

Australian Open

Saturday, 13 January 2024

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Cameron Norrie

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Go ahead with questions, please.

Q. Cam, you obviously pulled out of Auckland. How is the wrist? Was that very much precautionary? Tell us a bit about what prompted that.

CAMERON NORRIE: Yeah, it was obviously unfortunate not to play there in a special tournament for me. I was going there to try and win the tournament. Obviously couldn't complete it.

But I practiced today, and it's improving. It's feeling okay, yeah.

Q. Which wrist is it?

CAMERON NORRIE: My left one.

Q. What's wrong with it? When did you start feeling it?

CAMERON NORRIE: Honestly, just after the match I played with Van Assche. There was not a particular moment where I felt something happen or anything. The next day I was a bit sore, wasn't able to play obviously. Yeah, I did a scan. Didn't show anything too much. So, yeah, I'm here, and it's feeling a bit better.

Q. What was going through your mind at that point, Australian Open looming? Were you concerned?

CAMERON NORRIE: Yeah, for sure. I think it was just thinking about Auckland first of all. Big tournament for me. Growing up there, I want to try to win that one. I played such a good match with Van Assche. I was feeling good from the United Cup. I had a great pre-season. I did a lot of work and everything. I was able to kind of stay in one place, as well, practice with some top players, which was really fortunate.

I know I've done the preparation. I think now it's just making sure I'm fresh. I played a couple matches already, a couple in United Cup, and one last week.

I think just making sure to get the body ready and I'm feeling kind of back to where I was, the way I'm seeing the game, a lot more fresh and more clear. Yeah, it's nice to be feeling good mentally again, for sure.

Q. Are you still concerned about it coming in now?

CAMERON NORRIE: About what?

Q. Your wrist injury.

CAMERON NORRIE: Yeah, I mean, I couldn't play Auckland, so obviously concerned. But, yeah, we're managing it with my team. It was better today, which is positive.

Q. Can you still feel it? Is there still pain in there?

CAMERON NORRIE: It's feeling better, like I said. Yeah, I'm managing it with my team. I think I'm going to be good. Luckily I'm scheduled to play on Tuesday, so I have a few more days. Looking forward to practice tomorrow.

Q. I think last time we spoke, you were about to head off into the French Alps. What was that like as an experience?

CAMERON NORRIE: It was good. It was actually tougher than I thought. It started off pretty easy, then suddenly we're in the snow in the mountains. We actually weren't able to complete the hike because the weather kind of turned, and we didn't really have the right equipment, the right shoes. It was pretty challenging.

Yeah, a nice part of the world to do it. We picked a good day. Yeah, I think we hiked like 14 or 13 kilometers, almost 2500 meters. It was pretty tough. Yeah, felt good to get back down.

After that, like I said, had a good pre-season. It was definitely a good challenge. Definitely put outside my comfort zone. My fitness trainer absolutely killed me there. He was a beast that day. He was so good. I wasn't on his level just yet.

But it was good fun. I quite like those things. Definitely was a good start to the pre-season. We did a lot of good work. We stayed in Monte-Carlo the whole time and practiced. We didn't play any exhibitions or anything. It was good to kind of get that volume in. The tennis and the quality was really high.

Q. Slightly technical questions about tennis balls. They say the AO ball this year is sort of two-faced: the first three or four games it's quick and firm, then it really fluffs up. Have you had that experience? Would you rather it was a bit more consistent?

CAMERON NORRIE: Yeah, I think it is what it is. I think you have to just be ready for it. It's quite lively when they're new. It's very bouncy when it's hot, which I like. Yeah, I think the last couple games definitely they do fluff up. You have to really hit through the ball a bit more and go for it. I think it's just getting used to it a bit more.

I don't know if that was on purpose or not. I think all the players are aware of that. Yeah, I think you have to be tactically aware when the balls fluff up to be the one being a bit more aggressive and to go after your serve a bit more. Yeah, it is quite nice serving with the new ones. They're flying around quite quickly. They take the slice on the serve quite well.

I think I'm not bothered by it. It is what it is. I'm adapting my game. Yeah, it's all right.

Q. Can I ask you about your coaching team. Is Stephen here?

CAMERON NORRIE: He's not here, no, but he did pre-season with me and Facu. He was so good, such a good influence on everyone in the team. He speaks really clearly on what he wants to see and what his ideas are, which I liked. He came in with some really good ideas. Great fit for the team. It was an unbelievable two weeks with him there.

Yeah, he's not here in Australia. I think he's coming at some point, but just to watch, not to work with me. Yeah, he was so good. Great for Facu as well. Facu learnt a lot. I think it was exactly what we needed to talk about a bit more, tactics.

Yeah, I really liked him. There was no ego involved. He came in and he was really excited. He was loving the sessions and the quality we were bringing. It was a good fit.

Q. Can you tell us a bit more what he has brought to you, without giving too much away.

CAMERON NORRIE: I think really he made me and Facu think a little bit about tactics a bit more and how I want to be playing points, really challenged us on what I want to try to do out there, kind of a bit more of my identity, how I want to play.

Yeah, we worked a lot on the serve. Obviously unbelievable volleys. I don't know if you watched him volley before. He won Wimby doubles.

Yeah, I think it was just really more a cool guy to be around. You can see he's a really smart guy and he loves tennis. Yeah, it was really good.

Q. Why is he not working with you here?

CAMERON NORRIE: Yeah, it was just the plan to do the predominantly training weeks. Yeah, that was the plan all along. Facu was always going to travel and travel to the big tournaments and come to these ones. Yeah, then when I have the blocks in between the slams, I can work with him. We can get together and kind of progress.

We'll see how it goes this year, see if he's going to come to more or less, how it's going to work. Right now it's so positive. He was a great addition to the team. He loves it, as well.

Q. You talked about feeling fresh now. In hindsight, how were you feeling at times in the second half of the season and what you learnt in general about maintaining that mental freshness through a grueling season?

CAMERON NORRIE: Yeah, it was quite tough towards the end. I don't want to talk too much about last season. We've talked a lot already.

Yeah, I think it just goes to show if you drop a little bit, everyone's kind of there to take your spot. The level is so high. I think for me, it just motivated me to improve a lot in the pre-season and really try to evolve my game, keep working on a few things. Yeah, I think just how important it is to stay fresh.

Yeah, I'm not really sure. Schedule could be a little bit... Maybe a few weeks I would change here and there. I think more just coming to practice every day and approaching tennis with a fresh mind and ready to go, ready to compete, definitely goes a long way. I think it shows in this sport, in any sport, just such small margins.

I think, yeah, you drop your level a little bit, you lose a bit of confidence here and there, then you suddenly lose a couple tough matches...

At the beginning of the season, the tough and tight matches were going my way. I was really going in to win the matches. I think I started the year off really strong playing Demon. I won it, played a really good third set tiebreak.

Yeah, I'm really, like, just pumped to be back on the court playing, competing the way I was there in United Cup and the match in Auckland.

Yeah, I just want to keep evolving, keep getting better. Yeah, a lot to learn from last year, but I want to look

forward.

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