

# Citi Open

Thursday, August 5, 2021

Washington D.C.

## Coco Gauff

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. What's it like for you to be back on the court after missing the Olympics?**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, it definitely means a lot to be out here on the court even if it's just an XO, just to play in front of the crowd, especially since we are going back to Canada which will be a bubble, so it will be nice just to get some crowd experience and be in the crowd before it's time to go back to the bubbles.

**Q. Welcome back to Washington. It's great to see you again.**

COCO GAUFF: Thank you, great to see you.

**Q. I hope you don't mind if I ask a question related to the Olympics and your inability to play. We all saw the notice you shared and felt deeply for you. I don't want to violate your privacy, but I'm wondering, are you comfortable sharing with us were you vaccinated? Then sort of more importantly, did it affect you physically? I hope you were asymptomatic? What was the journey like?**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, so unfortunately I was supposed to get my vaccine that week, but because of the circumstances I couldn't. But I'm going to get it as soon as I can.

I mean, I was obviously disappointed. I mean, you all know I have talked about the Olympics pretty much since Australian Open when I realized I had a chance to make the team, but, I mean, I think I'm very hopeful I will have many other opportunities to qualify for the team and hopefully actually get to the Olympics before any unforeseen circumstances happen.

But I'm just happy that I didn't have really many symptoms. I was pretty much asymptomatic, I still have a loss of smell, but other than that, A-OK.

**Q. Good to see you back in D.C. I wanted to follow up**

**on a similar question, but curious how tough it is with the travel and everything you guys are doing on tour to get vaccinated and how much that played a role in the schedule when you're in a different city every week, maybe tough to space out the doses? What sort of a challenge was that for you?**

COCO GAUFF: That was actually the main reason why I couldn't get it earlier. When we were in Charleston, my dad took the Johnson & Johnson which is one shot, and I wanted to take it but I was under 18 and wasn't qualified.

My mom took the Pfizer, but obviously she's home longer than I am. Before I left Europe, I was thinking about taking the one shot but I was advised that since I was in Europe for three months, so it was probably not a good idea because the doses would be too spaced out.

So, yeah, I was supposed to get the first shot after that, and then after the Olympics get the second shot. But now I'll get the first one I think after I get back from Cincinnati and then the second one after the US Open.

**Q. Do you know about any availability for the doses at the tournaments? Washington is offering some vaccines, and I think maybe some other subsequent tournaments are doing that too.**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, they definitely have vaccines available. I know WTA always has that resource available for us, but the real problem is getting the dosages spaced out. And obviously going from different country to country is difficult. If it were just within the U.S., I think it would be a lot easier. But, yeah, that's really the main problem we were having regarding that.

**Q. Can you kind of bring us up to speed in how much hitting you have been able to do, how much practicing, and where geographically you have been based and how you're feeling about your readiness?**

COCO GAUFF: So, yeah, obviously when I had COVID I was just at home doing workouts at home, doing swimming, doing something to not be bored.

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Afterwards I have been practicing pretty much twice a day every day, and, yeah, so I have been practicing a lot, and I feel ready for this next hard court swing.

**Q. Did you say that you still have a loss of smell, or was that in the past?**

COCO GAUFF: No, I still have a loss of smell.

**Q. What do you want to work on on your game at the Citi Open? It's obviously not the full tournament, but just to get match play, what do you hope to accomplish with your time here?**

COCO GAUFF: Just definitely to get some points in. I mean, I have only hit with my hitter and haven't hit with many of the girls, except this morning I hit with Jess.

Just to get some points in and get more matches on the hard since we have been from clay to grass so quickly. I have only played on hard like three times in the last, say, couple months outside of my practices the last two weeks. So, yeah.

**Q. You're going into your third US Open coming up, which makes you almost a veteran at this point. I'm wondering how much it helps you having had so much experience on the biggest courts, and what you think of the court assignments you have gotten in your career so far? You have really been, especially at the slams, on the bigger stages pretty frequently so far. How has that helped you? Challenging at all? Your thoughts on that.**

COCO GAUFF: No, definitely I'm very grateful that I'm being put on these big courts, because it gives more people opportunity to see me play for the first time or maybe the second or third time, and I do like the bigger courts. I like it loud in the stands.

So obviously I'm always excited to play on a big court, but also, like, no matter what court I play, as long as I have my dad or one person out there watching me, I think I'll be okay no matter what.

**Q. Have you gotten to do anything in D.C. that's been enjoyable in your time?**

COCO GAUFF: We went to the Washington Nationals game yesterday, which was pretty cool. I'm not so much a baseball person. My brother plays baseball. So, yeah, he really enjoyed it. Tomorrow I don't think I have anything to do other than just small stuff, so we will probably do something there.