

United Cup

Thursday, 8 January 2026

Perth, Western Australia, Australia

Team Switzerland

Captain Stan Wawrinka

Jakub Paul

Luca Castelnuovo

Belinda Bencic

Naima Karamoko

Press Conference



STAN WAWRINKA: You sure? Okay, done deal. I will be wearing it in Sydney when she's playing. Let me confirm the (inaudible) then. No pressure, but now you have to keep playing that good.

Q. Obviously well done in your singles match thus far. Obviously straight set wins across all three of them. I know the job is not done, but how reassuring is it to start the season the way you have, especially when you're coming off an offseason where you haven't played many matches?

BELINDA BENCIC: It's a great feeling to start a season well. Of course, it's what you hope for to kind of keep going how last season ended. So, of course, to keep the momentum.

It gives you a lot of confidence that you come out of the blocks pretty good, and you already have so much play, of course, before Australian Open is always very important, I would say. So we definitely have that.

Now I think it's time to focus on Sydney. A good travel day tomorrow, and yeah, we see.

Q. Stan, the mixed doubles has obviously been a key in this tournament for Switzerland. Did you have a plan coming in that Jakub was going to play every mixed doubles match, or was it a fluid decision?

STAN WAWRINKA: Now, like I said already, we talk with Jakub before the tie, before coming here. Here he asked me. I said that I never play with Belinda, and the dream was that we can play once, but of course, I'm not young anymore. Playing a single and straight after mixed, if I play a long match, is going to be difficult for me. He was ready for it in case.

You know, the first match I played three hours, so it was no chance for me to show up on the mixed court. They played together. They play so well. Then, of course, you don't want to change your team that can play so well and beat everybody.

Then I'm not even thinking too much about if I should play or not, because I'm happy to focus on my singles, and I'm happy to see them playing so well. That's the beauty of this event, that we are a team, and we can change. We can put different player on the court.

So far they've been doing everything, so I'm happy on my bench.

Team Switzerland - 2

Team Argentina - 1

THE MODERATOR: Team Switzerland, congratulations. What's been the secret for you all this week?

STAN WAWRINKA: Belinda (smiling).

BELINDA BENCIC: I'm not a secret.

STAN WAWRINKA: Yeah, but you are the key.

BELINDA BENCIC: Good dinners.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Belinda, well done today, and well done, Jakub. So the other day when you guys were at Kings Park, I saw that Stan received a shirt that said "Belinda's world" on it.

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, he didn't wear it today.

STAN WAWRINKA: I have it in my bag. I'm not going to wear it during the match.

BELINDA BENCIC: I didn't ask during the match.

STAN WAWRINKA: Maybe I'll wear it tomorrow traveling to Sydney.

BELINDA BENCIC: So it's only a travel t-shirt.

Q. Would you like to see on the bench in Sydney?

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, it's the least I expect. I mean, how do you treat a gift like that?



Q. Belinda, how much of Jakub's game had you seen before this week?

BELINDA BENCIC: Well, I actually know him from earlier. He was also playing against my brother back in the days. Yeah, so I definitely know him. I know that he's a great doubles player right now. He's winning also a lot of titles in doubles and, of course, climbing up the rankings. Obviously I knew how good he can play.

It's more impressive on the court. He's definitely helping me so much. Stan is, of course, coaching us great. We have great energy on the court, and it definitely feels like when you are playing, you're not even -- let's say, they don't even allow you to let them down. They're always pushing you. You never have time to even think about it, and you are always fighting and just doing the best.

Q. Jakub, did you allow yourself to dream of this possibility coming to this tournament that you would play and win three matches with Belinda and help your team make the semifinals?

JAKUB PAUL: Obviously it's, yeah, kind of crazy now. I still need to really realize it. It was a dream for me to play. Didn't think I would be able to play all three matches, because as Stan said, we talked before coming here.

Yeah, luckily for me he played two really long matches. Then, yeah, I could play really well with Belinda. Yeah, it was just great to be on the court, help the team out. Yeah, to have the reassurance from Stan that, yeah, I can play good doubles really helps on court. Then, of course, playing with Belinda is just great.

Q. Stan, just a question on your match today. Your thoughts on how you played, and also did Baez surprise you in any way with that little body being able to generate so much power?

STAN WAWRINKA: Yeah, it was a tough match, of course. I think he played well. He went for it. He didn't surprise me, because I did practice with him before starting here, the week, and with Magnus, my coach, we saw that he improved a lot compared to last year. He was putting more pressure. It was more difficult.

Tonight I missed few opportunity to come back or to take the lead. I was thinking a little bit too much on what to do, but mainly because he was putting so much pressure on me, and he was always doing the right thing and always there.

So credit to him for playing that well tonight.

Q. Stan, what does it mean to you to come to a completely new city at this stage of your career and

have the crowd behind you and just so appreciative of what you've done for them, even though you've never actually played here before?

STAN WAWRINKA: No, I always love to come back to Australia. Always a lot of support, amazing memories from Australia. When we saw the draw in Perth, for me I was super happy because I never came here. So it's always an opportunity to see a new city, to see some new fans.

Tonight was great. Amazing atmosphere. They support us, and we are looking forward to see them in Sydney.

Q. Belinda, you were here a long time ago to play the Hopman Cup. What are your memories of that event? How nice is it to come back all these years later and have such a good showing?

BELINDA BENCIC: Yeah, it's really one of my favorite memories to come back to and to remember. It's really nice that I can come back and still play great tennis here after a few years.

Of course, I really love the team events here. I feel like people here really support, and they are so excited about it. I feel like all the city knows about it. It's definitely been great support. I love the stadium.

Yeah, so really nice. Hopefully next time when we come back, it's going to be the same.

Q. You've had three really strong singles matches here. Good quality opponents, high stakes, high pressure. Do you feel like this tournament just in terms of it being a lead-up to a Grand Slam tournament, do you feel like that could work at other Grand Slams, or is it given where the United Cup lies on the calendar, the time of year, that this is quite a unique event which can't really be replicated?

BELINDA BENCIC: I love this event. I think it's very unique. I think it creates great views on tennis to put ATP and WTA together. I think people are really excited.

People are really excited to watch mixed doubles. It's something different. It's really exciting.

I'm definitely always looking forward for this event, so I hope that it's going to keep going.

Q. Stan, three really high-quality singles matches for you so far, and I know there's a lot of fans looking forward to seeing you at the Australian Open. I'm just wondering in terms of a wild card, what feedback have you received so far from Australian Open officials?

STAN WAWRINKA: I've been talking to Craig and

Stephen in December before coming here. They've been updating me a bit with everything.

Again, I think, like I said already yesterday or two days ago, I'm super happy if I get one. I want to play one more time. Of course, it's my last year. Amazing memories from there, but I'm so grateful I received one last year.

Wild card, it's a wild card. I had one job to do if I wanted to play one more time was to be in the top 100, and I'm not.

So far I'm happy we are here in Perth. We did amazing week. Enjoying that with the team. Going to Sydney, playing there again. Next week I'm going to play Auckland. Got the wild card there.

I'm happy where I am right now, and I'm not worried too much about what's going to happen in Melbourne.

Q. How special would it be for you to have one final crack there at such a special place for you?

STAN WAWRINKA: Yeah, of course, extra special for sure in my last year after winning my first slams there and having memories. Of course, it would be amazing.

But, again, I don't take that for granted. Hopefully I have one. I will be super happy. If not, no worries.

Q. Just one more on the wild card situation. There's a lot of people with Kyrgios that are a bit divided on that, whether he deserves one, whether he doesn't given his lack of game time in the last three years. What do you think about that? Such a big draw card, but someone who has barely played in three years.

STAN WAWRINKA: Yeah, you know, Kyrgios is an amazing player. He's been a lot injured, of course, last few years. Not easy for him. He had amazing results in his career. Made final in Grand Slams.

Of course, if he's fit and ready, he want to play there. He's been playing a bit more last few weeks, playing some exhibition. He play Brisbane now. Hopefully he can be fit without injury a full year.

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