

Marathon Classic presented by Dana

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Toledo, Ohio, USA

Jillian Hollis

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us here in the virtual interview room. If you do have any questions, please feel free to utilize the chat function to let me know.

Thankfully I am here first joined today by Ohio native and LPGA Tour rookie, Jillian Hollis.

Jillian, how are you doing today?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: I'm doing great. How are you doing?

THE MODERATOR: I'm doing fine myself. Now, I know this is not the year or 2020 that you might have expected as your rookie year.

What has this year been like so far?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: It's been weird because I've never had a summer off. I've just tried to make the most of it. I played the first event in Boca and I played the two events in Australia, and felt like I finally got my feet under me.

I had a caddie, everything was going great. It was like, Oh, okay I got the hang of this LPGA thing.

Then global pandemic. I was down in Georgia when -- like practicing for a couple days getting ready to go out to Phoenix and got the email that most of the west coast swing was going to be canceled or postponed.

I had never had less direction in my life. I had always had my whole year planned out, whole schedule and everything, flights, hotels. It was in limbo.

I know everyone is going through tough times during COVID, but I really tried to make the most of it. Month went by and we just were still unsure, and two months turned into three, three to four.

I had a great time. I worked on a lot of areas of my game. I was able to spend time with family and friends that I've never gotten to do before. It was really nice.

THE MODERATOR: I know you got to spend some extra time over in Australia kind of as a vacation for yourself for a couple days. What was that like, to be a touring professional and finally being able to say that as you travel the world?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: It was so great. I wish we were going to China. I played an LET event while I was over there, and my buddy, Lauren Stevenson, and I were planning on going to Sydney and staying at Manly Beach and hanging out until we were going to go to China.

Then we found out China was canceled, so we were like, Okay, well we're still going to go vacation. It was great. I've never been to Australia. I'm glad that I was able to go play golf and also enjoy fruits of your labor and to go and explore the rest of Australia.

I met so many great people and just ate so much avocado toast. It was unreal. I had a really good time over there.

THE MODERATOR: Nothing some good avocado toast.

JILLIAN HOLLIS: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: As you started focusing on what you were going to do during this quarantine, I know you said you looked to improve your game. Did you ever put down the clubs and pick up a new hobby or do anything on the side?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: I had done that -- I mean, just coming from Ohio and living here in the winter I do that pretty much every winter. December, January, I'll take off a lot of time and just try to pick up a new hobby. I learned to play the piano a couple years ago. Just taught myself one winter and have done that.

It's that's been kind of like a cool thing that I can do. I've been fishing and hanging out, going to the beach. Just like fun unemployed person things to do, I guess.

No, it's been great. I did actually do a lot of golf over quarantine, and I think I would've picked up more hobbies or gone more places, but with corona and everything, you don't know. We have never had something like this.

So I don't want to go anywhere or risk anything. Kind of



sitting put and spending time and building relationships was like my main thing I did during the quarantine.

Just playing a lot of golf.

THE MODERATOR: I know you talked about what you used to do spending your winters here in Ohio. This is like a hometown tournament for you.

JILLIAN HOLLIS: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: How special was it to be able to resume the LPGA Tour season last week at Inverness and a couple miles down the road here at Highland Meadows?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: It's so great. I was actually just thinking about I was doing this press conference that the last interview I did, it was -- I did a lot of rookie interviews at the beginning of the year and I got asked the question a lot, What tournament are you looking forward to the most?

Judd Silverman has been so great to me, and I played in this tournament -- I was counting the years -- seven years ago as sponsor's invite as an amateur, and then played a couple years ago again as a sponsor's invite as a professional.

So it was really cool. Last year when I was playing Symetra, I think -- I was doing really well. I won two tournaments and I got the invite to come play in this tournament last year. I told Judd, I said, you know, I want to come back next year as a rookie. That's my goal, rookie on the LPGA. I want to come back as a member of the LPGA Tour so I was solely focused on Symetra.

He's like, Jillian, I respect that. That's awesome. So I had said that the Marathon was the tournament I look forward to the most, and I feel like I jinxed everybody, because a big global pandemic happened and now this is like the first tournament back.

Sorry, no, I'm really excited for this week. I'm glad that my family can come watch as well.

THE MODERATOR: I know you just talked about tournament director Judd Silverman, but how special has the Marathon been to your career? You've been a sponsor invite a couple of times before. Just that transition from amateur to professional, how special has it been to play in a tournament like this?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: It's been so special. And we have a lot of history here. My mom played professional golf. She played on the Futures Tour and Judd gave her a sponsor's invite like long, long time ago when she was playing. So

we always joke about that. He's like, Tell my sponsor's invite that I said hello.

We chatted earlier this week and he told me that. So I always get a good kick out of that. There is so much history here. I'm only an hour and a half away. To play Inverness last week, I know the setup was a lot harder than I anticipated, but I've played out there before.

A lot of members at the club I play at in Rocky River are members at Inverness as well. So it's cool. There is a lot of connections. I wish circumstances were different and they could come out and watch me, because they've been talking about and how there were supposed to be fans.

I know everyone will hopefully be watching from home.

THE MODERATOR: Now that you just said that Highland Meadows is definitely different than Inverness last week.

JILLIAN HOLLIS: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: Have you been out on the course yet? If so, what have you seen from it and what has it led to your game so far?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: Yeah, I played 18 this morning and I played 9 yesterday. I've played this course a lot of times, even since they redid it.

It's really good. It's like a placement golf course. You don't hit driver off the tee on every hole and I like that. I like when you have to think about your tee shots.

The fairways are so good. I love coming back up north and playing on the bent grass. It's so nice. The greens are always good out here. Very consistent. They're a little tricky, like back to front and front to back. There is a lot of slope that you might not be able to see.

But just playing it over the years I've kind of felt that and know where the breaks are. I'm really looking forward to playing this week. It'll be interesting.

THE MODERATOR: With that, we will open up for questions.

Q. Go Dawgs.

JILLIAN HOLLIS: Go Dawgs.

Q. There is a big difference between playing golf and competitive golf. What have you done in your practice to try to retain some sort of competitive edge? Play games with yourself? Any matches that you've done?



What have you done to try to keep sharp?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: Are we allowed to say gambling? I've played a lot of matches with like friends or people -- members at the different golf courses that I've gotten to play when he was in Atlanta.

And just little games we play with each other, whether it's for something small or something big, like -- I mean, pushups or ice cream or something. Like just going to play for something. That's kind of what I've done. I always play a little bit better when I'm under pressure.

I think just keeping the pressure on and keeping like tournament mode obviously for five months, it's hard to keep the pressure on for that long and not really have a tournament to play in.

But, no, I've gotten a lot of really good practice in and swing changes and everything as well. So just mixing that in and seeing how it looks on the course during all this time off has been really beneficial to my game.

THE MODERATOR: I know also as we return here I just want to know, have you gotten any messages -- I know you can't visit them -- but from family or friends knowing this is kind of, like I said, earlier your hometown tournament? Have you received any good luck messages or words of advice?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: Yes. I've got a lot of text messages and a lot of support from the members of the club that I play at in Rocky River. Like I was saying, every time I go up there I hear, We're starting up in a couple weeks. When are you starting? Good luck.

I've really felt the support since I've been home. It's so great that we have a tournament so close to my hometown. It's been here for so long. Like there is so much history here. I feel very loved and I'm very grateful that we're playing again on the LPGA and that it's in Toledo, Ohio.

THE MODERATOR: I just also want to ask, too, you have played this tournament as an amateur and a professional, and this is the second time as a professional.

Is it a little bit different knowing that you now have LPGA Tour rookie in front of that, or is your mindset more just go have fun with it and take it one shot at a time?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: My mindset is always go have fun and take one shot at a time and try to play your best.

I mean, playing as an amateur, you've never done something like this and it's oh, wow, look at all these

people; this is what they get to do for a living. It's so cool. Just here to learn and take it all in and enjoy the experience and play golf.

As a professional you're like, okay, I've done this before. You know, not on the LPGA Tour yet, so like if I win this week and you get other kinds of thoughts into your head.

But I think my time on the Symetra Tour last year really helped me game. I did half of a season in 2018 after I finished NAAs at University of Georgia and got like eight tournaments under my belt, and then went back to Q-School and didn't make it through. It was the most devastating thing ever for me at the time. I was so upset.

I played really well in the beginning of my Symetra starts and it just kind of faded away. I just worked really hard in the off-season and made a lot of really good goals for the 2019 Symetra year and just went out and played my game and stayed focused and met so many great girls and built so many relationships.

Like if I was at Symetra tournament I would know everybody there. Like it was the best feeling. And to travel on my own and do all that and to really like experience what professional golf is like for a whole year on a developmental tour as good as the Symetra, I wouldn't trade it for the world -- even though Q-School was so devastating at the time.

Looking back now a year later, this is the best thing that could have happened to me. So I feel much more mature this year as a professional.

THE MODERATOR: How excited are you for the next couple events that will be on your schedule? Will you be traveling to Scotland, and how have you prepared for being able to go a couple tournaments in a row like this?

JILLIAN HOLLIS: I am not going to Scotland. Just a personal decision. But it's been so great just getting back and kicking the rust off a little bit and kind of figuring out, okay, we're back in competitive golf. This is what we need to do.

But I'm just taking every week at a time. I mean, the future is unpredictable, and I'm so glad everything is going so smoothly and it's gone smoothly with the PGA Tour and other sports organizations that are starting back up.

I hope it can continue to move in a really good direction. I'm just so grateful to be playing right now and to be out here. Like this has been a rookie year that I'm going to remember forever in different ways than most rookies in the past might, but I'm very grateful that I have a job again

and that I'm back out here playing, and with my best friends, too.

I didn't realize how many hugs I gave in the beginning of tournament weeks until COVID hit and I have to give air hugs or social distance.

No, it's still great. The atmosphere is amazing and everyone seem to have a really good attitude about everything. I'm just very happy to be back on the LPGA.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us and thank you Jillian for sitting down with us.

JILLIAN HOLLIS: Thanks for having me.

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