

# United Cup

Thursday, 26 December 2024

Perth, Western Australia, Australia

## Team Brazil

**Captain Rafael Paciaroni**

**Thiago Monteiro**

**Gustavo Heide**

**Rafael Matos**

**Beatriz Haddad Maia**

**Carolina Alves**

**Luisa Stefani**

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Describe what it means to start the year here in Perth.

LUISA STEFANI: It's awesome to start the year here. We spent Christmas together. It's my second time at United Cup. Some of them have been here longer. Gustavo's first time.

I think for me it's really special to start the year in the team environment, get the energy going, get the vibe, support each other, learn from each other to start the year. I think it's always special with this group. We get along very well. We always have a good time off court. On court everybody does their thing and gives their best for our country. It's always a pleasure to play for Brazil.

It's nice to be cheering whoever is on court. It's nice to be a part of a great team like this. It's really exciting to be back here for me.

THE MODERATOR: How unique is it to be in this team format versus individual or with a doubles partner the rest of the year?

CAROLINA ALVES: Yeah, it's different situation. I mean, we always play just for ourselves during the year. It's nice to have the chance to stay with other players and learn and practice together.

It's a different atmosphere, but is still also nice for us to be together and play together for the country.

THE MODERATOR: How often do you keep in touch throughout the year?

THIAGO MONTEIRO: We spend a lot of time actually



together. I practice with Heide a lot in Rio. Also Matos, Captain, Bea, Luisa, Caro are like in many of the tournaments together. It's always nice to be around. Especially also here as a team.

It's always nice experience. Nice time together. It's nice to have some friends on the tour, too.

THE MODERATOR: What are you all looking forward to doing off the court here in Perth?

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Last year we went to an island close to here. I don't remember the name. It was very nice. We spent some time on the beach, we had some ice cream.

Yeah, I think we like to explore places and spend time together, yeah. That's all.

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

**Q. Beatriz, can you tell me one interesting thing about each team member. Could be they're really messy or a fussy eater, late to practice.**

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: One word?

**Q. Just a sentence.**

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: I'll start from my right.

I don't know Heide too much. We didn't spend a lot of time together. These days I spend with him, I see him a little bit more like lazy (smiling).

**Q. He's got time to win you over.**

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Rafael has the prettiest hair on tour. I can tell.

The captain, he always get me out of the comfort zone.

Thiago, yeah, he's an example for work hard person. Well, we practice together when we were young. Yeah, he's an inspiration for me also.

Caro is a very friend of mine since we are very, very young. I think my first rivalry was against her when we were like eight, nine years old.

Luisa is for me one of the best players in the net, in my opinion. She inspire me a lot also because of the tough



moments that she pass on her career. This is a very special thing that a few players pass. Is also very inspire not only for me.

**Q. I believe this is your third time playing the event. You have a 3-1 record. Why do you like playing United Cup?**

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: For me is very special to share moments with people that has the same kind of life of us. We sometimes don't have too much time to talk, to share moments. It's nice to learn with them.

Also I think the United Cup has a special point that we unite the men's and the women's tour. That means a lot not only for the sport but also for the world.

I think it's a special competition that maybe is different. We can have also maybe a little bit, like, fun during the matches and practice. Yeah, it's nice to be here.

**Q. Your two opponents, thoughts on playing them.**

BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA: Well, at the beginning of the year I did the pre-season. I feel good to start the year. As I said, is a different environment. I feel ready. I prepare myself.

Yeah, I'm excited to go there and give my 100%.

**Q. Thiago, you have a lot of Zs in your future playing Zverev and then Triple Z. What are your thoughts?**

THIAGO MONTEIRO: For sure, to start the year with those great players, they all play good. I mean, the level is very high here in the competition. It's really nice to start the year here.

Two big matches, and I hope I can perform well. I think I'm well-prepared also coming from the pre-season, practicing really good, feeling really good also in the court here.

Yeah, it's try to do the best tomorrow. We start tomorrow. Try to compete at the best, give all for the whole team on the court, and hopefully get these important points for us.

**Q. Last January you started your season at the challenger level. Can you talk about how nice it is to be beginning this year on such a big stage.**

THIAGO MONTEIRO: Yeah, it's always the goal, to keep on the big stages. I mean, it's very good for me to start here in Australia. Actually I skip Australia last year also because of an injury. I worked a lot to get better as fast as I could. Then playing from the challengers, entry level.

I'm very happy for the work that I put in, the level that I play during the year. To start this year is just like to try to keep at the highest level and also compete at the best.

**Q. (Question about Joao Fonseca.)**

THIAGO MONTEIRO: He's a great player. Known him since a few years ago. Been a big talent. Now everybody knows him so that's good for actually all of us and the country. He's so young and also inspiring us to improve and try our best, too.

Yeah, just we show the best. I think he's going to be a big player for the country, for Brazil, and very happy for the results. Also we share good moments on the Davis Cup, in Rio, because we practice there. We can also have the opportunity to practice together. He's such a nice guy, so very happy for him. I wish him to be one of the top players for this year.

**Q. Captain Rafael, what are your thoughts on the mixed doubles pairings? Do you go with your doubles specialists or play your No. 1 singles players or does it depend who you're playing?**

CAPTAIN RAFAEL PACIARONI: Very specific question, yeah (smiling).

Well, we'll see. Depends on the results on singles, depends the state of every player after the singles match. We have good different ways of different styles of players here. I have a good opportunity of choice because they have different styles.

Yeah, we going to be ready. Doesn't matter the score, but we are ready for play the mixed, as well.

**Q. Gustavo and Rafael, what are you both hoping to get out of this week?**

RAFAEL MATOS: Well, first week of the year, just to put the work that we did in pre-season. Happy to be here sharing this moment with the team. All of them are good friends. Enjoy the week, have fun and be ready for the year.

**Q. Gustavo?**

GUSTAVO HEIDE: Very happy to be here. Well, let's go, Brazil (smiling).

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