

Porsche Tennis Grand Prix

Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

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Coco Gauff

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome, Coco. Welcome back to Stuttgart. How are you feeling ahead of the tournament? How have the practices been so far?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I'm really happy to be back here in Stuttgart. I feel like I have been practicing pretty well. Yeah, hopefully can have a good week here.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. How does last few weeks work for you in terms of the transition from hard court to clay court? And if you changed anything compared to the previous seasons?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, this year has been a little bit more smoother because I didn't play Billie Jean King Cup this year, so I didn't have to do the quick turnaround from hard to clay. So I feel like I had more time to prepare.

Yeah, that's the only thing that's been different since last year. Just a schedule change.

Yeah, I think I feel better having more time, but obviously Billie Jean King Cup is important, so I think I just kind of choose which ties I decide to play.

We have so much depth in the American game that we don't always need me or, you know, our top players to be able to get through a tie.

Q. On that, do you think you'll be in Seville if you're there or thereabouts in terms of your ranking, et cetera?

COCO GAUFF: I mean, it's obviously on the calendar, but it just depends on schedule again and, you know, how the end of the year goes.

Last year I didn't do the Billie Jean King Cup Finals, but I definitely love competing and I love playing. I definitely am excited about our new captain, Lindsay Davenport. I didn't tell you yes or no right now, but we'll see later in the season.



Q. A question regarding the Billie Jean King Cup Finals. Do you think it's going to be an issue, logistic situation between Saudi Arabia and Seville?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah. I mean, it's always going to be an issue just with the dates and obviously playing on two different parts of the world.

It's nothing new. It's been like that for the last couple years. When I played in, where were we, Fort Worth and had to go to Glasgow, that was a tough transition.

So I think it's always going to be an issue until they're in the same continent, which won't be for a long time probably.

Q. Let's have a look at today but also your last 12 months. I remember a year ago you telling me, I was asking you about your preferred surface. You were, like, Well, I have had good results on all of the surfaces. I also asked maybe which one are you going to win a slam on? This was a year ago. Obviously you have now achieved that.

COCO GAUFF: What did I say? I feel like I would have said clay, right, or no?

Q. You were in a good mood at the time, beginning of clay court season, it was about a year ago. You were in the end, you were, like, I don't know. I'm optimistic about the clay court season. I mean, you had a good French Open but maybe less so in Madrid. Yeah, you at least achieved that ambition in New York.

COCO GAUFF: Yeah.

Q. What I want to know is now, where are we at now with Coco? And particularly this clay court season.

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I think clay and hard are definitely my favorite surfaces. Again, I can play well on all of them depending on how I show up to a tournament, honestly.

But for the clay court season this year, I'm really optimistic. Obviously the goal is to win French Open, but that's every



season of any top player. I mean, your goals should be to try to win the big tournament.

But I'm not looking at French Open right now. I'm focused on Stuttgart. You know, I want to win, try to win Madrid or Rome or here, just because I can't remember -- the last time I won a clay court title was, like, a couple years ago if I'm not mistaken, so I kind of just want to get a recent clay title under my belt. So any of the ones along the next couple weeks would be nice.

But, yeah, I'm always feeling confident about myself. Especially after US Open, I can be a contender. Semifinal in Australia, losing to Aryna who ended up winning. So I feel like I'm definitely a contender in all the tournaments, and it just comes down to the crunch-time moments and who can perform better.

Q. Regarding the work you have done in the last couple of weeks, I read that you have added another person to your team, probably a known face like you knew him already?

COCO GAUFF: Yep.

Q. Was it easy to connect him again with him? And how it is to work with him at the moment?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I added Jean-Christophe, I call him J.C., to my team. I started with him when I was 14. He was with me with that incredible run at Wimbledon.

It actually wasn't either of our choices to stop working together. He was having visa issues and couldn't get into the U.S. for, like, a long time, a couple years.

So once he got that all figured out and it became a perfect opportunity and the timing worked to be back together, I knew when we had stopped I always wanted to go back to him when all of that stuff got sorted.

So the timing worked where I was looking for someone, and we worked well together. I'm really excited to be back with him.

It's nice to have someone on my team that knows me since I was young and knows me well. So I'm really, really excited to have him back on the team. Yeah, it's good. I'm glad that, you know, the government let us be together again (smiling).

Q. Just looking at that unbelievable sort of sequence of events leading up to New York, you had a really early exit in Wimbledon, if I remember rightly. Did you feel anything, like, after Wimbledon, like, I don't know

why, even though you had a bad result on the grass there, you had a feeling that something big was building? And do you have one of the three that you haven't won that that's the one I would really want to win one day?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, no, after Wimbledon I was feeling terrible, so I was, like, I just need to get through the rest of the year mentally and try to push through. My eyes were set on Australia and trying to win that.

Then, I don't know, like, everything happened on hard court season. D.C. happened. Then Cincinnati happened. You know, even though people were saying I was a contender, all the analysts and all that, I didn't feel like one. I was, like, fluke, I don't know (smiling).

I very often have imposter syndrome, so I didn't have any hopes for anything. After I had a tough match against Laura Siegemund in the first round, I was like, well, I was happy to get out of the first round.

I had a lot of tough matches that week at US Open, or two weeks. I can't say that I confidently felt like I was going to win that tournament literally until I was in the final, and when I woke up the day to play the final, I just felt like no matter what happened I wasn't going to lose that day. It was a weird feeling to have, but I just felt it.

Then what was the second question? The one to win?

US Open was always the main one I wanted to win just because it's in my home country. I'm going to go with French Open just because Paris is my favorite city. Been coming to France since I was 10 years old. It's almost like a second home. I'm going to go with French Open.

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