

“There's now a little person in my life that's more important than tennis”

08/04/2024 For Angelique Kerber, the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix is the first tournament in Germany since the birth of her daughter Liana. Beforehand, she will turn out for Porsche Team Germany in the Billie Jean King Cup in Brazil. In an interview, the Brand Ambassador talks about her comeback, the challenges of being a mother on the tennis tour and the anticipation ahead of her return to the Porsche Arena.

Angelique, how much are you looking forward to the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix?

Angelique Kerber:“The Porsche Tennis Grand Prix has a quite special flair. It's something I missed a lot last year. I have lots of wonderful memories of the tournament and am looking forward to playing my best tennis in front of the fantastic spectators in the Porsche Arena.”

How important is the tournament for you? What have you missed most of all?

Angelique Kerber:"The week in Stuttgart was always one of the year's most important. I above all missed the feeling of standing out there on court in the full Porsche Arena and soaking up the super atmosphere. I watched the tournament on television but it's obviously no substitute. The fact that I like the tournament so much is naturally also down to my long-time partner Porsche which has always stood by me, no matter how things are going on court. It's a great partnership."

The year will see nine Top 10 players in action, and you are one of a total of nine Grand Slam winners. What do the players like about Stuttgart?

Angelique Kerber:"It's not for nothing that the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix has been voted so often as their favourite tournament. They simply feel at home in Stuttgart and find conditions in which they can perform at their best. It's the most important thing for them. The organisation is perfect. The tournament also offers a good opportunity at the start of the clay court season to prepare for the French Open. A very special motivation is also the Porsche that's at stake for the winner. The sports car lures many players to Stuttgart."

On the weekend that the tournament begins, you will be in action for Porsche Team Germany in the Billie Jean King Cup in Brazil. How important is it for you?

Angelique Kerber:"I'm looking forward to returning to the team and playing for Germany. For me, it's a big honour. We're facing a tough task against Brazil. But I hope I can help the team with my experience, both on and off the court."

The match is taking place in São Paulo, a 12-hour flight away. Did you have to think twice about playing what with all the travel stress?

Angelique Kerber:"As far as the travel stress is concerned, Brazil is definitely not a lucky draw for us. But we have to see things positively and try to make the best out of it. The real challenge is the 12-hour return flight and then having to get back on court one or two days later at the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix. It's going to be difficult with the time change and the jetlag. But who knows, perhaps I'll have one or two good matches on clay in São Paulo and will therefore come to Stuttgart on a high."

You returned to the big tennis stage at the start of the year in Australia. How satisfied are you with your comeback up until now?

Angelique Kerber:"Before taking the step, I knew full well that I had to be patient and that everything was going to take a while after the long break. But I'm quite satisfied. It's getting better all the time."

At the start of the season, you won the United Cup with Team Germany and then afterwards lost a few matches. Did you feel any special pressure at the time?

Angelique Kerber:"No. I don't put myself under pressure anymore. I love tennis. My heart is in the game. I love the feeling of standing on court and taking in the fans' emotions. It gives me strength which is

why I've come back. But what people expect of me no longer interests me. Those times are over. I knew I needed a few matches. In Indian Wells, I then saw that things were going in the right direction. It gave me confidence and made me optimistic about the future."

How difficult is it giving oneself the necessary time and remaining patient?

Angelique Kerber:"Patience isn't really one of my strengths. But I knew that it would take a bit of time before I started playing well and getting back to my former level. I still love tennis, but I'm first and foremost a mother with my whole heart, and it's a joy. There's now a little person in my life that's more important than tennis. It makes it easier to be patient."

What's it like travelling around the world with littleLiana?

Angelique Kerber:"I'm so grateful that she copes so well with the flights, time changes and the climate. She just gets on with it all. As a mother on tour, you have to be very flexible and spontaneous as you can't plan everything weeks in advance. You can only take things day by day and you have to keep reorganising everything."

In Indian Wells, you reached the round of the last 16 after wins against top players. Why did things suddenly start going so well?

Angelique Kerber:"Everything simply clicked. As I said before, after such a long break, you need time and patience. I knew full well that if I work hard then success will also come at some stage. That moment arrived in Indian Wells. I saw that I'm on the right track and that I can also beat top players again. It's given me a lot of confidence."

For its latest edition, "Christophorus", the Porsche magazine visited your tennis academy in Poland where many juniors are practicing. How important is the academy for you?

Angelique Kerber:"In my academy, I offer kids the chance to play tennis. It's always a moving experience watching them. It reminds me of my career beginnings. For me, it's important that I give something back to my sport through the academy, and that I can share the experience I've gained during my career with the juniors. Whenever I practice there myself, I take the time to watch them and give them the one or other piece of advice. I really enjoy it."

Porsche in Tennis

The Porsche Tennis Grand Prix is the flagship of Porsche's worldwide involvement in women's tennis. First played in Filderstadt in 1978, the long-standing Stuttgart tournament has been held in the city's Porsche Arena since 2006. It stands for tradition and innovation, as does the Porsche brand. As the most loyal sponsor of women's international tennis, Porsche has accompanied the WTA's oldest indoor event right from the start. Porsche has additionally been supporting international women's tennis for

years now. Together with its subsidiaries, the sports car manufacturer will to date therefore be the automotive partner of the WTA tournaments in Cluj-Napoca (Romania) and Bastad (Sweden). Angelique Kerber and Emma Raducanu give Porsche a face in tennis as Brand Ambassadors. Jule Niemeier, Maria Sakkari, Karolina Muchova, Anett Kontaveit and Iga Swiatek are additionally “Friends of the Brand” in their home countries. As a premium partner of the “Deutsche Tennis Bund” (DTB – German Tennis Association), the company has been supporting Porsche Team Germany in the Billie Jean King Cup since 2012 and fosters up-and-coming players in the Porsche Talent Team and the Porsche Junior Team.

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