

# Australian Open

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Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

## Caroline Wozniacki

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Caroline, welcome back to Melbourne Park. A lot of great memories for you here. Talk about what it was like coming back here after four years.

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Yeah, it's definitely a special place for me. I always really enjoyed playing here. Coming back here, obviously winning the tournament, it's something that I don't take for granted. It's really great to have the opportunity to play again.

I'm really excited to kick it off here soon.

THE MODERATOR: Who would like the first question?

**Q. When you came back you said you felt you could win this tournament again. Has that changed? Have your expectations changed? Do you still think you can win?**

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Well, I think anytime I step on a court, I believe I can win the match no matter who the opponent is across the net.

I think I'm playing well. My body feels pretty good. Yeah, again, it's a long way to go. I'm just going to focus on my first-round opponent and kind of go from there. That's always kind of been my mindset.

Yeah, I do believe that I'm playing very well.

**Q. In terms of preparation, how did you schedule to start retraining again for AO? Talk about the process of getting yourself ready for this competition.**

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I definitely had a long preparation. I didn't play anything after the US Open. It gave me time to, first of all, see where I was at. I felt like I was good tennis-wise, where I wanted to be, needed to be.

Then it was just kind of about getting physically stronger and ready. I took a few weeks off and slowly started pacing myself in the gym, then adding tennis, going harder and harder as kind of time progressed.

It was nice to have this much time to just work on everything, both body-wise and tennis-wise, and come in

here feeling very strong.

**Q. Are you traveling with your family now? How has it worked out for you not traveling alone?**

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I travel with my kids everywhere. They kind of are an extension of me and always around. I really enjoy that. They're very adaptable. They're at an age where you can move them around, and especially the older one, Olivia, she loves to travel and explore. She asks me when we're going on the plane next, where we're going next.

It's a lot of fun to be able to share these memories with them, even though they're still pretty small. But, yeah, they're here. I like to train early, so when I have a practice day, I practice early, then I have the afternoon with them, which is great.

I don't know what the other question was. Oh, yeah, obviously there's a lot more going on. I think I appreciate a lot more all the hours in the day that I have to do all these things.

I think I felt busy before, before having kids. I thought I don't know how you can be more busy, but that definitely was proven wrong after having children.

It doesn't matter if you've played for 1 hour, 3 hours, 10 hours, they're still there and having full energy. They want you to be there 100% for them.

I try. When I'm on court, I'm 100% there. When I'm with my family, I'm 100% there, as well.

**Q. When you were last here four years ago, the top 10 was completely different to what it is now. When you had your time off, how much did you follow tennis? Now that you're back, what do you think of the top players?**

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: For a while during COVID, I didn't follow much, to be honest. I kind of was enjoying just doing my own thing.

Then I got into doing a bit of commentating. I thought that was a lot of fun. I got to watch basically all the players, players that I hadn't met or seen before. Yeah, I was following a lot.

I think it's hard to - I don't know - compare the old top 10 with the new top 10. Obviously a few of the players that are in the top 10 now or top of the game were playing when the old top 10 was there.

I mean, you can't really compare someone to Serena, in my opinion. I think when Serena was on, when she was playing her best tennis, I don't think anyone here would be able to beat her. I'm saying that with having played basically anyone on tour.

With that being said, I think we have very strong players, players that are performing at a very high level. I think we're pushing tennis in the right direction. I think there's a lot more players that are playing on a very high level. That's been a continuous thing for quite a while now.

Again, I think it's hard to compare apples with pears. The old top 10 had the greatest of all time, if not of all tennis, but female and women's tennis. It's hard to be compared to her.

**Q. I'm curious, it's easy for us to say the moms are on a comeback, Naomi, yourself, Elina, Angelique. There's more among you. Where is the respect or what do you want us to best understand about the experience? For each of you I know it's different, but from your perspective, what is the thing you want us to understand about the personal experience of just beyond the headline of mothers playing tennis?**

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I think it's a very individual experience. It's hard for me to be able to speak on the other women's behalf.

I think for me personally, I don't think I realized how much kind of goes into motherhood, if that makes sense (smiling). Obviously my parents had me and my brother. They never had help. They, in my opinion, it seemed like it was a breeze. I mean, having angel children, I'm sure it was (smiling).

But it's a lot of hard work. They have a lot of energy. You have to figure out things to do with them all the time, which is the amazing part of motherhood and in general of being a parent, seeing them grow up, their eyes widen.

Also it's hard. It feels like you have two full-time jobs basically. For me, I choose to have them with me everywhere. That's a personal decision. I couldn't be without them for weeks at a time because I feel like they change so rapidly. I want to be there. I became a mom because I wanted to be a mom and I wanted to be there for my kids.

Finding that balance and being able to do both, I know there's thousands and thousands of women out there that have full-time jobs and are also moms, but it's hard.

Sometimes I pat myself on the back, You're doing good, we're okay. Some days it's survival; some days we're thriving. We're getting through one day at a time and the kids are happy.

**Q. Andy Murray said a few months ago that one of the reasons he is playing on, partly, was because he thought it would be nice for his kids to see him play, what he did for a living, be proud of him. Then he realized that they don't care at all. I'm sure your kids are too young to understand what you do, but do you hope that they do learn something more about you?**

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: For sure. I think that's one of the coolest things of being a parent and also being able to still play and doing what I love.

It's funny because Olivia, every time she sees someone play tennis on TV, she looks around, she sees if anyone is around, she goes, Excuse me, that's my mommy. She's playing right now.

I'm like, Mommy is right here. That's not me.

She gets the fact that I play tennis. Yesterday I woke her up in the morning and I go, Mommy has to go practice, I'll be back in a couple of hours, we can do whatever you want.

She goes, But Mommy, why do you need to practice?

I said, Because I want to be better. I want to win a lot more matches.

She thinks about it. She goes, Mommy, I'm really good at tennis. I don't need to practice.

It humbles you sometimes (laughter). I love her attitude. It's funny and it's great. It also makes you realize I do what I love and I do my best. But at the end of the day the kids will be kids. Again, we will never be cool to them.

I think right now I think I'm at a stage where I'm pretty cool for her and James. But we're definitely getting to a stage eventually where she won't care at all that I played tennis.

**Q. You're very close friends with Angie. When she became a mother, did she ask you how to handle it on tour with a baby or how to handle it to be a mother?**

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Yeah, we definitely had a lot of conversations. All of a sudden I became the experienced one because I had a child before.

We talk about it. Again, every experience is so

individual. Definitely when she had questions, she could ask me.

In general, we just catch up on a regular basis, even when we weren't on tour, seeing how life kind of was going. It's nice to see her back. I got a nice practice in with her today. It's great to still have our generation here.

There's a lot of young players. Some players were probably born the year I turned pro. I don't know. We're probably not far off.

I definitely feel young on the inside, but I realize I'm no longer in my 20s. In tennis, I'm in the older generation.

**Q. Do you connect differently with other moms than to other players? Do you share advice with each other?**

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Not so much. I think you obviously have your close friends on tour that you connect with, that you talk to on a regular basis.

I think it's like at any workplace: there's players you get along better than others. You only have a certain amount of time during the day. I barely have time to look at my phone on a day-to-day basis. I kind of prioritize the people I've been close with for a very long time.

**Q. How did you feel winning your first Grand Slam?**

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Thank you, that's a good question.

I felt really great. It was a very special couple weeks for me. I think winning my Grand Slam and then getting back to world No. 1 at the same time was definitely a very, very special feeling and a dream come true.

Melbourne will always have a special place in my heart.

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