

GS#91 – Molt més que un jugador

English version

Much more than a tennis player

This cache is a tribute to one of the greatest athletes of all time – Rafael Nadal.

In the text I give some reasons why I have cheered for him for many years since he was a teenager, appearing like a comet on the big stage: From the start the intensity and physicality of his game have been unparalleled, and his fighting spirit has been legendary. He gradually evolved from the “King of Clay” to an all-surface player who completed the career Grand Slam younger than anyone else, at twenty-four years in 2010 – a feat that in the Open Era only five players have achieved so far. He was the one who took the baton from Roger Federer, then judged a player whose records would hold for a very long time, if not forever. The changing of the guards took place at Wimbledon in 2008, where both played one of the greatest matches I ever witnessed, their third consecutive and last final at SW19, the one that Rafa won after five awe-inspiring sets.



But the place where he achieved his greatest triumphs is here at Roland Garros: Now, in 2022, he is a fourteen times champion, this one really a mark that will never be surpassed, I dare say.

But perhaps the true reason why he is not only a very successful player – only Federer and his other long-time rival, Novak Djokovic, can be classified in the same league – but really one of the greatest are not the many memorable matches and important championships he has won but some of his personal characteristics: This extraordinary competitor has never lost temper on or off court, never smashed a racket or even let out a swear word; he has always treated everyone with gentlemanlike respect – his

opponents, the umpires, the press or the crowd in general; he never gives up and his resilience is unbelievable: playing at top level for more than seventeen years so far although being hampered by various recurring injuries and even chronic orthopaedic problems like the Mueller-Weiss syndrome that he was diagnosed with as a nineteen year old.

No wonder that many of the younger top stars of the game – male and female alike – have grown up as hardcore Rafa fans, as, for example, Iga Swiatek, the actual number one of the WTA Ranking, Carlos Alcaraz, his young compatriot and arguably the greatest talent in tennis since the Big Three emerged some fifteen, twenty years ago, or Casper Ruud, his opponent in the 2022 RG final.

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I am grateful to have the opportunity to pay my tribute to Rafa by placing this

Virtual Cache

here in front of the statue created by the Spanish artist Jordi Díez Fernández and erected near the entrance to the stadium in 2021.

To log it as “**found**”, please

- 1.) take a picture of yourself or one of your personal items – which should be related to my hero, tennis in general or our common hobby Geocaching – in front of the statue. Should the grounds be closed (use the links provided in the French version for information about opening times, a guided tour of or a virtual trip to the stadium), you can take it from outside at the main entrance, with the statue of Roland Garros in the background. Attach the picture to your log.
- 2.) Find out the correct characters (minuscules or digits) represented by the letters A-S and substitute A-S (in the URL given in the listing) by them. If you enter the correct URL, a mapspotting puzzle will open and a password will be disclosed. Send me that password via the messenger (message or e-mail), giving your nickname as reference. Afterwards, you are free to log.

Notice: Any logs without a picture that proves your presence on-site or posted without you having sent the password in advance will be deleted without further comment.

- 3.) **Optional, “Bonus”:** Solve the mapspotting puzzle and you’ll get the code of a Geocoin matching the subject of this cache, which you can discover if you like to.