

Berrettini Will Play Nadal in US Open Semifinal

Roberta Cutillo (September 05, 2019)



After defeating the French Gaël Monfils, 23-year-old Matteo Berrettini will go on to play the world's No.2 Rafael Nadal on September 6, 42 years after Corrado Barazzutti, the last Italian male player to reach a Grand Slam semifinal.

"What a great fight," commented the 23-year-old from Rome after a gripping three hours and 57 minute-long match against the 33-year-old Frenchman [Gaël Monfils](#) [2], which he won in five sets: 3-6 6-3 6-2 3-6 7-6 (5).

"I think it was one of the best matches I ever saw," continued [Matteo Berrettini](#) [3], "I was playing, but I was watching also. I'm very proud of myself." And all of Italy is proud too and pleasantly surprised by this unexpected turn of events.

It is the fourth time in the Open Era - which started in 1968 - that a male Italian player reaches a Grand Slam singles semifinal: [Adriano Panatta](#) [4] won the 1976 Roland Garros and was a semifinalist in 1972 and 1975, [Corrado Barazzutti](#) [5] made it to the semifinals in the 1977 US Open



and the 1978 Roland Garros, and finally 26-year-old [Marco Cecchinato](#) [6] was a semifinalist in last year's Roland Garros.

Berrettini and Cecchinato are, along with 24-year-old [Lorenzo Sonogo](#) [7], part of the new generation of extremely young Italian tennis players who are quickly rising up the global ranks, making their towards a Grand Slam victory, something Italy hasn't seen in 43 years. (ed. note that we are speaking only of male players here, recently [Flavia Pennetta](#) [8] and [Francesca Schiavone](#) [9] have given Italian fans great joy by respectively taking home the 2015 US Open and the 2010 Roland Garros)

Tomorrow Berrettini will face the world's No.2 player, [Rafael Nadal](#) [10]. The Spaniard, who beat the Argentine Diego Schwartzman 6-4 7-5 6-2 in a much quicker match yesterday, is the last of The Big Three - which include Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic - left in the tournament.

The other two semifinalists, Grigor Dimitrov from Hungary and Daniil Medvedev from Russia, like their Italian colleague, are both in their 20s and will compete in the US Open Semifinals for the first time.

For them, like for Berrettini, having made it this far is already a huge accomplishment. And who knows, they may not be done surprising us just yet.

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