

United Cup

Monday, 8 January 2024

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Team Germany

Captain Torben Beltz

Angelique Kerber

Alexander Zverev

Laura Siegemund

Maximilian Marterer

Kai Wehnelt

Tatjana Maria

Charlotte Maria

Press Conference

Team Poland - 1

Team Germany - 2

THE MODERATOR: Congrats, Team Germany. Before we open up to questions we'd like to hear from the captain, your long afternoon. So many match points saved yesterday and today. Just sum up your experience.

CAPTAIN TORBEN BELTZ: I would say not only long afternoon. I think the last three, four days very long. Every night we had to play, like, the last and have to play till 2:00, 3:00.

But look at this team. Just a great team. I have to say thank you. I'm very proud of my team and very honored to be part of this United Cup this year. I'm very happy that we won the title. Yeah, it was really crazy run.

I kind of think the United Cup wanted us to win, because Angie was down two match points, she won the match yesterday. Sascha was down two match points today, and he won it. Unreal. Mixed, against Australia, also match points down. I kind of have the feeling the United Cup wanted us to win (smiling). They wanted Germany to win this year.

So I'm just very happy as their captain. Was a great experience for me also, was the first time for me.

Yeah, just overall very great. I could talk more, but I think I stop now. Thank you. (Laughter.)



THE MODERATOR: We'll open up to questions.

Q. Laura, obviously very busy shift, or I guess two shifts for you the last couple of days. Talk a little bit about the mixed doubles tonight and just what do you think the key was? You seemed very fired up from the first point.

LAURA SIEGEMUND: Yeah, I have to say that because of all these match points that we saved, and Angie and Sascha saved, when I was warming up outside and when he saved those match points, and then when he was going up in the third set, and then in the end winning, I really thought to myself, we have to make this happen somehow. This is the kind of match where you can't fail. You just can't have that.

In the end you still always have to play. I mean, the will doesn't carry you, but I think we played really concentrated from the beginning. We are a great pair. I thought it was pretty amazing how Sascha could, you know, still focus and keep his strengths, like the serve and everything up like that, because it's not easy when you're starting to get tired. Mixed is a very fast game and one mistake can cost you the match.

So I'm really proud how he handled that. It's not easy. And I knew that what my job was, and I just wanted it very, very badly.

Q. Alex, in terms of a physical feat, those four matches in 24 hours or so, can you compare that to anything physically you have done in your career?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: It's a difficult question. But I think I said it yesterday, I feel like this format, especially the last three days where, you know, I had to play six matches in three days' time, it's probably even more difficult than a slam, to be honest. Because in a slam, yes, you might be playing five sets but you always have a day in between and you always kind of get the recovery. You always get, you know, not go back to 100% but you go back to 90%, 95%, sometimes 80. Here you don't have time. Yesterday I went to -- yeah, today or yesterday? It's yesterday already -- I went to bed at 5:30 a.m. or 5:45 a.m.

You know, I have to still get up out of bed and not feeling great, still play two matches. Yeah, physically it is a very difficult event, for sure. Yeah.

To be honest, this trophy makes it all worth it. I think



winning it with this team makes it all worth it. We're happy about that.

Q. Angie, what's the experience been like for you these few days, considering it's been 18 months since you played a tournament?

ANGELIQUE KERBER: You know, I mean, for me to starting my comeback like this, I mean, it couldn't be better, to be honest. I had, like, yeah, five tough matches. It was a completely cold start for me. I had no idea where I am.

I played good matches, tough ones. But of course the match yesterday where I was feeling great on court again and I was feeling the emotions, the energy on court. And the whole ten days here, it was amazing.

This is what I really missed, to be honest. I really miss to play in front of the crowds. Playing also for Germany is always an honor, especially with this amazing team and the background, and having so many good matches. Knowing now a little bit where I am before the first Grand Slam of the year, before Australian Open.

Yeah, I think we can be all proud how we played, especially Sascha, of course. It was a marathon week for him, and he survived. You know, I'm really proud of Sascha, how he, yeah, handled all the situations, especially the two match points down.

Q. The fact that you've had your first win on this comeback, where do you think you are at the moment? What are the aspirations and the goals now?

ANGELIQUE KERBER: You know, I think also I had no idea how my body will react. Of course, I mean, the three, four days, or like the night sessions, it was not easy also for me. Like we have jet lag and the jet lag right now, and I think for me now it's really important to have a great recovery, and then see how I can play in Melbourne and, you know, the big tournaments. That's my goal for this year.

Q. Laura, the two mixed doubles the last couple of days, have you been involved in anything as gripping and as exciting as these two mixed doubles?

LAURA SIEGEMUND: It's very different in a team event. I mean, I've played important mixed doubles in the slams, but it's just a different feeling when you have, you know, other players working very hard in their singles matches to get those points, and then it kind of comes down to you.

I came in after a while into the mixed, not from the beginning, and I think you carry different on your shoulders. You know, you don't play only for you. You

play for the whole team. You play for the people that got the points in the singles.

It's a different kind of tension, I think, but I think it's also important as a good player to be able to handle those situations and go out there and do your job as best as you can. And I think I did that.

Q. Charlotte? I mean, the mic is hot in front of you. I'm curious for you, as a spectator participating in all this, what was it like? Could you see yourself or do you want to be put in a stressful situation that these three put themselves in this week?

ALEXANDER ZVEREV: She's playing 2030 for Germany and Mom is captain. (Laughter.) We have a signed paper. There's no more questions about it. I have decided that, and you have no say in it, whatsoever.

Q. What was your experience like, Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE MARIA: I was really stressed for today, because I knew it's going to be hard. I'm really happy my mom's team win.

So let's go, Germany! (Applause.)

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