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An interview with:

THE SPAIN DAVIS CUP TEAM

ALBERT COSTA
RAFAEL NADAL
DAVID FERRER
FERNANDO VERDASCO
FELICIANO LOPEZ

THE MODERATOR: Questions in English, please.

Q. Rafa, that was one of the great matches. How did it compare with your great triumphs at other times?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, thank you very much. Yeah, it was an emotional day for us. Well, for me especially, no? For us, win the Davis Cup for the fourth time is something -- well, for the fifth for our country -- is something unbelievable, really special. The atmosphere makes the event even more special. So it was everything fantastic, no?

At the end was a really emotional match, so to win a final like this makes a victory fantastic. So very happy for everything, very happy to have this team around me.

So thank you very much to them, and thank you very much not only them, all the rest of the team who worked really hard for us to make that happen.

It's a special day, and for us is the best way to finish the season.

Q. Rafa, what were you thinking after you lost the first set and you were broken at the start of the second to find a way to win the match?

RAFAEL NADAL: That's the only thing that I can think during the match. I had really tough moments during the match, but I was all the time believing in myself to try to win this match.

I know it was my day, it was my moment, and I had to believe more than ever with the victory. That's what I tried. For moments I played so-so; for moments I played well. But, you know, he was playing really aggressive from the baseline, fantastic shots, was very difficult to come back from this, his flat shots, and it was a really difficult match.

But finally I find something was very important. The second game of the second set, 1-Love, 40-Love with break, so had to break back in that game give me a lot. So after that the match was more equal, more close. So after that game I felt that the match started for me, no?

Q. Congratulations to Spain. Rafa, can I ask you, were you surprised at the way he came back at you in the fourth set?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, sure. It was a little bit surprise. But at that moment, you know, the crowd stop the match for five, six minutes, so that's makes -- that didn't help it. So after that, I started to feel a little bit the nerves and the pressure then, no?

So I think I played a little bit worse later, especially in the 2-1, in the 3-2, in that two games with my serve I think I played really bad.

After that he starts to play very well another time with a lot of winners. But that games, that was the games that I had to make the difference and to have to confirm the break and put the score 4-2 or, you know, 3-1. I didn't.

So that was a mistake. And after the match -- the match was really tough, no? 5-3 for him, 30-15 for him. It was really difficult at the end of the match.

Q. Albert, you've done it as a player, now as a captain. What are the differences of the stresses and strains? Which do you enjoy more, playing or as a captain?

CAPTAIN COSTA: Well, it's completely different sensation and feelings, but I think it's

better when you are a player, because when you are a captain, you can, you know, you can choose the players to play, you can choose all the team and everything. But at the end, these guys are the ones who win the matches.

You feel more special when you are a player, but this is also an honor to win as a captain because it's not easy.

I would like to say thanks to these people here. They did a great effort during the whole year and during the whole season. For us, for them it's very, very tough, and I just thank these guys for the effort.

THE MODERATOR: Questions in Spanish.

Q. Many titles, but you had never a Davis Cup like this. Then a question for David. In the court you said -- maybe I'm wrong -- but you said that this is the end of a cycle. Is that true? Have you said that?

DAVID FERRER: No, I said it's the end of the party, not the end of the cycle. End of the party. The party is finished.

RAFAEL NADAL: At the end of the day, I never finished a Davis Cup like this, but the happiness is very similar if a colleague wins the last match or if you win the last match, because it's teamwork and sometimes you win and sometimes your colleagues win.

And this year we have all worked really hard in Austin. Feli won his singles. They played really well doubles against the Bryans, and then David again, Fish. I finished in Cordoba. So this is all a race in which all of us take part.

Today it was my turn to decide a final. I think we have deserved it. The feeling is very special, because we play at home. And because it's the last event of the year, and obviously to have the Davis Cup in your country with the atmosphere that we could feel in the crowd is a reason for emotion and happiness.

We're all very happy. We all know that it will be practically impossible to repeat this feat, especially all of us together. It will be impossible to repeat it.

For the Davis Cup, it's a competition that is very important for what the crowd transmits around you, and I'm going to give it now to David to say what he wants to say.

DAVID FERRER: No, Rafa has just said everything. He is partly right. It's going to be very difficult for the four of us to play together again. Some people will play. Some people will want -- there are enough comers who are very good, and that's it.

Take your mask off. No, end of the party. This is the end of the party. No. At the end of the day, I have been here for many years, and we all look for -- personally we all look for our own calendar.

I'm older. I probably don't have a good physical condition, so it will be really difficult that the four of us coincide. That would be very difficult. It's not that it's the end of a cycle a lot, but there are lots of good people coming, lots of people who can replace us, people who are better than us, and they can get better. For us to be in a Davis Cup is going to be very difficult.

Q. Rafa, it has been a very intense year with many matches. How is this going to help you to prepare for the next season after such a beautiful game? It was so intense, so many people.

RAFAEL NADAL: For next year, I don't know if it helps. It helps for the preseason. I have two-and-a-half weeks of training now. That is intense. So I feel confident.

And also, I am excited about going on. I'm very happy for the year I have had. A couple of hours earlier my year became even better, which was already good.

So I'm good, I'm happy with my year, it has been intense. It has been a positive year. I'm finishing this season at home. Winning the Davis Cup makes it even more special. So I am very happy. It's a day in which we are all happy, because apart from winning, the atmosphere was very special.

Q. Congratulations, Rafa, and the whole team. I wanted to ask you if you were surprised by the match that Del Potro showed after being so tired from Friday, and Del Potro started really hard, winning 6-1. Then when he looked like he was tired, then he came back. So were you surprised by his attitude? And what were the words of consolation you said to him at the end of the match?

RAFAEL NADAL: It wasn't that I was surprised, because I know the very high level he has. Del Potro has a very high level as a player, so it was not a big surprise. It's all relative.

For a long time he was giving incredible shots that nobody else can do. I want to congratulate him for his attitude. He had a brilliant attitude, both him and the Argentinian team. They had a brilliant attitude, fighting really hard. They made it really difficult for us.

We had to take the best out of us to win the tie, and I congratulate them all, because thanks to them, we have gone through a very

exciting final, unforgettable for us and for them, too, I guess, even though they've lost this type of experience.

Del Potro is a fantastic player, as you can see on his record with two Davis Cup finals. But he will be a very good player.

It's clear that he's a candidate for No. 1. He will be amongst the first four players in the world next year. We are all here. We agree on that.

So he's a very complete player. He doesn't have any cracks in his game. He's very solid. He will be unstoppable next year if the injury allows him.

Q. You went to congratulate the Argentinian team first. Why?

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, we had just finished a very exciting tie, a beautiful tie. Most of them are my best friends in the circuit apart from those at this table and other Spanish colleagues. The Argentinians are really good friends. We get on really well with them. We have a close relationship with them. Apart from opponents, we are colleagues and friends.

Many of them are there in the bench, and they are very good friends of mine. I wanted to congratulate them, give them the consolation for not winning, but they were playing a very high level.

Q. Rafa, for us, can you please explain what you mean by "the end of the party," this party closure? Can you elaborate what you mean by this concept of the end of the party?

RAFAEL NADAL: Next year I will not play. Next year is a very complex year. It's an Olympic year. I have been, for many years, the player that competes the most. No, that's a lie. I'm one of the players that plays the highest number of games in the year, and I don't want to overplay. I don't want to have an incoherent calendar. I want a coherent calendar. I have not played an event that I shouldn't play.

So next year, since it's an Olympic year, my participation in the Davis Cup is impossible. Then we will think about the future. For the time being, let's enjoy today. It's not the most appropriate time to talk about the future, but of course next year I will not play the Davis Cup.

Thank God Spain has a good level of players, and there are many good players that will replace us that play really high-level tennis.

Q. Albert, you were following the whole team all year. Are you going to stay? There are many meetings, but the fact that

you are not going to play the Davis Cup doesn't mean you're not going to go to the Olympic teams, so are you going to have two teams? Because you need to go to the Olympic Games, don't you?

CAPTAIN COSTA: Let's enjoy this victory. I'm going to take a week off. I'm going to think about things. I'm going to think about whether I should stay or not. The first thing is that I need to talk to the president of the Spanish Tennis Federation, and then I will make a decision.

I think that it has been a great effort for three years, and I have enjoyed it with all of them, especially with Francis. Francis and I have won two Davis Cups. We lost against France in quarterfinals, but it has been really intense spirit with him.

I'm really grateful to the players. I'm going to take a week of holidays now, and I will think about it. You will hear from me afterwards.

Q. You have won many finals. Each final is different. What memory or what word can you use to define this final?

RAFAEL NADAL: I personally have lived it as one of the most special ones. 2009 Barcelona was special, but winning a final is always special. But the physical condition plays a role, and the atmosphere, as well. 2004 was unforgettable for me, because it was the first big tournament I did here, and this is very similar to the 2004, even better.

With the time -- even though you think I am a little calmer, I have more experience, but with time you acknowledge more how difficult things are. Each victory has a more special taste, because, you know, how difficult it is to do things. When you're young, everything is new, and you don't have the capacity to truly enjoy and comprehend the difficulty of the situation.

But after you've been here for many years, you understand there are ups and downs and that you need to fight to be there all the time. And that is why you acknowledge a victory much more with the experience. We're not old, but we have an advanced age now.

We have many years in the circuit behind our backs. We have many emotions and feelings that we have experienced in our careers. We know how difficult it is for this to happen, especially with the atmosphere that we have enjoyed today.

So we really appreciate the victory, and for all of us, it's one of the most special victories we will have in our career.

Q. Regarding the match, how do you assess the behavior of the Argentinian crowd when they stopped the match? Were you afraid that everything could change?

RAFAEL NADAL: I was confident if I had lost the fourth. I was fine physically. David did a good job on Friday with Juan Martin, so I thought -- I trusted that he will eventually get tired if it wasn't in the five or six minutes -- I can't remember how many minutes we had. We were stopped when we were 2-0. That didn't help me at all, because it made me feel more nervous.

I started being more hesitant with my right. I remember doing very ugly drives in the net, and the match changed. Then everything became difficult to run with my serve. I didn't play very well. I did a break. Then I went 3-2, then I played badly, and then he recovered. He came back.

He started shooting really strongly up to 5-3 for him. I think the 4-3 for him, I didn't play that badly and he did a break then, because I was playing well, and then in the 6-5 he was brilliant. I wasn't perfect, but he was brilliant.

Luckily in the tiebreak he missed some balls. I didn't miss one single ball. And the tiebreak, as it ended, I'm very happy, but there was a long way to go even if I had lost the fourth. But when you get to the fifth, then anything could have happened.

Q. Congratulations. I wanted to ask you, the five of you, if you are thinking about going to the Olympic Games because only four can go. Are the Olympic Games a priority for you next year? Because I don't know if you're going to play the Davis Cup or not, or have you ruled it out?

DAVID FERRER: We all want to play at the Olympic Games. The Olympic Games is a very important rendezvous. It happens once every four years.

I'm not talking about on behalf of the whole team. I'm talking on my own behalf, but knowing everybody, I think we all want to be there. We want to play in London, and we want to be in good physical conditions to represent yet again Spain, because we represent Spain in every single tournament we play.

RAFAEL NADAL: We all want to play. We all want to play. But only four of us will qualify. I hope I'm one of them. (Laughter.) If not, I will watch it on television.

DAVID FERRER: Yes, he has a wild card, maybe he gets a wild card. (Laughter.) If he doesn't qualify for the Olympic Games, we can give him a wild card.

Q. Rafa, congratulations. Today one of your colleagues was in the boxes, Carlos Moya. I suppose you've seen him. What has he told you? Because he was so excited that you went to talk to him.

RAFAEL NADAL: Carlos has always been somebody very special for me. He's always been one of my best friends when he was in the circuit. He's a very special person for all of us because of his personality.

He is a brilliant person, and we, all of us in the team, we have a special -- we are especially fond of him. I personally -- I feel really close to him.

We lived the 2004 final together here, and it was very special for him and me. We were together in 2004 and we also had difficult times in 2004 together, so getting here has been very special for me, as well.

So it's good to remember people who helped me in the past, and he helped me in 2004. Carlos was one of the persons who helped me the most during the week in 2004 during the final. Jordi Arrese, Juan Avendano, Josep Perlas, they all trusted me and they took me to the final.

So they are all part of the history of tennis, and they deserve the acknowledgement and our gratitude for all they have done for this competition and for our country. They have represented us so many times.

THE MODERATOR: Catalanian questions now.

Q. What does this Davis Cup trophy mean for you?

RAFAEL NADAL: This is a special competition. What makes it really special is the way we play it, the feelings that you go through during the weekend and what it means for me personally because it is victory. It's important.

This is a very good way of finishing the year after a long year. It's helped me. I have been working really hard, so it's been very good to finish the season this way, so I'm very happy.

I'm very grateful to my colleagues that have helped me in this final, and I'm happy to be able to enjoy the triumph now, and that's it. It's going to take a very important position in my memories.

I don't know where I will put the trophy, but emotionally, sentimentally, this is something which is good for me. It's very special. It's unforgettable.

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