

Roland Garros

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Coco Gauff

Press Conference

C. GAUFF/J. Grabher

6-2, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Coco, good performance tonight. Just talk us through your thoughts on the match and what you were really pleased about in your performance.

COCO GAUFF: She's not an easy player. She likes to dictate with her forehand and hit those high, heavy balls. I think I did a good job of taking the time away from her, really rushing her. I think I played well at the net, too, and making those adjustments.

Got broken a couple of times, but I was able to break back mostly.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Did you have a moment with Sinner's match points you were seeing that you were all ready to go, and then it was two more hours, I think?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I was warming up. Luckily on Suzanne Lenglen they tell you there's seven minutes after the interview, so you have a little bit more time so you're not quite fully finished with the warmup. But, yeah, I was probably about 70% done with my warmup. That let cord match point was crazy. Obviously they were both serving for the match multiple times.

But, yeah, it was a long wait.

Q. It's unique to this sport just about that you don't know when you're going to play.

COCO GAUFF: Yes.

Q. Which is odd.

COCO GAUFF: Yes, it is.

Q. But normal. Would you mind giving a list of then what you do across those two hours, whether it's scream or whatever?

COCO GAUFF: Scream (laughing). Yeah, watch the match, to be honest. We're sitting there all in the gym



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waiting and then when a set is over, you go back. I almost fell asleep in the middle of the fifth. I was, like, I wish I could see the future because I probably would have taken a nap in the fourth, but obviously, you don't.

Then, the eating part for me is the hardest because you don't want to eat like a full meal if you're thinking you're going to go on in 10 minutes, but obviously that 10 minutes can turn into 30, then 30 to 2 hours. So I'm really just snacking the whole time.

That's why also on the changeovers I try to eat a lot too. Two bites here and there just to make sure I stay fueled for the whole match.

Q. First, can I just ask, what were you snacking on?

COCO GAUFF: Fruit. Just simple. People always think it's something crazy, but it's just fruit I literally ate.

Q. What kind?

COCO GAUFF: My dad makes a little fruit salad. There's cantaloupe, pineapple, watermelon. Usually there's grapes, but I don't think they have any grapes here, or maybe he forgot. But yeah, those are -- but usually the pineapple and the grapes are my favorite.

Q. My original question was going to be to ask you about your next opponent, Mirra Andreieva. I understand you've practiced with her. I just want to ask maybe I guess in general what you know about her, how well you know her and her game, and give us maybe a little preview of a couple of days from now.

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, obviously I've watched her the past couple of weeks. She's obviously done well.

And the practice with her, it was a good practice. I think she's a great player.

I guess regarding the next match, I don't know, I haven't really thought about it. So I guess my team and I will come up with something.

But, yeah, obviously she's young, but I don't see age as a factor, to be honest. You have to play her as you would play any other person that's grown and strong. Obviously she's proved her position here, and I'm going to try to do my best against her.



Q. Coco, congratulations. The wins keep on coming. You told us a few days ago that one of your favorite superheroes was Spider-Man, and Spider-Man's motto is: "With great power comes great responsibility."

COCO GAUFF: Yes.

Q. I wonder if you could just tell us what you think your great power or skill is on the court, what your great power or skill or hidden talent is off the court, and also, what you think your responsibilities are on the court and off the court?

COCO GAUFF: Okay. So the great powers on the court, definitely my mentality. I guess an all-court player. I can hit the ball. I can do some intangibles.

Off the court, I think I'm a pretty entertaining person to be around. I don't know. I feel like most people aren't bored with me (laughing).

I guess the responsibilities, I mean, on the court I try to present myself the best I can in that moment. Obviously I'm not going to be perfect. I mean, Roger, he's probably the closest to that when it comes to that. I'm not going to be like that, but I think I try to be authentically myself.

Off the court with the responsibilities, I'm pretty aware of my presence in sports and the media is something that I don't take for granted. The reason why I do speak out on all these causes and I do feel a responsibility to do that because I do feel like I'm in a privileged position to be where I am. Maybe that can be taken tomorrow, but I want to make sure everything that I wanted to say was said in that moment.

Q. If I heard right, you just said that your greatest strength as a player was your mentality, and, of course, tennis is such a mental effort. Could you talk about your mentality. My second question is, no offense, but the Heat barely made it into the playoffs, and yet, here they are. Why are they so great, and what can you learn from them?

COCO GAUFF: I guess my mentality, first, to answer the first part, it's something that I think I've always had since I was young. I think for me I'm able to put myself on a scale of knowing that I'm good, but there's a fine line of knowing that you can be good and also knowing that you're not good enough.

You always have to strive for better, and I think the thing about me, I'm always striving for better. I have motivations, and I think it's a great thing most of the time. Sometimes it is a curse because I do over-critique myself sometimes.

I think for me I do feel like in matches I try to never give up in a way. Like, for example, the last couple weeks obviously haven't gone great, and I feel like after losing that first set in the first round I could have easily thrown in the towel or thought these thoughts. I think in the past I might have done that, but I feel like now I'm continuing to grow and to be a stronger mentality.

And the Heat, they're there because of their grit. The Heat, this team that the Miami Heat has right now has a lot of grit. It's something inspiring for me.

I always watched the games, I mean, when we had Bron and Wade, and there was a lot of grit then, but I think there's even more I feel like watching this team, the way they compete as a team, and then obviously we have the leader of the team, Jimmy Butler, and his mentality. That's something that I learn from.

Honestly, believe it or not, their series winning going up 3-0 and then going to 3-all really helped me in my first round because I was, like, if they're not freaking out at Game 7, I shouldn't freak out after losing the first set, and that's literally what I told myself on the changeover.

I think that's what I love about sports and being an athlete. We can all learn from everyone no matter -- you know, basketball and tennis are not similar in any way, but the fact that I'm able to learn that from them is what I love about being in sports.

Q. Do you think there's an art to making the top-10 and then another art to staying there? And, if so, is being a self-critic maybe something that could help in that?

COCO GAUFF: I'm going to be honest. I'm not a ranking person at all. So when I made top 10, it was a cool accomplishment, but for me it was never about staying there. I only want to go upwards.

The goal is No. 1, and I think that's when I would care about the ranking, to be honest. But every other number there, it is I guess pedestals along the way, so I think it is critiquing in a way. But I feel like for me it's not a goal to stay top 10. I mean, the goal would be to be No. 1, and anything in between 2 and 10, I mean, I'm going to be honest, it's not that important to me.

The biggest goal is to win Grand Slams, and I think the ranking will come with the Grand Slams.

Q. We've said that you're playing Mirra in the next round, who is just 16. A couple of years ago you were the new kid on the block. Now you're part of the old guard almost. How does it feel to think that there's now younger players coming on the tour behind you? Now that you're going to be one of the experienced players, is that a weird mindset?

COCO GAUFF: Not really, because when I was her age, I didn't think about -- and I'm sure she's not thinking about her age on the court. And all the people who've played against me when I was her age, I don't know if they were thinking about my age. I doubt they were.

I feel like it really doesn't play a factor regarding when we step on the court. Maybe there could be an experience thing that maybe could show, but honestly I really doubt it when it's someone of her level.

I think she knows the game well, and she's proved her position to be here and proved in her results in the past, so I don't think the age thing matters.

For me, I guess, I've never thought about my age, to be honest. So, yeah, and I've played a couple of people -- I think two times. This will be my third time playing someone younger than me.

Yeah, honestly, the first two times I didn't even think about it because when you step on the court, you just see your opponent, and you don't really think about the personal side of things. You just see forehand, backhand, serve, and all the same.

Q. I was talking to Sara Sorribes Tormo earlier today, and she was talking about being injured for a little while, having a walking boot and having to basically learn who she was without tennis and discover who that person was. I think before the tournament you were talking about kind of maturing now and becoming an adult. What is the challenge of learning who Coco Gauff is without tennis when Coco Gauff is in tennis, like playing all the time and figuring out who you are?

COCO GAUFF: I think for me it's making sure my life doesn't 100% revolve around tennis, and I think it's been like that a lot of my life, being homeschooled and training a lot.

It's something I really do love, so sometimes it is hard. Even the offseason, the tennis offseason is so short, but I'm itching to play. So I couldn't imagine being injured, and knock on wood, I hope that doesn't happen.

It's a process. Sometimes I do have to think about what are my ambitions outside of tennis and what I want to do. I'm debating now thinking of starting college classes. I don't know what I want to study, to be honest.

My immediate reaction was business because of tennis, but now I'm, like, do I want to study business because of tennis, or do I actually want to study it, you know? It's little things like that.

It's just like, I don't know, certain decisions, I feel like a lot

of my decisions are influenced by tennis because it is a part of me, but I have to make sure it's really what I want and not I guess what would help me in that aspect.

So, yeah, I think it's a unique thing, but it's something that I kind of love because I don't feel like I'm trying to push away from tennis, but I'm just trying to find more of who I am outside of tennis.

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