

Karolina Pliskova is the new Stuttgart tennis queen

29/04/2018 Karolina Pliskova is not yet in possession of a driver's licence – but a dream car. By winning the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix, the 26-year old Czech received, alongside the prize money and world ranking points, a 718 Boxster GTS as the main prize.

In the high-class and thrilling final at the long-standing Stuttgart tournament on Sunday, she defeated the impressive Coco Vandeweghe 7-6 (2), 6-4 in front of capacity 4,500 crowd in the once again sold-out Porsche Arena.

On the final day of an exhausting working week in Stuttgart, Karolina Pliskova and Coco Vandeweghe once again gave everything they had. The evenly-matched first set was sewn up by the world No. 6 on a tiebreak. After going a break and then 5-2 down in the second, it seemed as if the match was virtually over but Coco Vandeweghe dug deep in an effort to ward off defeat. She fought her way back to 5-4 but then Karolina Pliskova, whose three-set quarterfinal match against the French Open winner Jelena Ostapenko lasted until past midnight, had no desire to put in any more overtime and wrapped up the match and her tenth career WTA title with her first match point after one hour 56 minutes.

“The car is the best motivation”

“It was a very intensive match. Winning this wonderful car is the best motivation to finally take my driving test,” said Karolina Pliskova before Dr. Wolfgang Porsche, the Supervisory Board Chairman of Porsche AG, handed her the winner’s trophy and Oliver Blume, Chairman of the Executive Board of Porsche AG, chauffeured her onto court for the winner's photo in the carmine red 718 Boxster GTS. “I got off to a slow start but after an intensive week I felt pretty tired. And my serve wasn't quite on song,” said the overjoyed winner before congratulating her opponent on her excellent tournament week. “Playing Coco is never easy. She doesn’t give you many chances and the few you get, you have to take.

It is exactly what Karolina Pliskova did to crown a successful week for herself in Stuttgart. The journey began last weekend for her, and the Czech team, when she helped secure a place in the Fed Cup final. For her, the win against Angelique Kerber gave her self-confidence a big boost and even the loss against Julia Görges was very important for her. “It showed me that I have to work hard if I’m to be successful. Nothing comes from just sitting around.” Words she remembered it during the final on Sunday when her legs were getting increasingly tired. It made her dig deep and show her best tennis under difficult conditions, and it all paid off. “The longer the match lasted, the better I felt. At the end, I started to wobble a bit but that’s normal when such a fantastic car is waiting behind you.”

Coco Vandeweghe impresses the whole tournament

Even though it was not quite enough to secure the win in Stuttgart, the American nevertheless played an impressive tournament. Intensive and aggressive. Though the red clay is a surface she tries to avoid at all costs, the world No. 16 put the fear into the Top 10 stars in the Porsche Arena. On the way to the final, she not only stopped the US Open winner Sloane Stephens in the race for the carmine red Porsche 718 Boxster, the most coveted trophy on the WTA Tour that was parked the whole week on the rostrum at the back of Centre Court. The world No. 1 Simona Halep was also unable to halt her progress and title-holder Laura Siegemund had to give up her dream of a second Stuttgart victory in succession.

“I had a fantastic week here in Stuttgart and am proud of what I achieved. The spectators were a great support,” she said and thanked them for their backing in her own special way. Immediately after smashing her racket in the middle of the second set, she presented it to a fan in the front row. “I play for the people. They should see that I’m living my dream in the way I play the game. In the end, she promised, “I’ll be back next year and will win.”

.@KaPliskova is the new Porsche Tennis Grand Prix champion!
World's No.6 triumphes over the American @CoCoVandey 7-6(2) and 6-4.
Congratulations, Karolina! #PTGP2018 #porschetennis #passionreturns
pic.twitter.com/7STnC1owDS

The laid-back American was given a standing ovation by the spectators in the Porsche Arena and then

acknowledged Karolina Pliskova as the deserved winner of the long-standing Stuttgart tournament. She is the first Czech to claim the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix. Czech-born Martina Navratilova, the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix record-holder, was an American citizen when she bagged the first of her first six titles in 1982.

Anna-Lena Gröenefeld and Raquel Atawo win doubles

Nice success for Anna-Lena Grönefeld – the Porsche Team Germany player has won the doubles in the Porsche Arena together with her American partner Raquel Atawo. In the final, they defeated Kveta Peschke (Czech Republic) and Nicole Melichar (USA) 6-4, 6-7(5), 10-5. The victors also now have a Porsche – a two-wheeler. They were both presented with a Porsche Bike RX, an attractive off-roader with a high-end carbon frame in the Porsche Motorsport look.

Aces for charity

This year the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix once again supported social projects through its Aces for Charity campaign. Porsche donated 100 euro for each of the 263 aces delivered during the course of the tournament. Porsche duly rounded up the donation to 30,000 euro. The sum was divided up equally amongst the tournament's three charity partners, "Stiftung Agapedia", the "Olgäle Stiftung für das kranke Kind" and the "Verein zur Förderung des Hospiz Stuttgart". The cheques were handed over before the final by Lutz Meschke, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Board and Member of the Executive Board, Finance and IT to, amongst others, Mario Gomez the German international footballer who was in the Porsche Arena as the Agapedia ambassador.

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