

# BNP Paribas Open

Saturday, March 8, 2025

## Coco Gauff

Press Conference



C. GAUFF/M. Uchijima

6-4, 3-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Coco, quite an epic match today. Talk us through your thoughts on the match and thoughts on your opponent. She played quite well.

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, it was a tough match. I didn't play as well as I would like to, but full credit to her. She stepped it up when she needed to.

But, yeah, just happy to get through it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. So from a tough match like this early in the tournament, are there data points that you're taking away, things you want to work on to adjust for this specific tournament now this week?**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I mean, obviously serve, just like getting more serves in the court. Off the ground I felt pretty good, honestly. I think if I just double-faulted less it could have probably been a straight-set match. I felt off the ground I felt like I was dictating more of the rallies.

But, yeah, I mean, coming off a tough couple back-to-back losses, I guess it's just taking it more as a positive maybe than if I had a couple good weeks last two tournaments.

**Q. I know you have only just recently got off the court, but can you explain why so many unforced errors and why so many double faults?**

COCO GAUFF: I mean, the unforced errors, I had to go bigger towards the end of the match, and even in the middle, because I felt like she would dictate so it's kind of just take your chances. Then doubles, I've been in the practice of trying to fix things on my serve.

I don't know. It was just an up-and-down process. It's tough out there. But, I mean, if I'm able to win matches playing kind of like D tennis, then it gives me confidence just when I'm able to mesh things together like I did earlier

this season.

**Q. Obviously a complicated day. Was the two losses, are those in your mind as you're playing the match, or are you just trying to play point to point? After it was over, did you go to the practice court and hit some serves like you often do?**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, for the first one. I mean, yeah, it's in your head kind of at the start of the tournament, honestly, because I don't even remember the last time I have done that.

Yeah, but not so necessarily in the match. I mean, once it's over, you're like, okay, finally it feels good to be back in this position. Today was a longer match. I think it would have been more detrimental to go back out and hit serves than kind of benefit to it.

But usually, yeah, I'll go back, but I think it was a 2-hour, 30-minute match. I've spent enough time on the court.

**Q. It's a long match and many ups and downs. But if you pick one specific games or, like, a point, what would it be? Also, what is your impression on today's opponent? Did she remind you of any other players?**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I mean, I think I returned decently well today. I felt like I was pretty aggressive on her second serves especially and kind of taking my chances.

She doesn't really remind me of anyone. I played her in doubles. I don't know. She kind of is very steady off the ground and has a pretty good forehand, likes to run around it. There's no player that comes to mind that reminds me of her.

But she's obviously a great player and she's had some great wins. The Australian Open, she was close to beating Andreeva and beat Emma in the first round, so she's -- I didn't realize how young she was. She's only 23. For some reason thought she was a bit older.

Yeah, I'm sure we'll face each other in the future and she'll keep being ranked higher if she continues to play well.



**Q. Obviously each year you have your birthday during Indian Wells.**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah.

**Q. Jumping ahead to a few days, I wanted to ask, you have had eventful season, some really big wins, changes in your support team, Olympic experience. What have you learned in this past year? How have you grown as a person?**

COCO GAUFF: I think just accepting the highs and lows. I think sometimes in sports you want to just stay on the high and kind of ride that wave, but especially with this sport, a season as long as tennis, it's kind of impossible to always be on that high wave, and there's going to be some low moments I think. Just trying to stick through those tough moments and get better through them.

You know, not feeling like, you know, the rest of the season is going to go that way. Yeah, I feel like I'm able to turn it around. It's happened before. I think it just takes one match or two matches to kind of get that confidence back.

**Q. We were sitting close today, and it didn't look like you were having much fun today. I know it was a tough day for you, but generally, so many of us remember you as an exuberant teenager. Now that you're ranked and there's so much pressure, is it harder to find the joy and exuberance of playing?**

COCO GAUFF: Not really. I think today is just one of those days you just don't feel great on the court. So it's kind of like frustrating in that way, because I was having such great practices this week.

Yeah, I mean, obviously I guess some moments I'm showing my happiness a bit more than others. Today is just one of those not-feel-good days at all. I don't know, you kind of just want to get better and move on from it.

But yeah, as I get older, honestly I feel like I love the sport more than when I was 17, 18, just because I felt more pressure then because how I just came and started.

But yeah, I think just today is just one of those days where I just did not feel great on the court and because of the last couple of weeks, I'm pretty hard on myself. I just wanted to do better.

**Q. Your next match, are you aware of your next match?**

COCO GAUFF: I think I play the winner of, is it Bencic and Amanda?

**Q. Sakkari.**

COCO GAUFF: Oh, my gosh, I don't know what draw I'm looking at. I never look at the draw, but I don't know why I thought it was that.

**Q. You played her here last year. So what do you remember from last year's match, and how are you going to prepare the next 48 hours to face her here again?**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, last year I felt like she was playing pretty aggressive. You know, every time I play her, it's a tough match. She's a very athletic player. Big on both sides. Same with the serve.

I mean, last year, I mean, that was such a long kind of day. It was rainy and we stopped and started so many times.

But I think for me I guess my keys will just be to focus on my end of the court and accept that she's going to hit some great shots. She's a great player. I think just trying to focus on my end and be ready and know that it's going to be a physical match.

**Q. You seemed to be having a lot of luck with getting into the net in this match. When you're going into the matches, is there, like, a certain number or certain percentage of points where you want to see at the end of the match where you got in, make that a priority?**

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I do think typically I have, like, a high winning percentage when I'm at the net. So I guess, yes, I do try to get in. I guess I don't necessarily think about how many times I get in. Yeah, I think for me today I feel like I won most of the net points.

Because she was kind of a scrambler like getting to so many balls, I felt like it was just easier, especially in these conditions where there sometimes can be wind, it's a little bit easier just to take the ball out of the air or volley it.

Yeah, I like coming to the net. I try to win at least 70% of those points, but it's not something that's actively in my mind where I try to rush in. I just think if the opportunity is right, then I try to go in.

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