

Porsche Tennis Grand Prix 2018

29/04/2018 The 41st edition of the long-standing tournament in the Porsche Arena in Stuttgart at a glance.

Like the New Yorker Coco Vandeweghe, Karolina Pliskova encountered few difficulties in keeping her chances of a maiden title in Stuttgart alive. The current world No. 6, who last weekend dashed Porsche Team Germany's dreams of a Fed Cup final place when playing for the Czech Republic in the Porsche Arena, ended Anett Kontaveit's impressive streak of wins. The surprise package of the tournament, the outsider from Estonian thrilled the Stuttgart audience throughout the week with her resolute game and performances. Ranked No. 31 in the world, she had shown little respect to top players like last year's runner-up Kristina Mladenovic, but she was no match for Karolina Pliskova who did not drop a single point on her serve in the second set.

"It's going to be a close match"

The strong-serving Czech, who was on court until past midnight in her quarterfinal match against Jelena Ostapenko, was happy at reaching the final – but she wasn't satisfied with her game. "I was still

tired and made too many errors at the start," she said. "It was only at the end of the first set that I dug deep and found my game. For me, I was a bit out of sorts but It's important that I can win such matches." A preview of the final? "It's going to be a close match. Coco has played many good matches and appears to be very self-confident. A good serve will be the key."

The prospects should not cause her to lose any sleep before the final. This season she has already hit 160 aces, more than any other player. Additionally, she played and beat Coco Vandeweghe 7-6(2), 6-4 last year at the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix – but that was in the second round. Finals are normally completely different affairs.

The doubles final at the 41st Porsche Tennis Grand Prix will include Porsche Team Germany's Anna-Lena Gröenefeld. She and her partner Raquel Atawo (USA) will play Nicole Melichar (USA) and Kveta Peschke (Czech Republic).

More information in the press release.

In the two hours and 55-minute duel between the outsiders, Anett Kontaveit (Estonia) progressed for the first time to the last four in Stuttgart with a 7-5, 6-7(6), 6-4 win against Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (Russia). She will now face Karolina Pliskova. The world No. 6 from the Czech Republic defeated the French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko (Latvia) in a top class and enthralling three-set victory - 5-7, 7-5, 6-4 - that lasted beyond midnight.

"Every player has to give 100 per cent"

"The match was decided in the mind," said Karolina Pliskova. "I'm so happy and relieved to have reached my first semifinal in Stuttgart. Now I want to go all the way to the final but it's not going to be any easier." Just how difficult it is to assert oneself against the tough opposition at the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix is something Caroline Garcia knows only too well. "The tournament is one in which every player has to give 100 per cent in every match if they want to win," said Caroline Garcia when looking forward to Saturday's clash with Coco Vandeweghe. The New Yorker, who was given a Top 20 wild card by the tournament organisers after her manager missed the deadline, acted the cool blonde when previewing the upcoming semifinal. "It'll be a new match on a new day. We'll see what happens."

The only German in the penultimate round of the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix is Anna-Lena Grönefeld. Paired with American Raquel Atawo, the Porsche Team Germany player will take on the top-seeded Andreja Klepac (Slovenia) and María José Martínez Sánchez (Spain).

More information in the press release.

None of the former Stuttgart winners will be involved in the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix quarterfinals on Friday. After Julia Görges and Maria Sharapova departed the tournament in the first round, the 41st edition of the long-standing Stuttgart tournament also ended early for Laura Siegemund and Angelique

Kerber. “I’m sad and disappointed. I tried everything, wanted to fight because this tournament with its magnificent crowd is very dear to me. But it just wasn’t to be,” said Angelique Kerber after her match on Thursday against the Estonian Anett Kontaveit. After losing the first set to love, she was forced to retire when 2-0 down in the second. “Though I had a niggle in my thigh over the past few days, after my bad start in the Fed Cup loss, I so hoped that this week in Stuttgart would end on a high note. But it's unfortunately not going to happen.” Another player unable to finish her match was the Spaniard Garbine Muguruza. After losing the first set 7-5, the Wimbledon champion was unable to continue after suffering a lower back injury.

For Laura Siegemund, the second round in the Porsche Arena was a case of played well but defeated. The local hero's dream of a successful title defence came to an end in her match against the American Coco Vandeweghe (USA). She once again thrilled the crowd with her passionate style of play. Even the loss of the first set did nothing to unsettle her. Quite the opposite as the Porsche Team Germany player fought back to win the second. Loudly backed by the excited crowd, she came close to advancing to the quarterfinals but was eventually beaten 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 by the world No. 16, who had eliminated US Open champion Sloane Stephens in the previous round.

Marta Kostyuk, the highly talented 15-year old from Ukraine once again excited the Stuttgart spectators with enthralling tennis. Against Caroline Garcia, she made life hard for her French opponent before losing narrowly 6-1, 3-6, 7-5.

Two other Top 10 players also progressed at the expense of qualifiers to join the world No. 1 Simona Halep in the quarterfinals. Karolina Pliskova, the world No. 6 from the Czech Republic, lived up to her status as the favourite by beating the Russian Veronika Kudermetova 7-6(4), 6-3. Another favourite to progress was the world No. 5 Jelena Ostapenko from Latvia after registering her first ever main draw singles win at the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix when defeating Zarina Diyas (Kazakhstan) 6-3, 6-0.

More information in the press release.

The day’s first singles encounter was not much shorter as Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (Russia) needed three sets – 7-6, 5-7, 6-4 – to down the American Madison Keys who was making her debut in Stuttgart. The US Open champion Sloane Stephens however exited the tournament relatively unspectacularly. Not showing anything like the qualities that landed her a first Grand Slam title in New York last summer, she lost 6-1, 6-0 against her countrywoman Coco Vandeweghe. Everything was over in only 56 minutes and the world No. 16, who was given a Top 20 wild card, was comfortably through to the next round.

Impressive qualifiers

Marta Kostyuk, the highly-talented 15-year old from Ukraine, was joined in the second round by two other qualifiers. The world No. 193 Veronika Kudermetova (Russia) knocked-out the Spaniard Carla Suarez Navarro, who is ranked 168 positions higher, 7-6(5), 6-2. And the Kazakh Zarina Diyas was an

easy 6-2,6-3 winner against lucky loser Carina Witthöft (Germany).

In the doubles, Porsche Team Germany's Anna-Lena Grönefeld has progressed to the second round. Together with her American partner and title-holder Raquel Atawo, she beat the Australian-Ukranian duo of Monique Adamczak/Lyudmyla Kichenok 7-6, 3-6, 1-0 (1). No longer in the tournament is the Porsche Talent Team Germany pairing of Lena Rüffer und Antonia Lottner. They lost 7-6 (2), 2-6, 1-0 (2) to title-holder Jelena Ostapenko (Latvia) and the Ukrainian Olga Savchuk an.

More information in the press release.

In the second round on Thursday, Caroline Garcia will face 15-year old Marta Kostyuk, the youngest player in the tournament. The top talent from the Ukraine overcame the tenacious Antonia Lottner from Porsche Talent Team Germany 6-4, 6-1. Turning her attentions to her next opponent, her eyes lit up. "Sure, I'd have loved to have played Maria but as a Top 10 player, Caroline is also a great challenge."

Julia Görges surprisingly downed

Marta Kostyuk lives to play another day but Julia Görges' journey came to an end in the first match of the evening. After enjoying the adulation of the excited crowd after her magnificent win against Karolina Pliskova in the Fed Cup on Sunday and then going on to win the Turkish Airlines Tiebreak on Monday, there was little left in the tank on Tuesday for her match against the Czech qualifier Marketa Vondrousova. The 2011 Stuttgart winner was defeated 6-2, 6-2 but was not going to search for excuses. "I've gone through a few days that were high on emotions and I wouldn't want to miss any of them. Unfortunately, I couldn't stay energised and take it into the match. I'm now just shattered. One of those days. The world won't come to an end because of it." Karolina Pliskova, her Fed Cup opponent on Sunday, did better when showing her A game to beat the Dutchwoman Kiki Bertens 6-2, 6-2.

Laura Siegemund also progressed comfortably to the second round. The local hero and title-holder, who only recently returned to the WTA Tour after a long injury break, beat the Czech Barbora Strycova in two straight sets 6-4, 6-3. Her next opponent will definitely be an American – either the US Open winner Sloane Stephens or Coco Vandeweghe. After her opening win, Laura Siegemund first of all savoured the moment.

More information in the press release.

Porsche CEO Oliver Blume with Angelique Kerber, Kristina Mladenovic, Coco Vandeweghe, Julia Görges, Laura Siegemund, Caroline Garcia

The first main draw match was played on Monday evening. It produced a 6-2, 6-2 win for Slovakia's Magdalena Rybarikova against the Russian Daria Kasatkina. In the second round, she will meet the top-seeded Simona Halep, the current world No. 1.

More information in the press release.

Time for some qualifying #R2 results!
V. Kudermetova vs. S. Hsieh 6-3, 6-3
V. Lepchenko vs. L. Rueffer 6-4, 6-1
Z. Diyas vs. Anna Gabric 6-3, 6-1
M. Vondrousova vs. O. Dodin 6-3, 1-6, 6-1

Congratulations to all winners! #PTGP2018 #porschetennis #Qualifying pic.twitter.com/O8cQrjnz50

More information in the press release.

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The Porsche Tennis Grand Prix will this year offer its audience a quite special champions' reunion – with Maria Sharapova, Angelique Kerber, Julia Görges and Laura Siegemund in the main draw, it means four former Stuttgart winners will be appearing in the Porsche Arena. In the 41st edition of the long-standing tournament, eight Top 10 players and a total of 16 from the Top 20 will be competing for a Porsche 718 Boxster GTS as the main prize. The final will be played on April 29.

Headed by the current world No. 1 Simona Halep as the top seed, the world class field brings a whiff of a Grand Slam atmosphere to the Porsche-Arena. Other top 10 stars alongside the Romanian, the winner of the 2017 Porsche Race to Singapore, are Wimbledon champion Garbine Muguruza (Spain/No. 3), Elina Svitolina (Ukraine/No. 4), French Open winner Jelena Ostapenko (Latvia/No. 5), Karolina Pliskova (Czech Republic/No. 6), Caroline Garcia (France/No. 7), US Open winner Sloane Stephens (USA/No. 9) and Petra Kvitova (Czech Republic/No. 10). They will be joined by eight Top 20 players including the strong Frenchwoman Kristina Mladenovic, who lost last year's final after a tough three-setter against Laura Siegemund, plus the Americans Coco Vandeweghe and Madison Keys, the 2017 US Open finalist.

"This year, we will again be able to offer our spectators many exceptional tennis moments," said Tournament Director Markus Günthardt. "Such a strong field is a dream. Especially pleasing is that so many Top 20 will be coming here. It promises exciting and hard-fought matches straight away in the first round."

Four Germans definitely in the main draw

As the current world No. 11, Julia Görges has never been ranked higher in her career. The 2011 Stuttgart winner and Angelique Kerber, who claimed the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix in 2015 and 2016, are however not the only Germans in the main draw. Title-holder Laura Siegemund has been given a wild card as has Antonia Lottner from Porsche Talent Team Germany. In the high class qualifying

tournament, Carina Witthöft and Andrea Petkovic will be battling for one of the last four main draw berths. Qualifying would be an attractive tournament in itself. With the Frenchwoman Alizé Cornet and Zarina Diyas from Kazakhstan in the line-up, two Top 50 players will head the seedings. Thanks to a wild card, Katharina Gerlach, Katharina Hobgarski and Lena Rüffer from Porsche Talent Team Germany plus Julia Middendorf from Porsche Junior Team can put themselves to the test against world class players in qualifying and, in doing so, gain valuable experience.

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