

Wuhan Open

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

Wuhan, Hubei, China

Coco Gauff

Press Conference



C. GAUFF/V. Tomova

6-1, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Coco, could you comment on today's match, please.

COCO GAUFF: I'm really happy with how I played today. I only got to practice once before this tournament started. So just happy to get through.

That's kind of probably how I'll feel every day this week. It's probably going to be the same answer (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. What has the last couple of days been like for you in terms of recovery? How are you feeling right now?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I'm feeling, I mean, fine physically. Well, both mentally and physically I'm a little tired, if I'm being honest. When I got on the court, I felt fine.

I think I just love to compete and I love to win. It's one of those things when you step out, you're going to try your best. I have zero expectations this week, so it's kind of one of those rare opportunities where there's no pressure. Every match you're just happy to get through, honestly.

Q. You said that you've kind of viewed these few weeks in China almost as practice weeks.

COCO GAUFF: Yeah.

Q. That last week the title came almost as a surprise to you and your team.

COCO GAUFF: Yeah.

Q. If you had to allot percentages to tennis as to how much of it is psychological versus technical versus physical, how would you allot those percentages?

COCO GAUFF: Hmm... Obviously, I think it weighs

differently week per week. I mean, I would say like 60% psychological and maybe 20% physical and 20% tactical. I think a lot of it is on the mental side.

Honestly, it varies week by week. It depends on the player. Some players struggle more on physicality. Maybe they're mentally fresh, but they might be going through some injuries and things.

But I do think the tactical side of things is not as big as people may think it is because of the fact you just have to play your game.

Yeah, there's some things that matter that your opponents do, but I take the perspective of you'll figure it out in the match, especially if you never played someone before, and even more especially if you played someone many times because of the fact they'll play differently almost each time, unless they've won every single time. Then it's different. If it's been a back and forth, they play you differently every time.

Q. As you said, without pressure like Beijing, you weren't expecting anything. It's easy to say, I want to replicate that when it's a tournament under pressure. Is it wishful thinking or are there things you can implement from this situation?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I think for me, I can learn a lot from experiences, knowing that I put pressure on some tournaments maybe that didn't need the pressure and realized that I'm here and I'm fine.

Yeah, I think it's just a learning experience. Obviously, I think in my career, the tournaments I've won, maybe with the exception of Auckland, because I did have pressure as defending champion, the ones I've won, I didn't not expect it, but I kind of went into it with no pressure.

Yeah, but it's easier said than done obviously (smiling).

Q. Fans in China are known to be super passionate and super creative with the gifts they give players. Have you had any super memorable interactions or received anything cool either here or in Beijing?



COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I've gotten a lot of gifts in Beijing, a lot of stuffed animals, a lot of pandas. Yeah, I think that was a cool one.

Also there was like an old man, I posted my story, he had my name holding like a pink sign with my name, it had hearts and stars and stuff. I just wasn't expecting it. I've never had that from like an older fan before. Usually young ones.

I remember him very clearly. I saw him. In my final in Beijing, I saw him when I walked on the court. Afterwards I went to sign it. Yeah, he just wanted it to be signed. He was very appreciative of it. I don't know. It just meant a lot to me to see maybe someone a lot older supporting me and coming out with the sign. I don't know. I think that was the most memorable.

Also after my final, there was a lady, she was saying, I love you, I love you, over and over, like screaming. The security guards were laughing. I was laughing because of how enthusiastic she was.

The fans have been very passionate. Honestly, the place I've come I've gotten the most gifts, most of the time you'll get like bracelets from some fans in the U.S. U.S. and here I think I get the most gifts.

But here you can tell, like, they really take time to give you the gifts and see what you like. I know they know I liked stuffed animals, so I've gotten a lot of those.

Q. I know it's still really new, the relationship with you and Matt. I was curious, are there any things he said to you or observations he's had about your game that has brought you a new perspective?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, Matt is a very relaxed, calm guy. He keeps the view of the perspective of tennis. Right now he's helping me tweak some things in my game.

I think the balance between him and JC has been a very good balance. They're both kind of very similar people in a way. They're both very relaxed. Maybe slightly different approaches. At the end they both want the same thing. We agree on the same things to work on.

Yeah, I think it's been a good balance of just having not necessarily different opinions, because they kind of say the same things, but to me, I get the same voice, but I'm sure they're bouncing different ideas off each other.

It's nice that they communicate really well because when they come to me it's one voice.

Q. You had a Twitter exchange with a rude user earlier this week. You responded beautifully. You talked about the qualities of being a child.

COCO GAUFF: Yes.

Q. You credit your grandmother telling you to approach difficult situations with niceness and understanding.

COCO GAUFF: Yeah.

Q. To what extent do these sort of exchanges test you?

COCO GAUFF: You know, you could just stay silent. There's sometimes the ones that you respond back. For me, I'm never going to be, like, nasty to someone. You think it. But I believe that the energy you put into the world. I try to put in good energy.

For me, I realize that you can never make everybody happy. There was a lot of comments on Twitter about, like, how I've only 250s. That's not true. I won a slam, I won a 1000, I won a 500. I won another one a couple days ago. I posted on my story, Here's another (indiscernible) 250.

Yeah, for me it's just like you'll never satisfy anybody. We ended up ending it on good terms. It wasn't like a feud. The person thought I was immature. Honestly, I approach almost every tournament in the mindset of me as a kid. How I approached Beijing, I was like I want to approach this how I would play tennis as a kid.

Sometimes as I'm becoming more of an adult, I think I realize or lose my inner child in a way. The world can be harsh. I guess as a child, I didn't recognize how harsh it can be. Sometimes I try to go back into that mindset and realize at the end of the day this is my dream now, and it was my dream as a kid. If I don't want to do it for myself now, I can definitely do for myself then.

Q. You like Serena and Venus Williams as your role models. You won a championship in China. Venus also won a championship in Wuhan at the age of 35. Do you have extra motivation to win a title here? Do you have any exchanges off court with them?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I saw that Venus won. I was walking on the Walk of Fame here. Yeah, last week I saw that I was, like, the first American since Serena to win in Beijing. I don't know what the stats are here, but it would be really cool to do it here, especially both of them being my idols.

Yeah, I didn't realize she was 35 when she won that title. It's pretty impressive. No, both of them I have great exchanges with off the court. Serena has always been somebody I've looked up to on TV and in person. She's given my great advice.

Venus I've gotten to know maybe a little bit better just because I played doubles with her. Yeah, I just got to learn from her more from a firsthand perspective.

Both of them I admire so much. To do anything in the same sentence as them means a lot to me.

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