

United Cup

Friday, 2 January 2026

Perth, Western Australia, Australia

Team Australia

Captain Lleyton Hewitt

Alex de Minaur

Jason Kubler

Maddison Inglis

Storm Hunter

John-Patrick Smith

Press Conference

(Press conference recording started in progress)

LLEYTON HEWITT: ... days to prepare after a long season. Obviously everyone's really excited. We got a great team here. Really good team culture and camaraderie around the guys. Looking forward to going out there.

And obviously for these guys to get to play on home soil in an event like this against such quality teams and players, it's something pretty special that they don't get to do every week.

With that said, though, we have a bloody tough match tomorrow night. They're led by their male player in Casper Ruud. It's going to be a hell of a match between him and Alex, which I'm really looking forward to sitting there. It's a good preview of the Australian summer.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Alex, after the Australian Open last year, you said you talked to your team and you might reconsider playing the United Cup this year. What made you want to come back this year?

ALEX de MINAUR: Yeah, I mean, obviously the dates being a little bit later definitely had a lot to do with it. Going from starting I think the 27th or 28th last year to the 3rd actually allowed me to spend Christmas with the family for the first time in seven, eight years. That was a nice feeling.

Obviously being able to play here in Sydney, I don't get to do that often enough. It's always a very special feeling coming back, playing here, having a team environment, right? You don't get too many of those on tour.



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Q. Lleyton, what is your thinking in terms of picking doubles players versus singles players? Does that change for mixed doubles as opposed to men's doubles?

LLEYTON HEWITT: Yes and no. A lot depends on matchups to be honest in every situation.

We're lucky. Everyone can play mixed doubles up here. We're very fortunate that we got a lot of options, as well. I think a lot of players that can switch and play with different partners, as well, which is important I think in this kind of format.

Obviously the singles players, more so Alex, because of our matches, he's the one playing the second singles match and would have to back up straight after, as well. You don't have a lot of time after the singles matches to make these decisions. It will be something that Alex and I will sit down straight after his singles and work through.

Q. Jason and Maddison, could you share how special that moment was for you and starting the season on a team together?

JASON KUBLER: It was super exciting. I didn't anticipate the hour leading up. I was so nervous. That was crazy. Felt like we were on a first date again.

Very happy I did it. Very happy Maddie said yes, which is good.

Yeah, no, we were super pumped we could get into the United Cup, as well. Not often we can play the same tournaments. When we can, we try.

To start the year together playing for Australia as well, supporting these guys, is super special. We're looking forward to the week.

MADDISON INGLIS: No, it's very exciting, especially having that time in Perth. It was our first time to Rotto. It was such a special spot to do it. It was really exciting.

It's been nice to spend these couple weeks together after, to enjoy it. Yeah, it's super exciting we get to be on Team Australia. We're looking forward to it.

Q. Lleyton, have you had an opportunity to talk to Maya, see how she's feeling? Do you have any indication whether she'll be well enough to play? If



... when all is said, we're done.®

not, what is your strategy?

LLEYTON HEWITT: I haven't spoken to her because she's resting. Just trying to get as much sleep and rest as possible today. Hopefully it's only a 24-hour thing and she can bounce back tomorrow.

She hit well yesterday. Yeah, confidence-wise I don't think myself or the team are too worried about how she's hitting the ball and moving and playing at the moment. We're trying to give her the best chance of having 100% energy when she goes out there to play.

Yeah, fingers crossed she gets the chance. If not, we'll reevaluate.

Q. Alex, you often have spoken glowingly about playing on Ken Rosewall Arena. What takes over when you walk on there and you have a match to play?

ALEX de MINAUR: Well, for me specifically what I'm thinking as I'm walking out is the countless hours I did on the outside courts on this venue growing up, right? I was at the academy here. I grew up here. I was here whilst the tournament was being played. I was a hitting partner for the tournament. All I wanted as a kid was to one day compete on that court.

It is basically a pinch-me moment every time I walk out there. I get goosebumps. The crowd support is always unbelievable. Yeah, that's what I love about it.

Q. J.P., you're on a national team. How exciting is it for you and your feelings of being part of a Team Australia?

JOHN-PATRICK SMITH: Yeah, to be honest, 36 years old now. To be able to represent my country with a great group of professionals here, it's something I've always dreamed about. To do it here on Australian soil as well, at a venue I actually played. Like Demon, I actually played juniors here a lot. They had the New South Wales Open here. To be able to come back here and do it in this sort of stage, environment. I watched the United Cup on TV. Ken Rosewall Arena goes nuts when Team Australia comes out.

To be part of it, I'm looking forward to it. Like I said before, it's awesome to be in this team environment and learning so much already here. It's been great.

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