

BNP Paribas Open

Saturday, March 9, 2024

Coco Gauff

Press Conference



C. GAUFF/C. Burel

2-6, 6-3, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Coco, crazy match. What were you telling yourself in that third set to turn it around?

COCO GAUFF: Just trying to trust myself and be aggressive. I really tried to focus on making her run and not letting her attack with her forehand. Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. You said the other day that you don't really feel famous, but when you're in a stadium like that do you feel like that love is for you? Do you feel that's yours?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, definitely is, like, when playing in the States, 100%. You know the crowd is going to be with you unless you're playing another American.

Yeah, they definitely were trying to root me on, especially in the tough moments. I'm glad I was able to come out through at the end.

Q. What was the most fun part of being a teen? If you could change one thing about your teenage years, what would it be?

COCO GAUFF: Okay. The most fun part, hmm, I think just the friends I've made along the way so far. Yeah, I met a lot of cool people. Made a lot of friends. Yeah, the support system I have is great.

One thing I would change, I wouldn't change, like, anything. I guess I would just tell myself just to relax a little bit more. You know, that's probably going to be the thing I need to tell myself my whole life. So just relax and enjoy the ride.

Q. I believe you met Michelle Obama, but who have been the coolest people you've met?

COCO GAUFF: Definitely her, she's at the top of the list. I met Jaden Smith, who was, like, he was like somebody, I

still love his music and everything. Especially when I was younger, I loved him in "Karate Kid" and "Pursuit of Happiness" and stuff. That was really cool.

Yeah, I would say, like, those two are the coolest people for me. Obviously I've met a bunch of cool people, so the list could go on and on (smiling).

Q. Who would you like to have dinner with?

COCO GAUFF: That's a good question. Probably between Beyonce or Rihanna, that's tough. I'm going to go with Rihanna, just because I would love to hear how, like, she started Fenty Beauty, because that was kind of one of the first makeup brands to provide a full shade range of foundation for all skin tones. So, yeah, and how she kind of like navigated the business side of things, which obviously Beyonce has an amazing hair brand that just came out too. So I don't know.

Q. Have you seen the Netflix adaptation of "Avatar: The Last Airbender," how you feel about it, and if you could somehow spin that into a tennis-y answer, by all means?

COCO GAUFF: Spin it into a tennis answer?

Yeah, I really like the adaptation. I watched the first one. I think it's overhated. People are critiquing every little thing. Obviously there's things that could have been improved. I think overall it was an enjoyable series to watch. I'm glad I got renewed for two seasons.

I don't really know how to bring tennis into the answer, because it's so far-fetched. I will say if I could choose one thing to bend, I would choose water.

Q. Coco, you were just talking about Rihanna and Beyonce and the business side of their careers. Are you starting to look towards those angles? If so, in what way?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I wouldn't say I necessarily started. Like, I haven't done any brainstorming or anything like that. But it's definitely something I want to do later on in my



career.

You know, I don't know in what world that would be in. I mean, yeah, I can't tell you. I love beauty and fashion, so maybe something in that world. But, like, again, I haven't really brainstormed. I'm not planning on starting anything anytime soon. I think I just want to focus on tennis.

But I would say towards the later half of my career, I don't know what the later half will look like, but maybe, like, closer to 30, it might be something I actually try to set.

Q. With 20 around the corner, is it difficult to be able to celebrate that milestone while you're in the middle of a tournament or have you got things planned, like, a small party or dinner out? What's in mind?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, it's always difficult. I really haven't celebrated that much since I've been playing professional tennis, just because this tournament always falls on my birthday. Sometimes we go to dinner, but, you know, don't know when I'm going to play. So yeah, we'll just -- we'll do a dinner but probably not on the actual day. Maybe at the end of the tournament. I'm not a huge, like, birthday, like, I obviously love celebrating, but, you know, I'm not, like, the partying, go-out type. I don't have anything planned.

Yeah, probably a dinner or something.

Q. Many of us have seen the beautiful cover of "Vogue." My question is, were you on the cover for "Time Magazine" when they celebrated you? And also, what other magazine covers have you been on?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I'll be on the cover, comes out maybe later in the year. I don't know when. For "Vogue," yeah, we shot that in December, so it was, like, cool to see it finally come out. It was obviously a big secret to keep.

Other magazine covers, I would say those two are probably the only ones I can think of. I did do ESPN, which is really cool. Then when I was younger I did my local Delray Beach magazine when I was probably 13 or 14. That's the only one I actually have blown up in my room.

But I don't think I'll get the "Vogue" one blown up. I think I'll just get the magazine and keep it somewhere. Yeah, and honestly, I didn't choose to get the young one blown up. That was my mom, and she put it in my room, but I don't think I would have put it in my room. It's weird looking at pictures of myself in that aspect.

But yeah, I can't think of anything else off the top of my head. But I will say one future cover I want to do, I don't think, not any time soon because I feel like two is enough

for this year, maybe in a few years I would love to do "Essence." I think that's just really prominent, especially in the Black community. I'll probably hopefully get an opportunity to do that in the future.

Q. You like fashion. I'm wondering if you've ever been to fashion week out here in Palm Springs? It happens at the same time as Miami, I think.

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, no, I've never been to any fashion week, let alone here. I am lucky I have gotten invited a couple of times but it's always been, like, during a big tournament. Yeah, obviously tennis is the first priority over everything. Hopefully in the future maybe I'll take a tournament off and something to do something like that, but right now tennis is definitely the priority for all of that, but I do like looking at the looks online.

Q. When you have a tough opening round like that, is it your experience that helps in some way that you survived it?

COCO GAUFF: Well, honestly in the past, yeah. I mean, the last tournaments I have done well usually I have a tough opening first round, especially with the biggest one was US Open.

And, yeah, I think for me it's just getting through that match definitely meant a lot. Could have easily thrown in the towel. But honestly, I was just telling myself, like, win or lose, I don't want to have any regrets on the court. I want to be like I gave myself the best opportunity to win, and I did that.

Am I proud of how I played? Not really, to be honest. But the fight, I am proud of. I am eager to improve. I think it wasn't my best tennis at all. I think I just have a lot of improvement that I can do to get better.

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