

Rafa's Fountain of Youth

Rafael Nadal just keeps on grinding....and winning.

He overcomes injuries, critics, politics, and even accusations questioning his performance-enhancing "techniques." At the end of the day, Mr. Nadal continues to add to his achievements.

In just 3 months this year, Rafa has compiled a 20-0 record and 3 title victories. Most impressively, Rafa claimed the Acapulco title for the fourth time in Mexico (twice on hardcourts and twice on clay) **and** the *30th title in his career without losing a set!* Acapulco was his 91st title, 3 behind Lendl for 3rd place in most titles won by a male in the open era. Moreover, in typical Rafa warrior fashion, he outlasted Stephen Korda at Indian Wells in the round of 64, and, as always, managed to gracefully praise and hug his beaten adversary.

He ravaged his opponents down under for his 21st title, ending a three-way Grand Slam record tie with Djokovic and Federer. The conquistador even overcame covid right before the tournament to not only confidently answer repeated questions about Novak's vaccine resistance, but he also out gritted the Aussie field as Medvedev waved the white flag in the final five-setter. With the looming absences of Roger and Novak on the horizon, Rafa is poised to gallop into the European dirt season and the Parisian sunset with his 14th French Open title.

But the most remarkable 2022 milestones for the Spaniard consist of these three facts: 20-0 on hardcourts, securing his 91st title (4th all-time), and he is **35 years old!** It seems like the Spaniard has finally found the fountain of youth that evaded Ponce de Leon.

With the start of Indian Wells and the dog fight victory over up and coming Korda, Rafa relishes an opportunity to win his 4th title in the desert. Nonetheless, if you asked Rafa what he thought his chances are of winning a fourth title, he would undoubtedly say in his serious and yet fun accent, "my opponent tomorrow is what I worry about, as he is a very, very good player. I will have to play my best."

Bravo Rafa, and thank you for keeping the game fun, respectful, and pertinent, and good luck to you Mr. Evans as you try to break his streak today at Indian Wells. I hope you packed some extra electrolytes and bananas.