



Miami Open presented by Itaú

Friday, March 20, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

Coco Gauff

Press Conference

C. GAUFF/E. Cocciaretto

3-6, 6-4, 6-3

THE MODERATOR: Welcome, Coco. Safely through to the third round. How do you feel the match went for you today?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, it was a difficult match obviously today. Last time I played her, she controlled the match. Today I was just trying to learn, I guess, how to win against her. Previous times we played I've won I think were on clay, so I think today was just more so trying to figure out the recipe on a different surface.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. How do you make that mid-match adjustment in a match like that where someone who has played you hard before, how do you kind of recenter yourself and make that mid-match adjustment?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I think, I mean, I felt like I was playing good tennis, and then I had the loose game that got broken in the first, and I think I just let that get away from me instead of trying to figure out a way to stay in that set.

Yeah, the second set I felt like I had -- I kept getting a bunch of break chances in the first, and a couple of them were unlucky with let cords and a couple of them I just wasn't aggressive enough. So I think for the second, the idea was just to take my opportunities when I had them.

Yeah, she played some great tennis. Honestly, I thought she just takes the ball so early and she has good timing, so you feel like you hit the ball deep and most people will take a couple steps back. You know, that's how most people are taught to play, and she's the opposite.

So I think for me was just expecting every ball to come back way, I guess, more offensively than you normally would against most other opponents.

Q. Iga yesterday talked a little bit about some of the expectations that she often feels when she goes out on court, especially this season. I'm curious, when you find yourself down a set or perhaps broken on serve, do you ever feel those expectations in the back of your mind, or do you ever even think about them when you're in the middle of a match?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, for sure I do think about them a lot. Honestly, today I wasn't. I had no expectations going in. Most of my team didn't even want me to play this tournament, but I just kind of vetoed that.

So I think I just went into it like every match as a positive, so I think that's why today I didn't. But also, I kind of wanted to prove them wrong. I really wanted -- that's what I was thinking about, honestly, when I went down in the break, I think, was just I didn't want them to be like, Well, I told you.

Yeah, so I feel like I have to win a few more matches to prove them wrong, but I am happy with how today went.



Q. About your injury, you said that nothing was shown on MRI, but do you still feel some pain, or do you hesitate to use your arm?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I mean, I do feel it sometimes. I felt it a little bit today, and I took some Advil. Yeah, but it's definitely not as intense as it was in Indian Wells.

It's such a weird thing, because I have practiced and not felt it, and sometimes, all of a sudden, a shot, you just feel it.

Yeah, I said it's a nerve thing, so I don't really know, I guess, what we have been doing has been working, which is just needling and a lot of soft tissue work and stuff. It's definitely gotten better. Went from feeling it a lot to not a lot -- or, God, sorry, feeling it a lot to a little bit.

But, yeah, I think it will get better. It's just so weird, because it is my left arm, and yeah, I don't know. Every time I talk to some professional about it, it's just the weirdest thing, because my whole life you would think would be my right arm.

Yeah, I think it's just something I take day by day, and right now the plan is just to continue to play. If I ever feel like it's getting worse and turning in the wrong direction, I'll just pull the plug.

Q. Given that you are from and live in Delray, curious what it feels like somewhat of a hometown tournament and to have the crowd, family, friends, and if it affects your routine at all being closer to home?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I mean, only thing is just the distance. I choose to stay at home just because it's only about a 20-more-minute commute from Brickell. So I'd rather just spend the extra 20 minutes in the car driving and be home.

So that's the only difference in routine. Also, I forget I can get my laundry done here, so I keep taking my laundry home just out of habit. And then also just seeing my brothers. Today I threw some footballs, throws with my brother before the warm-up, and hearing my other brother's voice, he was really loud today. At one point he, like, scared me.

They do know tennis etiquette, but I guess they don't care because they have been around tennis their whole lives. He just screams really loud.

No, I think the biggest thing is just wanting to do really well in front of your family, and I had to remind myself today that they're always watching, regardless if they're in person or not, so I tried to take that pressure off.

Q. Talking about the crowd, I don't know if you saw, but Rory McIlroy, the Masters champion from last year, was in watching your match for a little bit.

COCO GAUFF: No, I didn't. That's cool.

Q. Are you a golf fan?

COCO GAUFF: No, I'm not, but I do know who he is. That's cool. Yeah, I didn't notice, but yeah, that's pretty cool. I think he's one of the few people I would recognize out of golf. Maybe Nelly Korda, obviously Tiger Woods. There's probably a few -- Jack Nicklaus, is he a golfer too (smiling)?

Q. He's a golfer, yeah.

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, there's a few names I recognize, but I'm sure my dad would probably be more enthusiastic, but that's pretty cool.

Q. Your next match, not about golf, Alycia Parks will be your next opponent. You played



her at AO a couple years ago. What are your thoughts of playing her the next round?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, Alycia and I have known each other forever, so it's always cool to play her. Obviously I'm expecting a way different match than AO, just considering I feel like she's gotten a lot better, and I feel like I've gotten better too. I think it will be a tough, tough match.

Yeah, she's been playing some great tennis, and I'm always rooting for her. Yeah, I'm excited that we get to play each other. I guess we hit on the public courts, probably about an hour drive from here, Pompey Park, that's where we hit. To be able to play on the big stage in Miami, I guess this is both of our home tournaments. It's pretty cool.

Q. This question is a little bit off-topic, but you are open to talk about any kind of subject like sometimes politics and stuff. I was wondering where that kind of knowledge or where that kind of belief came from, from your family or can you talk a little bit about that?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I think from my family, I think -- you know, you just grow up I think with strong influences in your family. My grandmother actually integrated a public school in Delray Beach. She was the first Black student to attend that school.

So I think when you have someone like that in your life, you just naturally, that's just how I was raised. We talk about tough things in our household. We talk about basically everything.

My parents have never told me to shy away from what I believe in. Yeah, I think I try to always approach these things more on a moral level than a political level.

I think, for me, some people view it as political. I view it more as humane, so I'm always going to

advocate for the moral, good thing to do. Want to talk about taxes and stuff like that, then that's up for discussion, but when it comes to human rights and equality, I think that's just something, it's very easy for me to talk about, because morally, I think that's the right thing to do.

Q. I was going to go back to your response about, so your team didn't want you to play and you kind of wanted to prove them wrong. Do you kind of feed off that sort of energy of proving people wrong a little bit? Like, is that something that not that you like to do, but you kind of feed off that energy?

COCO GAUFF: Yeah, I think so. I mean, even last year my team didn't want me to go to China and then I semi'd and won there. I don't know. I guess it's a thing.

My parents will definitely tell you I'm stubborn, and I will stand on my heel, I'll die on my heel. I think I'm just that type of person. Maybe it does make me play better.

No, I obviously take the considerations of my team, and I did consider it. You know, life happens and you just realize, you know, if I had the opportunity to play this tournament, I'd rather take it up, because you don't know what's gonna happen.

Tomorrow is not a promise. I just want to make sure I make decisions that I know I won't regret in the future. I think I would regret not playing more so than playing, because at least if I played and did bad, well, I guess I have time to train for clay season, whereas if I didn't play, I'm just going to be watching the tournament and be, like, I want to be out there for three weeks. I'd rather torture myself maybe for one day than three weeks.

FastScripts Transcript by ASAP Sports

