

United Cup

Friday, 29 December 2023

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Team Croatia

Captain Iva Majoli

Borna Coric

Nino Serdariusic

Ivan Dodig

Donna Vekic

Petra Marcinko

Tena Lukas

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the team press conference for Team Croatia.

Iva, back at United Cup again. This year different city. Talk about how excited you are to be back captaining the team again.

CAPTAIN IVA MAJOLI: Well, we're very excited to be back. It was amazing experience in Perth. It's a great format, great team event. I think everyone is happy to have men and women together. I think we all enjoy very much, especially season being long, and most of the time it's only men or women.

Yeah, it's nice to be in Sydney. Yeah, we're looking forward to our first match.

THE MODERATOR: Borna, your thoughts on being back in United Cup again this year?

BORNA CORIC: Yeah, absolutely I'm super happy to be back. I'm always enjoying playing in the team competition. I enjoyed in the last year in the Perth, as well. Yeah, hopefully this year we can go one step further.

THE MODERATOR: Donna, talk about how excited you are to be here in Sydney.

DONNA VEKIC: Yeah, haven't been to Sydney for a couple of years, so really happy to be back. We are staying really in the city center, so many things to explore.

Yeah, really excited that the team is back together, and hopefully we can play as good as we did last year.



THE MODERATOR: Ivan, strong end to the season last year. How much are you looking forward to contributing to Croatia's success here?

IVAN DODIG: Yeah, had a great year. Still is not over. I'm still enjoying a great season. But I'm really happy to be part of this great team. Always played for many years this team competition. Always enjoy.

Now I hope this year we can do well here in Sydney. We'll try to give our best.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Donna, let's start with something a little different. Can you talk about the personalities of your lesser known teammates at the back?

DONNA VEKIC: We have Nino, Petra and Tena. To be honest, we don't see them -- I don't see them a lot during the year, but they fit into the team really well.

The only thing I can say is that Tena, she can sleep 15 hours a day (laughter).

CAPTAIN IVA MAJOLI: She's from Dalmatia.

DONNA VEKIC: She's not jetlagged.

Q. Do you expect to be playing mixed doubles as well as singles? How does that impact you when you play twice in a day?

DONNA VEKIC: Yeah, I hope I can play singles and mixed. I've been enjoying playing doubles a bit more last year, last season. Yeah, hopefully one of these two guys will want to play with me (smiling).

Q. Borna, the change in the format this year, do you think that helps Croatia in any way?

BORNA CORIC: I'm not sure if it's going to help us, to be honest. Obviously it's going to be much shorter, which I think is good. In last year, it was very, very long ties and matches. I don't enjoy that when I come back home at like midnight. So, yeah, hopefully this year it's going to be a little bit shorter.

Q. You've got a minimum two guaranteed matches against Griekspoor and Casper. Is that an attractive reason to play a tournament?



BORNA CORIC: For sure. I actually haven't played Casper since 2019, I think. That was our last meeting. Against Griekspoor, I think I never played. I'm looking forward to play those matches as I haven't been on the tour since the US Open. I want to see where is my level at the moment.

Q. Ivan, last year men's doubles was one of the five points in the tie, now it's one of three. For a doubles player, that must be exciting to know you might be playing in the decisive match.

IVAN DODIG: Yeah, if I can see this format, I think it will be a lot of matches deciding in the mixed. That's definitely exciting. I hope I can help my team. I have some experience in mixed playing. Obviously some other teams also have good experience.

That's good. I think this format, it's little bit different. I think it will be exciting for the crowd, for the players. I'm expecting some surprises.

Q. Petra and Tena, regardless of how much you get to play this week, what is appealing about the tournament? Is it being around Donna and Borna and Ivan?

BORNA CORIC: For sure (laughter). I can answer that question. Especially me.

TENA LUKAS: It's really nice to be part of the team. It's nice to be here because back Croatia, it's not such a nice weather as here. I mean, I'm really enjoying. I'm very happy to be here for all these weeks.

PETRA MARCINKO: Me, too. I enjoying time with them.

DONNA VEKIC: She needed to say this. I wrote it on a paper (laughter).

Q. Nino, what do you hope to get out of the week?

NINO SERDARUSIC: I'm really optimistic, to be honest. We have a really, really good team. We're here to help them do their best they can do on the court. I hope it's going to be very positive week for all of us.

Q. Donna, the Croatian population in Perth is under 5,000. Here in Sydney, it's the largest Croatian population in all of Australia. What sort of support are you expecting to receive?

DONNA VEKIC: I mean, hopefully big support. I know we had a big population here. Hopefully they will come and support us.

Q. What is it like to be on the other side of the world representing your country knowing that there

actually is a significant population that have historically come from Croatia?

DONNA VEKIC: It doesn't really matter where we are. Always playing for our country is special. It's different when you're also playing for the country, playing for the team. It's different than other events. That's I think why I and all of us enjoy these kind of tournaments more.

Q. Borna, as you adjust from the individual into the team environment, how do your routines change?

DONNA VEKIC: They don't. We adapt to him.

BORNA CORIC: I was just about to say I don't like to change my routines (smiling). They know it. They also like it, to be honest. They like that I have everything perfect. That's okay. We stick with my routines. Whatever we can fit in there, that's okay. My things are the most important (smiling).

Q. Do you eat together and spend time together?

BORNA CORIC: Yes, of course. If I'm not eating at a certain time (smiling). I'm joking. Of course, yeah.

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