

Miami Open presented by Itaú

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Miami, Florida, USA

Francisco Cerundolo

Press Conference



F. CERUNDOLO/J. Sinner

4-1 [Ret.]

THE MODERATOR: Francisco is into his first ATP Masters 1000 semifinal in his very first ATP Masters 1000 main draw. Something very rare.

Questions?

Q. I got a text, a random text today, from a former ATP player. He just happened to say Francisco is going to be a top-10 player in the future. Never talked about you before. Is your belief as strong as his in you?

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Well, that's a tricky question. Hopefully, yeah. I believe myself that I can keep improving, keep moving up.

Of course a dream that I have to be a top-10 player, I'm working a lot to be there. Yeah, I don't know. It's not a goal right now. It's happening this week is going to change a lot of things, but yeah, hopefully I can be a top-10 player in the future.

It's not something that I'm thinking about right now, but yeah, I will work to achieve that and many more things hopefully.

Q. I want to know what it's like for you playing in Miami. Such a huge Argentine population here and they're very supportive of Argentine players also. Is it different playing here than anywhere else in the world?

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Yeah, I have been saying that. Is like play in Argentina. Yesterday I play an American guy, and I think more people were cheering for me than for him. So it was really weird.

I'm feeling great here. I love to play with my people, Argentina people, Latin people. It's fantastic. I think it brings my best inside the court.

So, yeah, I think nowhere else in the world except Argentina I am feeling like home.

Q. They're not your friends, though, those guys with the flags? Do you know them, or you are going to meet them later apparently?

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: They aren't my friends. I don't know them. Maybe I can meet them, but to be honest, I have no idea who they are.

Q. At the end of the match, can you just explain what happened?

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: To be honest, I have no idea. I warm up today at the same time of Jannik. I see him, he was doing okay I think. Suddenly, when I was serving I think 3-1 30-Love, I saw he was bending down and like touching his foot.

When he retired, he said something but I couldn't understand because it was like really fast. I don't know. I wish him a speedy recovery, but I don't know what happened on the court today.

Blister? Okay, yeah. It was weird, because he didn't call like medical or anything. He just retired.

Q. What you have achieved doesn't happen very often, so how shocked are you yourself with what you have achieved?

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Yeah (smiling). I don't know. Today my emotions are, I don't know, weird, because I wanted to play, I wanted to try to win the match in a correct way.

Yeah, yesterday I was delighted. I was really happy. I couldn't believe it, reaching quarterfinals. Now I'm in the semifinals, but I think tomorrow or tonight I would be more happy for what I have done these two weeks, and hopefully it doesn't end. I want to play my best on Friday and try to win and make to the finals.

Q. You played also in the last few years like challenge events. Do you see like a big difference between challenge and this type of event, about the level of player, how much they want to win? If you can explain



a little bit the difference for you.

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: In challengers, I think there is a high level. There are many people that can play great. There are always five or six in top hundred that play there, so yeah, it's very competitive.

I think in challengers most of the people want to win a lot, because they are just starting or growing up and they want to be in the ATP level. So I think is really tough to get through that level.

But yeah, here, you have the top guys, the top players that they play great. I think here the level is higher, the intensity, everyone plays great. But I think, I don't know, the hunger that there is in challenger and the will they want to win, I think it's more in challengers than here.

Q. Argentina has produced some incredible players over the decades on both the men's and the women's side when you look at Vilas and Juan Martin, David Nalbandian, Gabby. Who did you look up to and who was your idol when you and your brother were starting out?

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Yeah, Argentina is fantastic. I think we had many great players. We have now Diego, Delbonis, and there are many more coming up like me and my brother and Baez and a lot more players.

Yeah, when I was young, my idol was Nalbandian. I always look at him. I love the way he played. It's not that I play like him, not even close. But, yeah, I look up at him. And my brother, he was always a fan of Nadal because he's lefty, and he always look at him, yeah.

Q. Did you see David around? Because he's coaching now.

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Yes, this year I started like having a better relationship with him and Zavala (phonetic) and all of the guys that were at the top level when I was a kid. As I'm improving, biggest events, so I'm able to meet them more often, so it's amazing.

Of course we are going to have a chat. They can give me some thoughts and experience they had in the past, so it's really nice to be able to, I don't know, to just hang around with them, and they are gonna give me some tips, so it's fantastic.

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