

China Open

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Beijing, China

**Chen
Zhang
Graff
Sun
Liu
Yang**

Press Conference

Tournament Organizing Committee

THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, we're coming to the end of the 2024 China Open. I would like that thank all the friends of the media for their presence at the press conference.

We will have Secretary General Chen give us a summary of the 2024 China Open.

CHEN: Dear friends of the media, good afternoon. With the support of all walks of life, the 2024 China Open has been successfully held in Beijing. The success of this tournament not only brings great performances to the tennis fans, but also brings festivities to the National Day holiday. It is also bringing passion and a vibrant atmosphere to Beijing.

The China Open has received a lot of support, including from the friends of the media. On behalf of the organizing committee, I would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all of you.

The 2024 China Open is coming to a close tonight. According to our tradition, I will provide a brief summary of this tournament.

Number one. Top players have been providing great performance, including highlights from Team China. This year we had 380 players from 48 countries and regions coming into Beijing. From the WTA, 158 players, the ATP, 72 players, including Grand Slam champions, for example, Alcaraz, Sinner, Medvedev, Sabalenka, Gauff, as well as Osaka. Tennis fans have been looking forward to their



great performances.

We also are seeing a record high from Team China, reaching 18. From the ITF side we also have 107 under-18 junior players. The youngest is 15 years old. We have 73 Chinese players. 32% of these players are of foreign nationalities.

Including the finals today, this tournament provides in total 469 matches to the public, among which the WTA is 160, the ATP 62, and ITF 230.

We're also seeing a new record in terms of the length of men's and women's singles. For example, on September 26th, Chinese player Gao Xinyu played a three-setter with a Spanish player Tormo. The duration of that match was 4 hours 15 minutes, the longest match played in the China Open women's singles.

On October 2nd, the men's final between Alcaraz and Sinner was 3 hours 21 minutes, the longest men's final in the history of this tournament.

Also the performance of Team China had great attention of this tournament. Zheng Qinwen made a deep run into the semifinals of this tournament. Another Chinese player into the top four, 35-year-old Zhang Shuai with a wild card had a four-match winning streak. For the third time, she made it into the top eight of the China Open.

In terms of men's sing, Buyunchaokete with a wild card defeated the fourth seed Rublev in the third round. Also he made it into the top four in the China Open as a wild card player. He had the best performance among the Chinese players.

Number two. Tennis fever during the National Day holiday with a record high from ticket revenue. We saw more spectators in the 2024 China Open. The first weekend, September 28th, there were 39,000 spectators in the tennis park, a new record high in a single day. On October 1st, the tickets for the Diamond Court, Lotus Court, including grounds passes, were sold out. On that day, the number of spectators was 44,000, a record high of single-day spectators.



On October 2nd, the men's final, as well as Zheng Qinwen's performance, the spectators that day reached 29,000. There were 13,000 spectators in the Diamond Court. During the whole tournament, around 300,000 spectators, a 50% increase compared to last year.

There were five single days in which we saw more than 25,000 spectators. As of the 5th of October, there were about 140,000 tennis fans coming from outside Beijing, as well as 13,000 spectators coming from other countries into Beijing.

In terms of ticket sales, on opening day, it was twice as the same period last year. On the first day, the finals of the men's were sold out. Also it was really hard to get a ticket to the women's final.

Two days before the first day of matches, the ticket revenue was double from last year. As of 11:00 in the morning, the 1st of October, tickets were sold out for the duration.

The total revenue of the ticket received 80 million Yuan, a record high of the China Open, a 60% increase compared to last year.

Number three. Hot topics on social media as well as record high in broadcasting viewership.

In terms of media reports, we have 91 media outlets, including 22 international media outlets. 397 reporters in total covered the tournament. As of the 5th of October, there were 379,871 articles and posts. It's seven times as much compared to the same period of last year. Within China, media reports covered 352, 701, articles and posts, a record high for the China Open.

On social media, there were 415 hot topics, 149 hot topics on Weibo, exceeding that of all the four Grand Slams. On October 2nd, #ZhengQinwenAnisimova became the number one hot topic of the day. The semifinal of Zheng Qinwen became a hot topic on the 4th of October. It was the number one hot topic for nine hours.

In terms of television broadcasting, the China Open overlapped with the WTT. As of the 5th of October, there were 160 broadcasting TV hours. On September 30th, October 4th, October 5th, Zheng Qinwen's matches reached record highs in terms of TV audiences. Also we are seeing new record highs from the CCT.com as well as Migu Media.

Number four. Empowerment from technology. We're seeing green transportation servicing the China Open.

We're also seeing new technologies being implemented in the China Open. Coming into the center, for example, you can see the service center, accessibility services, locker rooms, maternity rooms. Also on the west square, the spectators can sit in the recliners to watch the matches on the 360 degree big screen.

Also we are seeing an upgrade in terms of food and beverage services and spectator experiences. In the 2024 China Open, we have introduced 30 food and beverage brands, as well as 44 food and beverage outlets. We are seeing higher quality food in the five different areas of the food and beverage building.

To facilitate parking issues, we're working with the Beijing Public Transport Group. We have been providing 14 days of free shuttle services to the spectators so that spectators can reach the tennis center from five private parking areas.

Using a new technology, we are providing seamless experiences for the spectators. Number one, we have the WeChat application so that users can book their tickets, as well as book dinners, souvenirs, on the WeChat application platform. The application also provides real-time information to the users so that we can improve interactivity with the users.

Facial recognition technology has been implemented. Through the application, the spectators can actually use their ID cards as well as ID information to reduce their time entering the venue.

The application of autonomous driving vehicles. These two vehicles are parked in the center of the square, selling souvenirs and ice cream.

In terms of green transportation, we're using WeChat accounts and applications to publish the most up-to-date information. We're also working with the Beijing Transportation Management Bureau for the 2024 China Open guidance video tutorials so that people understand the concept of green transportation. In terms of public transportation, we also have night shuttle service after midnight.

Between September 26th and October 2nd, which was the peak period of the China Open, subway line eight was extended in its operation hours till midnight. According to the statistics, the subway was the most preferred transportation for the fans.

During the matches, the peak capacity of the number eight line, the subway station had 336,000 people pass through. The peak reached was October 1st. There were 35,000 people using the subway, two times the daily capacity.

We're seeing strong tennis culture within the tennis park, showcasing traditional arts as well as the culture of Beijing.

The tennis park focuses on cultivating a strong tennis culture, providing new ways of consumerism for tennis. The pillows and key chains were very popular among the fans. There was a time where we were short of supply of such souvenirs.

The sponsors, partners, have been using new innovative ideas in their activities. Different brands have been creating interactive activities. More than 10,000 spectators participated in these activities.

A new upgrade of the food and beverage experience. A lot of these outlets are using innovative concepts in their products. For example, tennis-shaped ice cream, desserts. In addition to being delicious, these are also interesting products for the spectators.

The China Open is also promoting tennis concepts to promote cohesive and harmonious relations. All of these revenues coming from these philanthropic activities will be used in junior tennis events. This is how we can contribute our part to the tennis culture among the public.

Consumption levels in 2024 reached 25 million, a 40% increase compared to 2023. We are committed in promoting Beijing culture in terms of player activities.

The player party was held in the Prince Residence in Beijing. They appreciated the traditional instrumental performance as well as Chinese traditional dances. They also experienced sugar paintings as well as a lacquered fans.

Alcaraz and Gauff visited the Forbidden City as well as the Great Wall. Badosa visited Zhongshan Park in downtown Beijing. Novarro visited a local community in Beijing. The players were also able to appreciate the pictures of Beijing. Through the lens of the media, the scenery of Beijing is showcased around the world.

Master Wu Zhongfeng also has the carved the champions' names on the cup. Also the players were able to sit on the chairs of Chinese characteristics. It shows the special characteristics of the Chinese culture. Alcaraz, after winning the championship, took championship photos on the chair.

During the China Open, there was a specific historical cultural exhibition showcasing the special characteristics of Beijing during this exhibition. We also invited Olympic champions, including Ma Long and Fan Zhendong into the coin toss ceremony.

The feedback of different players, as well as different stakeholders. As of now, we had 44 press conferences, 273 interviews. We heard positive feedback from Sinner, Alcaraz, Medvedev and Osaka. Also Chinese players including Zheng Qinwen, Wang Xinyu, Jerry Shang and Buyunchaokete.

In the post match interviews, Alcaraz as well as other players provided positive feedback regarding the upgrading of the facilities of the China Open. Positive feedback came from the media as well as spectators. We will follow up with these comments and feedback after this tournament.

So that was a summary of this tournament. We'd like to thank you for your support. We look forward to the 2025 China Open. We hope you enjoy the finals today. Thank you very much.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. We are seeing highlights from Team China, for example, Zheng Qinwen and Buyunchaokete are in the final four. We are also seeing a record high of the spectators. From your perspective, how can we further promote the tennis culture, attract more people to pay attention to tennis? What are some of the new measures you are taking?

LIU: I would like to thank you for your attention to Team China as well as thank you for your support of the tournament.

In terms of culture, sport belongs to a type of cultural activity. From the tennis center's perspective, we have been supporting the development of tennis in China. I think this has been integrated with the development of the China Open.

From the bureau's perspective, from the tennis center's perspective, we would like to take advantage of this opportunity. We can see that starting from the Paris Olympics, the great performance of Team China, the record-breaking performance of Chinese tennis players. We have seen great performances.

Ever since, we have seen tennis fever. We are also seeing highlights of Chinese players in this tournament. Of course, we will take this opportunity to promote tennis.

In terms of upgrades and promotions, of course we will focus on the training of the tennis athletes as well as coaches. Only if we can upgrade the performance of those professional players will we be able to attract more people focusing on tennis to participate in tennis as a sport. The

professional tournament will be a very important level in this process of promotion as well as development.

In terms of the new measures of promotion, we would like to focus on the leisure activities in the local level in terms of supply and demand. We want to devise good policies, good grassroots activities as well as the upgrade of the facilities so that we can provide better venues, atmospheres for tennis activities at the grassroots level, we can provide better public services to these activities.

The tournaments will play a leading role in attracting the attention of the public. We will continue with these tournaments, upgrading the capacity of these tournaments so that we can attract more attention from the public, so people can actually enjoy how tennis can enrich our lives.

Also we want to put more focus on junior development. For example, we should start with children. We would like to enhance training, education at the school level. Also we want to encourage more children to play tennis so that we can cultivate a full lifecycle of tennis training so that children at a very young age have access to the tennis culture.

This is why within the Diamond Court we have seen logos like this: Small tennis, big future, to encourage more children into tennis.

On these two aspects, we would like to see a virtuous cycle of tennis tournaments so that we can facilitate a long-term development of tennis. With your attention and support, the support from different aspects of society, we will be able to see a brighter future for tennis in China.

Q. We just mentioned the record-breaking TV ratings of the China Open, including the big screen and small screen. Any upgrades in terms of broadcasting technologies as well as the experience?

SUN: We have three broadcasting vehicles. These are upgraded technologies in supporting broadcasting technologies. We're using these vehicles collecting the signals of seven courts. This is a big upgrade compared to previous years.

In terms of the Diamond Court, we also have seen upgrades in equipment, 22 positions, ultra-steady broadcasting technology and platforms.

We also have movie-quality broadcasting equipment. This started from the Olympics so that we can actually capture the very minute experiences and details within the pictures. This is what we have been upgrading in terms of movie-quality machines. That was an upgrade for the

Diamond Court.

In terms of the Lotus Court, we've been installing 8K machines so these can be broadcasted on the TV as well as the outer courts so that we can expand the coverage of these matches on different courts. In terms of the Lotus Court, we covered 35 matches, up to 70 hours with really great effect.

We do not have the latest numbers in terms of the viewership, but we are seeing and we believe this is a record-breaking number. This is a really good improvement and showcases the capabilities of our technologies. That was the big screen terminal.

In terms of small screens, we are also seeing upgraded technologies. We can capture the details in the ongoing process. Of course, we're also showing what the players were doing in the gym as well as behind-the-scenes videos. That footage could be shown on the smaller screens. These are interesting details that people can see.

We are putting a small team together to upgrade the small screen experience. Also we have 22 people sitting at the back end editing the videos on the smaller screens.

All of these were shown in the CCTVvideo.com, as well as our applications so that we can show more content outside what we can show on the traditional TV terminal.

I was looking at the numbers yesterday. There were six million viewership for the videos on the CCTVvideos.com. We have been enhancing our efforts in this regard.

We're also putting more people on the short video so that we have people working on-site so they can make the videos on-site with very quick turnaround. This is a great strategy supported by the tennis center as well as the central government.

Looking into the future, next year we really want to upgrade the technology because we went through the Grand Slams, the media services. I think they have more diversified services. I think next year we can further improve our short videos so that we can have wider coverage as well as improve in the larger and smaller screens so that even commentators from foreign countries will be more attracted to these matches. We look forward to these upgraded experiences.

Q. We have seen this China Open tournament has been very popular. The Chaoyang District is trying to build a tennis specialty district within Beijing. What are your plans in this regard?

YANG: We are working hard to improve higher quality tennis venues so that we can service the tennis fans in the district. Our goal is to build more than one thousand venues for tennis. For now we have around 700 venues.

Every year we have 20-odd tournaments, attracting more than 30,000 people. Also we focus on how tennis activities can be integrated into school curriculum. We are following ITF standards. We have classes in traditional schools. We have six trial programs for tennis in these schools, which has received high recognition from the local government.

In schools, students would have standard tennis training in their daily curriculum. We also have new players registered through the local administration. We have seen 125 users being registered as new professional tennis players.

We are seeing a deepening of tennis culture in the local government. We have this tennis festival being held recently in Chaoyang District. With one tennis ball, you can attract the general public. The opening ceremony was held in the Liangma River of Chaoyang District. We still have a promotion on this Liangma River to promote tennis culture.

We are trying to use tennis activity to attract and also to make a greater bonding of the general public in the different neighborhoods of the Chaoyang District.

We also have been holding a CBD elite tournament to attract the tennis players of the Chaoyang District. We are trying to promote tennis culture through these activities. With the success of the China Open, more people from the Chaoyang District will participate in tennis.

Q. We have seen four tiers of sponsorship. What are some of the highlights in terms of sponsorship relations? What is their feedback? This is the last day of this tournament. What kind of positive feedback have you heard from the sponsors? Also we have been seeing upgraded experiences for consumers as well as food and beverage. What are some of the new measures this year? What kind economic impact can you see in this tournament?

ZHANG: I would like to thank you for your support from the friends of the media so we can see a greater impact of the China Open.

There are many breakthroughs we can see in terms of this year. In terms of commercial activities, your first question refers to our highlights and new measures.

This is the 21st year of the China Open, the 18th China

Open. We have these tiers, one plus three plus eight plus ten. These are four tiers of the sponsors. This is the first time we have seen the full sponsorship on these four tiers. This is thanks to what we have been doing in the past years as well as the support of the sponsors and also thanks to the great performances in the Olympics this year.

In terms of our relations with our sponsors, there are several highlights:

The sponsors coming into the China Open are not only seeing this tournament as a platform of showcasing their products, but also they're trying to integrate the DNA of tennis with the culture of their companies.

For example, China Peoples Insurance, this is a new partner, a new sponsor. We have this philanthropic activity with the insurance industry because the insurance industry holds a social responsibility for the philanthropic development in China. With non-profit activities, we can promote tennis as well as people's awareness of insurance, as well as their responsibilities, products and services. This kind of long-term relationship is one way to integrate their DNA with tennis development.

We have been also traditional China culture, innovative traditions. For example, the cup of China as well as the chairs. We can see how honor is being represented in the traditional Chinese culture in terms of the design of the cup of China.

We are not only transmitting the Chinese culture but also we are integrating the corporate culture with the China Open. So this is also another highlight of this tournament.

We have seen a large number of sponsors promoting this tournament, as well as purchasing advertisement segments on different social media platforms in order to promote this tournament as well as their own services.

We also have been working with the China Media Group in broadcast television as well as the promotion of the tournament information, scoring information showcasing as well as the symbols and logos of these companies and the sponsors.

On the surface you can see these are commercial trials and activities. On a deeper level, we can see it's a more integrated, more in-depth collaboration between our tournaments with corporate sponsorship.

There are different levels. There are the state level brands, local level brands, as well as international brands. The integration of the three levels will be really helpful in facilitating the brands. Also we can have wider coverage



of the users on different platforms. This will be a new trend for the China Open in our effort was in the future.

This can be expanded into the attention from the companies and sponsors. In this tournament, I've talked to many leaders of the companies. A lot of the companies are trying to have a better understanding of the duration as well as number of sponsors of the China Open. They are trying to understand if there are other tennis tournaments they can participate in.

From their interest and their requests, we can see that tennis has become a new trend for corporate sponsorship. This is one way for them to promote commercial operations.

Before we said that tennis was a niche sport but now it has become a more public participation sport. The promotion of tennis relies on commercial support and activities. I believe tennis will become a concentration of commercial sponsorship and activities.

Q. We saw many international players actually visit the landmark buildings or significant spots here in Beijing. This year's players party. In terms of your communication or talk with international players, what do they think of their stay over the past fortnight?

GRAFF: Last year many players came to China Open for the first time. They brought maybe one coach and one official with them. Suddenly the positive feedback from last year meant that this year suddenly they were bringing two, three, four, five, six, seven. When we went to the airport to meet Carlos Alcaraz, he came with seven people.

The interest for the China Open and for Beijing as a city had grown during the years. Players were telling each other and the families that you have to come to the China Open because there are so many things to do. The players were telling their friends and family that you have to come to the China Open because there are so many things to do. The group grew. There were players that were having seven rooms in the hotel. They were very, very excited to come here, to see all the Chinese landmarks, especially the landmarks in Beijing.

We could see how the players enjoyed to come to different landmarks. We have a perfect picture or a movie from Carlos Alcaraz and Coco Gauff when they went to the Forbidden City. Those pictures went viral all over the world. People were talking about how beautiful it was, how nicely they dressed.

The players party was another new thing for this year. We went to the Prince's Mansion. The players knew

immediately when they come there that they were in China. The architecture, the way people dressed, the color, the lighting, everything. There were so many activities for the players. They really enjoyed the new site for the players party.

I think the biggest problem for next year is probably we need another hotel because the groups are growing so much, there are so many players who want to come to China, especially come to Beijing and see all the attractions here.

Other tournaments, players come and they lay on the beach in the morning, they play tennis in the afternoon. In China they come here and do sightseeing, do culture in the morning, or they do culture when they are off. Their parents or their friends, they do culture every day.

We can see all the landmarks and attractions. The China experience is something that the players really look forward to. Many players, of course, they talk about the Chinese food, they talk about the Peking duck, about the hot pot, all the specialties that they cannot get in other countries. Of course the Chinese tea, it tastes different in China because it's done in the Chinese way. The players appreciate it.

I think the tournament has a tremendous attraction for the players, not only because we have the beautiful site, the National Tennis Center, all the improvements that have been done, but also Beijing is a city, a fascinating city, because of the culture, because of the heritage.

I think the future looks tremendously bright for the China Open.

THE MODERATOR: Due to time constraints, seeing two finals today, that will conclude the press conference. Thank you very much.

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