

**August 21, 2009**



**Western & Southern  
Financial Group®**

**MASTERS & WOMEN'S OPEN**

**R. NADAL/T. Berdych**

6-4, 7-5

An interview with:

## **RAFAEL NADAL**

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. How pleased were you with that performance out there tonight?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Yeah, very happy, no? I think I improved every day a little bit more, so today I played very good match. I think normal level when I am on rhythm, so that's very good news. Win against Tomas on this surface is very good win for me, so I'm very happy for that.

Sure, very, very good news being in the semifinals. When I arrived here, I didn't expect to be in this round, so very happy. Anything can happen right now, because my tournament is very good for me.

**Q. Are you looking forward to playing Novak again tomorrow? You played him last year here in the semifinals, and you've played him a lot.**

RAFAEL NADAL: Yeah, sure I gonna try to be competitive to try to fight to win. So that's what I gonna do, and we will see what happens later.

**Q. In the volleys, were you putting more spin on the ball? Looked like you were putting more spin than you had previously.**

RAFAEL NADAL: I think I had a very good feeling, especially on the forehand. So I went inside more. I was going inside more times. So I think especially in the beginning I played almost perfect match.

Later Tomas starting to serve very, very well, and it was difficult to return the serve. With the second serve he is going higher too, and he had the position inside the court early. It's difficult to put out Tomas of this position, no?

But I didn't lost court. I was all the time close to the baseline, so that's what I -- when I went through the match, that's what I tried to do. So I did, and very happy, because I think I did and I did well.

**Q. Why did you not expect to make it to the semifinals? You made it the semifinals here last year, even though you lost the match. Is this not a tournament that you think normally you're going to win?**

RAFAEL NADAL: No, sure, it's a very good news being in the semifinal, no? After two months outside, the second tournament, playing two matches like this, like against Mathieu last night and against Berdych today. So it's very good news, no?

Sure, if I am in normal conditions I am coming here with the goal play a good tournament and try to win the tournament. But in this conditions, being be in semifinals is perfect for me, because I think that's more confidence for the US Open.

For sure it's very important, this tournament. And this tournament, be in semifinals is very important. We will see right now.

**Q. As you try to get back to the form you had before your injury, does it really help to you play the top guys? Does playing someone like Djokovic help you get further along?**

RAFAEL NADAL: I think the match is tomorrow. Any result gonna help me more to get more level, no? Because it's another, I don't know (Through translation) another step of level. I had to push myself to this new step to try to win. That's what I gonna try.

I know if tomorrow I have a good

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match and the result is there, it's close, I am there.

**Q. What is the most difficult thing for you when you've come back from injury? What's the hardest thing to get good again?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Well, get the routines. You know, when you are playing and you are with confidence, you don't need to think a lot about every point, no, because you do automatically. You do the things.

Right now it's more difficult because it's the beginning and you have to think a lot of time. But I think I today I did very well, no? Because when I have 15-30 -- well, I don't have a lot of 15-30, no, but when I had Love-15 or something like this I had a good serve, good forehand.

So when I had to play aggressive and when I had to win a point, I was there playing the point, no? So sometimes when you are coming back off an injury in the beginning you know the point is very important and I have stupid mistake.

So that's more difficult thing, no? Try to do the right things in important moments.

**Q. Looking back to last year when you played Djokovic in the semifinals and lost, what do you have to do differently tomorrow that you perhaps couldn't do last year to win?**

RAFAEL NADAL: A lot of things, no? I think I arrived last year to the semifinals very tired. I did my goal here, being in semifinals to be No. 1.

So, you know, I wasn't pleased about my result, but I won in Wimbledon, Roland Garros, Toronto, and it was a lot of efforts, no? It was too much, no? So maybe I was a little bit tired.

Tomorrow maybe I can lose 6-2, 6-2, but the mentality gonna be different.

**Q. Will you watch any of Federer and Murray or just stay focused on your match?**

RAFAEL NADAL: What time they play?

THE MODERATOR: 2:00.

RAFAEL NADAL: Sure, gonna see a little bit.

**Q. Did you watch Wimbledon, Rafa?**

RAFAEL NADAL: I watched the final.

**Q. How did it feel to watch that fifth set?**

RAFAEL NADAL: Yeah, it was emotional, no? A lot of emotion in one important match like the final of Wimbledon. The match was so close. Roddick had one 15-40. So, yeah, these kind of matches are special. For everybody I think it's nice to see these kind of matches.

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