

# Miami Open presented by Itaú

Saturday, March 25, 2023

Miami, Florida, USA

## Coco Gauff

### Press Conference



A. POTAPOVA/C. Gauff

6-7, 7-5, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Coco, talk us through your thoughts on the match and also how your opponent played today.

COCO GAUFF: I mean, overall the match, I got myself out of a lot of tough moments in the match. I think that I didn't play. Even when I won the first, was up in the second, I didn't get there by the way I should have been playing.

I felt like, I don't know, I just didn't play how I wanted to today. Really where I got in the match was because of my mentality but not because of the game.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Did you feel you got too defensive as the match went on? She had some good groundstrokes.**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, definitely. I think that's kind of been where I've been messing up in all my matches this year. All the ones I've lost I think I lost because of that. I think it should be more used as a tool in a toolbox than as a weapon.

I think I have to change my mentality in the game about not relying on that too much because I think sometimes I play a little bit too passive because I know I can get to balls.

All the players that are doing well now on tour are big hitters. It's not like I don't have the tools to hit big, because I definitely do, I think it's just more so making that the first decision.

**Q. The 10-minute heat break, it was 2-2, were you tired? Did you change anything?**

COCO GAUFF: I mean, definitely physically I feel like wasn't at my best today. I got a lot of great gets, so it wasn't like that. Definitely I feel like a combination of nerves, playing at home.

Just in general, I don't think it was so much more getting to

balls, I think where I messed up was more on the positioning. I feel like I was really lazy on the positioning.

So, yeah, I think that's something I have to work on.

**Q. You mentioned nerves. It's effectively a home tournament for you. Does it feel different coming out on court when you know you have all those expectations in the arena?**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, it's definitely a difference. I don't know how much it affects me or not because I do feel like, in general, I make things bigger than what they are. I mean, playing at home is great. I don't know how much it affects my game, per se.

In my first-round match, I was a little bit nervous, but I was definitely fine. Today stepping on the court, I wasn't nervous going into the match. Even throughout the match, I wasn't nervous. I feel like it's one of those things that maybe the feeling is there and I'm not recognizing it.

But, yeah, I don't think that's the reason why I lost today. I really think it was a combination of Anastasia playing well and me not stepping into the court when I needed to in certain moments.

**Q. Was it a rhythm thing as well? You had good moments, then moments where it seemed to drop a level.**

COCO GAUFF: I don't know. I feel like I have to go back and watch the match. Generally I tend to see the negative sides of things. I think right now I'm, like, I didn't play good.

Speaking to my coach, obviously he told me there were moments that I played well. 15 minutes here where I'm playing well, then maybe 10 minutes a drop. It's all about not having that drop.

In the last couple matches, even the ones that I've won, I would say, especially in Indian Wells, there were some drops in the match. Probably outside of Noskova match. But the other ones, yeah.

I think I have to recognize those drops and be able to



combat them. It's not a physical thing 'cause physically I feel like I'm one of the best on tour. I think it's more of a mental thing, being engaged in the match.

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**Q. As it's the kind of the close to the first three months of the season with the hard courts, could you assess your start of the season from the Auckland win all the way through here?**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, it was definitely better than last year's start, so that's one thing.

I think I improved throughout the season. I mean, obviously today was a bit of a letdown for me. But I feel like the decisions I'm making on the court are better than the decisions I was making last year into the season.

I feel like now I'm not executing at all, frankly. I think I need to work on the execution part because I am executing them in practice, certain moments in practice. I think it's transferring that into the match.

I think I need to figure out what three things I want to focus on in the match, then maybe go to those points. I feel like at 5-3 I didn't have anything that I was looking for in that game. Normally I do have something.

I think my mind just wasn't all the way in today.

**Q. Looking ahead to the clay season, how much of it do you think will help turning the page a little bit onto a new surface? Does the game simplify for you on clay or is it the same as when you play on hard court in terms of how you approach it?**

COCO GAUFF: I definitely think the game does simplify a little bit. I have a clearer picture of how I want to play on that surface. I definitely think physically usually those are the players that are doing well on clay, so I think that's why it suits me a lot.

Taking in what I've done on the hard court season I think will help me into the clay season because, yeah, like I said, last year I didn't have a great start, and that clay season turned it around.

Even though this tournament didn't go how I wanted, I would say I had a decent start to the year. I'm hoping I can have an even better clay season than last year.

Yeah, I mean, there's one more thing I have, Billie Jean King Cup, then switching to clay. I guess we'll focus on that. I'm going to use BJK Cup to figure out what I need to do on the hard court to get ready for the hard court season after Wimbledon.

