

# HSBC Championships

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London, England, UK

Queens Club

## Francisco Cerundolo

Press Conference

F. CERUNDOLO/B. Nakashima

6-7, 6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: First of all, congrats, Fran. I know you're still waiting for the second semifinals result. But first of all, congrats to you, to your biggest final of your career. Also first final here at Queen's Club. It was a really tight match. How did you manage to conquer those tight moments and get the victory?

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Yeah, thank you very much. Yeah, super happy to be in my first final here in Queen's, my first 500 ATP.

Yeah, it was a super tough and challenging match today. I think Brandon play incredible level of tennis. A little bit for me the same. Was a good match from both sides. Some ups and downs, but I mean, it's normal in a tennis match, a match that almost lasted three hours.

But overall, I'm super happy with the level. At the beginning of the week, I didn't expect to be here in the final, so I'm super happy and proud.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Congratulations. Could you tell us a bit about the Diego Maradona shirt that's draped on a chair in your player's box, please?**

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: I mean, it wasn't my idea. I think it was yesterday or in Round 16 match that I look up at my bench, and the shirt was there. I think it was a friend that is here, that he brought it and they put it there. Because I won the second match, it's gonna sit there until the end of the tournament.

I think it's good bringing Argentinian flag there. I mean, we are in a month of World Cup in football, so it's always a present and it's always special for all of us.

**Q. Congratulations. How important is it to you to have Nicolas Massu and Pablo Cuevas in your team, having experienced former players to help you improve your game?**



## CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Queen's Club

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Well, it's super important, to be honest. With Nico, it's our first week together. He flew last Monday to Argentina to practice three days, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and we flew Wednesday evening here.

We tried to get to know each other a little bit. We didn't know, just hi and the name, no more than that. It was Pablo's idea to bring him to the team. I didn't even know him. So it's great first week, to be honest (smiling).

As I said before, we didn't expect to be in the finals, but it's amazing to have them both, Pablo, Nico, experienced guys. As players they were successful and they know the tour a lot.

Nico, he's also experienced as a coach. I'm trying to learn as much as possible, both perspectives from both of them. I'm super happy with the team that I have.

**Q. Congratulations on making it to the final. You seemed to really thrive in the attitude of the crowd. What were you thinking in those pressure moments, and how much did that help you?**

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Yeah, I'm super happy, because the crowd really get involved. I mean, I was trying to use that energy on my side, and I think they were enjoying the moment, the matches. I think I played really good points, really good shots, and I left it all out there.

I mean, yeah, tried to use the energy, because it was a tough match, a long one, and sometimes you are feeling a little bit tired, but you get that support and it's fantastic from the whole stadium, whole crowd, and also from my team, from my friends.

I tried to use the energy in my favor, and yeah, today it really worked out. Yeah, I'm super happy and thankful to all of them.

**Q. Firstly, are you not feeling well?**

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Why?

**Q. You sound like you've got a bad throat or a cough.**



FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: No, no, no. Since I arrived here, I don't know if it's the change of weather. I'm really allergic, you know, (smiling).

Yeah, a little bit of that, but I'm feeling perfect.

**Q. Do you know the history of South American players at this tournament? First Argentine since Nalbandian in 2012, and third South American, Victor Pecci in 1979. What do you know about what happened in 2012?**

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: I know, I know. Luckily, yeah, I know. I have heard it, I watched it. Now we don't have umpire, so I cannot do that (smiling).

Yeah, it was an unfortunate situation. I think Nalbandian, he didn't want to do that. But yeah, tension of the match, maybe you are reacting in a way you don't want to. Yeah, it was a bad situation, to be honest. I hope I don't do the same tomorrow and I can finish the match in proper ways. (Laughter.)

**Q. In your training sessions, is there anything that you focused on specifically for the grass? You have said that you didn't expect to be in the final this week. Has there been anything that you have adapted, you have found that has helped you get to this point?**

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Well, I mean, just try to improve the moment, because it's totally different, the moment, coming from clay to here, try to adapt and be as smooth as possible.

And then, yeah, here in grass, try to learn from the guys that play good. I mean, I have been watching a lot of matches, a lot of players, how they play, how they approach the points, how they attack, how they go to the net.

Yeah, I did well on grass before, two years ago, three years ago. Last two years weren't the best for me on grass, but, I mean, I knew how to play a little bit and try to adapt. I mean, I tried to give myself opportunities and chances to improve, and I think this week I have been doing quite good. Yeah, I have been fighting a lot.

**Q. Looks like it should be Tommy Paul, who won here a couple of years ago. If it is him, what do you think? What are your thoughts for the final?**

FRANCISCO CERUNDOLO: Well, I know Tommy a lot. We played many times.

But I think last one was 2024, 2023, so it's a couple of years ago. But I think he loves to play here on grass. As you said, he won once, and he always perform well on this surface. He's a guy that has a lot of variety on his

game. He's really smooth when he moves.

I mean, it's going to be a super-tough match, for sure. I have to play my best to try to get a chance to beat him. But, yeah, I don't know. It's the final. It's a different match. I will try to give my best, because of course I want to win, but I know he's a great player and he knows really well how to play on these conditions.

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