

“I compare our tournament with a Porsche 911”

16/04/2024 For Markus Günthardt, the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix is an event for the whole family. “It’s our goal and we want to continue down the path,” says the Tournament Director. “We’re proud and happy at being able to present our audiences in the Porsche Arena with so many top players once again this year.”

Markus Günthardt talks…

…about the return of the top stars Iga Swiatek, Aryna Sabalenka and Coco Gauff in the Porsche Arena:
“These players are naturally the best that one as a tournament director could wish for. I’m actually rather proud they’ve decided in favour of our tournament, and that they’ll be back in Stuttgart. With a total of eight Top 10 players, there really is more than just a Grand Slam whiff. I’m also pleased for our spectators as we can present them with such a world class field.”

…about Iga Swiatek's chances of a third consequtive Stuttgart win:
“She’s obviously the big favourite. But it won’t be a walk in the park. But I also don’t she will have her

work cut out with only Aryna Sabalenka and Coco Gauff. It's quite possible that a player we don't currently have on the radar will be in the mix for the title. By winning for a third time, she would join world stars like Lindsey Davenport and Maria Sharapova in the history books. Even though she's won a lot in her career, I actually think it's a big incentive."

...about the first steps when planning the tournament:
"The same goes for the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix, after the tournament is before the tournament. The focus at the start of the planning and the preparations is on the overall concept. We ask ourselves what do we want to improve and what new things do we want to do, no matter whether it's for the players or for our audience. We scrutinise everything. After deciding upon an idea, we then present it to Porsche AG. If we get the thumbs up from Zuffenhausen, then we work on its implementation."

...about the importance of an attractive off-court programme of entertainement:
"In my view, it's very important. Especially as we want the spectators to spend the whole day in the arena, but we can't expect them to spend ten hours a day sitting in the stands. We have to create the conditions in which they're very happy to stay in the arena for a long time. In the past years, we've instigated a lot of things in this respect and we've turned the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix into an attractive event for the whole family. We've worked really hard to go one better."

...about the challenge of continually improving the tournament:
"It's obviously not easy. We've nevertheless managed it quite well in the past. We don't want any radical reforms. But such an event is never the finished article, you continually find opportunities to improve things. I like to compare our tournament with the Porsche 911. Every year when a new 911 is launched, I have the feeling, it's perfect. But engineers and designers nevertheless continually manage to make it even better. That's exactly what we try to do with our tournament."

...about the current situation in women's tennis:
"For the first time in a long while, we're seeing a phase again in which there's a real battle for the No. 1 spot. And it's a good thing. Women's tennis is benefitting from the rivalry between Aryna Sabalenka and Iga Swiatek and their battle for the tennis throne. And now they have been joined by a Coco Gauff who has improved immensely and who, after her triumph at the US Open aged only 19, has also staked a claim for the crown. One thing is for sure, the next few years are going to be very interesting and exciting. Also at the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix."

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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