, really.

Q. Any thoughts on Kohlschreiber against him tomorrow?

ROGER FEDERER: Philip is a good friend of mine, but then again I hope Rosol can keep it up and play similar to what he played against Rafa.

It must be possible I think on grass, you know, that that can happen again, absolutely.

Q. We know you have an incredible memory for matches. How much do you remember of the one match you played against Malisse on grass? How do you assess his game on this surface?

ROGER FEDERER: Well, I think this is his best surface, to be honest. He's a great player with great talent and reads the game extremely well, the geometry of the courts.

He's got a good first serve and he moves smoothly, especially on the grass

which you're supposed to be doing. I think he does all those things very well, which makes him a tough player to play against. I guess the time I played him it was in 2003?

Q. 2001, five sets.

ROGER FEDERER: Five sets? Okay. I don't remember that quite, but I do remember it was either '01 or '03. I have played him over the years. Same thing. Xavier is one of the first guys I ever saw in international junior tournament, so we go way back, as well. It's nice to see him doing well on tour.

But I know the difficulty. I haven't started to think of it a whole lot because I do have two days off now, but I'm looking forward to the match. It's going to be a tough one.

Q. So within this 24 hours or so Rafa loses and Novak lost a set and you have this incredible match. You could say in a way, Oh, my God, the top 3 players...

ROGER FEDERER: Can't play tennis no more, right?

Q. Yeah, right. (Laughter.) But you really could look at it a different way. It shows that the level of incredible dominance that you guys have had, the ability to pull off whatever it is, 28 of the last 29. Can you just talk about the dominance of the three of you and how really difficult that has been and what an achievement?

ROGER FEDERER: Yeah, I guess you can ask every player, and every player is going to give you the same answer: They don't know how it works, you know. It's giving your best every single day, every single point you play, you know, staying injury-free as much as you can, and then work hard, you know, on the practice court.

Now, I have been around the block obviously, and I know how hard it is to, you know, every day beat the guy ranked 25, 65, 105. It doesn't matter. They all present their challenges. But some playing styles suit you more and some don't. That's why I love this sport, that every day is a completely new day, you know. You don't know what to expect, and you have to react so much in our sport that you only control certain things. This is where I think it's impressive that the other guys also for so many years have been able to be so solid.

But what this victory of Rosol does to me is give great belief for other players that they can beat the top guys, which I think is great, even though it might not be that great for me down the stretch. Hopefully not.

But it's just -- I think it's great for the sport that it is possible, such a victory for a lower-ranked player. It's not a low-ranked player, but in terms of Rafa Nadal being No. 2 in the world and the champion he is, it's obviously a massive upset. I hope it does give many other players great belief in playing us in the future.