

# United Cup

Friday, 9 January 2026

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

## Team Australia

**Captain Lleyton Hewitt**

**Alex de Minaur**

**Maya Joint**

**Storm Hunter**

**John-Patrick Smith**

Press Conference

Team Poland - 2

Team Australia - 1

LLEYTON HEWITT: (No microphone) -- perfect preparation for him going into Melbourne now.

The mixed doubles, it comes down to a few points here and there. Could have been up easily 4-Love in the first set. We find ourselves down.

Disappointing not to get the result, but that's the United Cup. We've been close a few times.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Maya, what has the experience been like for you this week? What have you gained from your matches? Plans for next week?**

MAYA JOINT: Yeah, I really loved this event. First time playing it. Hopefully first of many. Terrific team. I was so lucky to learn from all of these players here.

I mean, the matches were all very high quality that I played. I think it's a good preparation to go into AO. Yeah, super fun event.

**Q. Alex, after the first match I think you said that serving performance wasn't part of your DNA. Can I ask what changed tonight? How important is that, knowing you can rely on that going into Australian Open?**

ALEX de MINAUR: Look, I think what was a little bit strange for me was the amount of double-faults. That's something I don't normally hit. Obviously that was what felt like an anomaly. We got back to the practice court, just worked on a couple things, a couple different feels.



Yeah, I'm very happy with my serving performance the following two matches, kind of showing all the work that I put in. Of course, if I can land first serves and play with a lot of first serves, it makes my life a whole lot easier. Makes me definitely a more dangerous opponent.

Hopefully I can keep that up for the rest of the summer.

**Q. Lleyton and Alex, can you talk through the decision-making process for the mixed doubles, how you came to that decision. It seemed like it was a very strong Polish crowd, towards the end. Did that surprise you at all?**

LLEYTON HEWITT: I think with Alex, he was feeling a few tweaks the last few days, as well. He's been doing a lot of training in the off-season to get ready for five-set matches. We decided the best thing for his body moving forward was not to put his hand up to play mixed tonight.

It is tough though, as well, to make a decision so quickly. Also, if you are that second match, to turn around straightaway and switch on. You just don't want to risk injury as well at certain times, especially the amount of moving he had to do tonight against a bloody quality player out there.

Yeah, they always get a lot of support here. I knew it was going to be a good atmosphere, that's for sure, coming out. Yeah, no, it was a full house. I think when that arena with the roof on has a full house, it's a good atmosphere.

**Q. Alex, we probably won't see you before seedings are announced. A strong potential, depending on what happens in Hong Kong, that you'll move up to 5 in the world, the first since Lleyton in 2006. What would something like that mean to you going into the Australian Open?**

ALEX de MINAUR: I will talk about it when I know it's 100% certain (smiling).

It is what it is. I think ultimately in tennis there's so many variables, right? Over the years that's something I've obsessed about, something that I've looked at after every single match, focused on everyone else's results. As I saw last year, it consumed me, right? It was too much.

I'm doing my best to kind of be a lot more chilled out about it. If it happens, it happens. I think I played some



good tennis here. Ultimately, yeah, any improvements would be welcome.

Ultimately, those are the goals that I'm pursuing. Whether I achieve it this next coming week or at the end of the year or in the middle of the year, I'm going to be looking forward to hopefully finishing off the year higher than I did this last year. That's my main goal.

**Q. Storm, what has this week been like for you?**

STORM HUNTER: Yeah, it's been a really great week, positive week with the team. Team environments for me, I love them. I thrive in them.

Just spending time with the guys, as well. Obviously I know the girls really well from the Billie Jean King Cup. Spending time with Lleyton and the boys on the team has been awesome.

To get a lot of good training in, having the opportunity to play singles, it was great to get that match in under that pressure. Played really well.

Didn't go our way tonight. But really proud of the matches I put together, the training I put together. Now the focus switches to quallies on Monday or Tuesday. Head to Melbourne with a lot of confidence in my body and my game at the moment.

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