

United Cup

Friday, 29 December 2023

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Team Greece

Captain Petros Tsitsipas

Stefanos Tsitsipas

Stefanos Sakellaridis

Despina Papamichail

Valentini Grammatikopoulou

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the press conference of Team Greece. Unfortunately we have one member of the team who is still traveling, stuck in a connecting flight. We'll start up with Petros, who is the captain of the team, playing captain. We would like them to say a few words about their arrival in Sydney and expectations for the event. Captain first.

CAPTAIN PETROS TSITSIPAS: So, yeah, most of us arrived yesterday night. It's always great to be back playing the United Cup. It's the second edition.

So, yeah, as expected, we're going to start on the second. We already can't wait. We still haven't wait. We're shortly going to proceed with our practices and get our strokes going, our feet going, get used to the conditions.

So, yeah, for us it's still early to really tell how it's going to go.

THE MODERATOR: Stef, we know you like to play team events.

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Absolutely. It's charming to be in a team event again. There's a lot of excitement that this holds. It's quite valuable for me personally. I've talked about how I enjoy team events in tennis, something that usually we lack as tennis players. We're mostly representing ourselves.

United Cup is one of the most exciting competitions that tennis has at the moment. To be representing the Greek colors is something that you don't see in tennis that often. It's not something that we had before.

With all the efforts of the whole team, they're all fighting the whole year to earn their spot on the Greek team. This is a great second edition, as we said, for United



Cup. It shows consistency from our side as a unit. We're here to do better, bigger, bolder things this year. We were very close last year reaching the semifinals. It is important for us to get back together, unite again, and make it work the way we did it last year.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up to a few questions.

Q. Stef, we know Melbourne has a big Greek community. What do you know of the Greek community here in Sydney? What sort of support are you expecting?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: Same Greeks, different city. All the Greeks are here to support us at any given moment, I feel like. We have a great relationship with them. They are always on high attendance when we play on these courts. We witnessed them in Perth. We've witnessed them in Melbourne, even in Brisbane. Now we're in Sydney.

I feel like, regardless of the player, regardless of who is on the court playing, whether that's Despina, me, Maria, Valentini, Stef or Petros, the support is the same. The support is the same intense on every occasion. That for us means a lot. It gives us in a way a psychological advantage knowing that there is this kind of presence on court.

Q. What is it like having the opportunity to learn from Maria and Stefanos?

DESPINA PAPAMICHAIL: For us, they're big examples. We follow them all the year, like we're looking forward to be playing with them with Maria in Billie Jean King Cup and Stefanos in United Cup, which is a great opportunity for us to learn from them.

They opened the doors and showed the way. We are trying to follow. We broke into top hundred of doubles, Petros and I. We are fighting, and we are very excited to follow their steps.

VALENTINI GRAMMATIKOPOULOU: Hi, everyone. I think what Despina told, I agree. It's a big gift for us to learn from these guys who are top, Stefanos and Maria. It's a big boost for the whole year to learn how they fight and the support they give us.

Our team is really united, which I said this last year. I'm really excited for this opportunity for the second time. I don't think we give a lot of expectations from our team,



but we are really ready to fight from last year, as you saw. I hope we will enjoy the same as last year.

Q. Stefanos, I think you play Jarry in round one. Interesting head-to-head with him. What are you expecting from that match?

STEFANOS TSITSIPAS: He's a player that has good qualities in his game. He's a player that can serve big. He has big strokes. He can generate power.

We have a very similar game style. We've tested each other on multiple occasions, most of them playing for very long. I remember specifically this year, I got to play him in Los Cabos. It was a very intense, long match with a lot of physical being included during the entirety of the match.

All it takes is good preparation and the right mindset from the very beginning.

Q. I was hoping someone could talk about the physical advantages of playing a team tournament as opposed to playing one of the singles tournaments.

STEFANOS SAKELLARDIS: I mean, playing team tournament, last year was really fun. Way more fun than playing alone, you know. Like, you can share the joy on the court. You can work outside the court as a team, so that gives you extra motivation to practice.

I think it's also good preparation for the Australian Open for Stefanos, Maria. The girls are going to play there. So, yes, I think it's a great tournament to be.

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