

United Cup

Friday, 2 January 2026

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Team Norway

Captain Christian Ruud

Casper Ruud

Viktor Durasovic

Malene Helgo

Astrid Brune Olsen

Ulrikke Eikeri

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Team Norway, welcome back to United Cup once more. Captain, how has the preparation been going and a few words about the big tie tomorrow against Team Australia.

CHRISTIAN RUUD: Yeah, the preparation has gone well I think. Always nice to be in Australia. We came from cold Norway, so it's nice to get some heat.

But yeah, I think all the players have prepared well and are very excited to play Australia. Of course, it's a tough start for us. Let's see if we can surprise the Australian fans (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Casper, you've had quite a bit of success in mixed doubles. How did you find that experience of playing the US Open last year? Do you think that might prompt you to play more mixed with Ulrikke at the regular Grand Slams?

CASPER RUUD: Yeah, it was fun to play at the US Open. Obviously they did a big change in the way it was played, when it was played, which was a key factor to I think a lot of singles players showing up and playing.

Being the week before the main draw started for us, most of us are there anyway practicing, so might as well have some fun on the court and play mixed doubles.

Regularly at the slams, the three other ones, they're played in the second week or later. If you are to reach the second week of a slam in singles, it's not a common thing to play mixed doubles, as well. So I'm not sure about that.



I've had a great time playing with Ulrikke here in United Cup. We won some good matches. Last year we had a really tough one against Poland, almost went our way. I hope we can get out there this year and play for Norway and see if we can get some wins under our belt this year.

Q. Ulrikke, you play obviously women's doubles on the tour. How does playing mixed doubles compare for you? Is there any shift in mindset when you play mixed doubles?

ULRIKKE EIKERI: Yeah so, I mean, we only play mixed doubles in the Grand Slams and here in the United Cup. It's different. It's different to play with the guys.

In one way it's more fun. I think I enjoy it a little bit more than regular doubles. I wish we could play more often, yeah.

Q. Playing Alex tomorrow night...

CASPER RUUD: It will be obviously tough. We had a little showdown in London a few weeks back at this UTS event. He got the better of me there. I don't have much success against him in the past. I lost to him a few times before on tour. It's a tough, tough test, battle.

I always enjoy watching him play here Down Under. He always comes out with so much energy and runs like he's never run before when he's at home. I'm sure he will be one of the tougher opponents I will play or face during the year tomorrow.

I'm ready for a tough match. I've had a lot of good weeks to train at home. Let's see if I can bring some of the firepower and things we've been trying out in practice tomorrow.

But I know it's going to be really tough.

Q. How bad a surfer do you think you are?

CASPER RUUD: Probably as bad as you can get them. But it was fun. It was really fun to try. Never really understood the hype around surfing. Having done it myself now, I can really understand why people find it so fun.

We don't have any sort of waves or these things in Norway unless you go really far up north. I never had a meeting with a surfboard and the waves. It was much more fun than I expected.



Q. Casper, in terms of decision making on whether to play the United Cup or whether to play a tour event, is that something you thought about, whether you wanted the full tournament experience? How does the United Cup compare to something like a Davis Cup?

CASPER RUUD: I mean, it doesn't have the same history as Davis Cup, that's for sure. It's a cool initiative. It's been fun to play. When you play 25 regular tournaments, as it is during the year, why not play something else for once?

It's a fun event. Also being able to share it with Norwegian teammates is fun. Getting together as a team is really nice. It's a long travel for us, but I think we all enjoy it. I get two guaranteed tough matches at the beginning of the year, which is great.

I hope I can play well and get some momentum to start the year.

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