

# Billie Jean King Cup

Monday, 6 November 2023

Team France

Captain Julien Benneteau

Varvara Gracheva

Caroline Garcia

Alize Cornet

Kristina Mladenovic

Clara Burel

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, Team France. Thank you for joining us. We will begin with questions in English.

**Q. Just a question for Julien. Could I ask how you feel preparations have gone? You have a full team. How have preparations been coming into this tournament?**

CAPTAIN JULIEN BENNETEAU: Yeah, so far the preparation is very good. All the players are ready and fit. If I need them to go on court, everybody is ready to go on court on Wednesday, which is, for me, a very good thing.

That's why I asked to my staff and to the players when we came here, so yes, for the moment, I have nothing to complain.

**Q. Would you mind just giving your thoughts on the opposition? You have an all-European group. Would you mind saying a few words about that?**

CAPTAIN JULIEN BENNETEAU: Yeah, Italy, we lost to them last year, so we know that it will be a difficult tie, the first tie of the group, so very important also in this format to begin very well, to start very well in the group.

They have a mix of experience and young players. We know that they're going to play with a lot of passion and they will fight a lot, as us.

We will see on Friday against Germany. They have experience in No. 1 with Tatjana Maria. We know her very well because she's married with a French.



Between these two matches, Germany will play Italy also on Thursday. It can change a lot of things. The first thing for us is to be focused on Wednesday against Italy.

**Q. Alize, you always speak so eloquently what it means to play for France. How excited are you to be back in French colors this week?**

ALIZE CORNET: It's always a true honor to be part of the team. First of all, because we have a lot of fun all the time, as you can see. We are always laughing and having a great time together.

This is the kind of weeks that I'm waiting all year long, because I know I'm going to have a great time with good people, going to have good practices, and we are going to give everything we have. So that's the first thing.

Then playing for your country, playing under your flag is something very special that we don't have the chance to do every week. Tennis is an individual sport, and being with the girls and being supported by the whole team is very, very special. So I don't get bored of it. Actually, I even appreciate it more and more throughout the year, and I'm very glad to be back.

**Q. Caroline, flywithcaro, did that begin at the Billie Jean King Cup maybe?**

CAROLINE GARCIA: Yes, it did.

**Q. Are we going to see it a few more times maybe in the next few days?**

CAROLINE GARCIA: Well, I hope so. That's the goal. The whole goal is to win the match just to do the celebration. That's it (smiling).

**Q. That aside, how would you assess your year? This time last year, you were at the WTA Finals. You had a great time there, of course. A year later, how do you feel the last 12 months have been?**

CAROLINE GARCIA: Yeah, I mean, obviously the year has been very challenging, on and off court, the results are



not the results I wanted and I worked for.

But sometimes it's up and down, and I did the best I can. I did the best I can so far. I try hard but not always paying off or turning on my side.

The last couple of weeks of the year the season have been better and some improvement to take and to keep as confident for a good offseason and good beginning of the year.

The Billie Jean King Cup is the last challenge of the season, and I'm really happy to be part of the team, and hopefully I will be able to help the team to do something well.

Yeah, after, a new year is starting, and I will do the best I can again.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports