

Marathon Classic presented by Dana

Thursday, August 6, 2020

Toledo, Ohio, USA

Sophia Popov

Quick Quotes

Q. Sophia, take us through what happened there on the back nine. When did you really start to feel that you were heating up out there?

SOPHIA POPOV: Probably about midway through the back nine. I mean, I knew I was hitting the ball really well all day as far as my irons go. Tee shots were a little all over the place, but I kind of missed in the right spots so I always had a chance at -- like I always had a chance to reach a green.

I hit some really good irons, and it was just a matter of time whether I was going to make the putts or not. Then at some point I started rolling them in and gained confidence. I said, All right, if you can roll in one, you can roll in a couple more, so that's pretty much what happened.

Q. I know you were just talking to me, that 9 tee shot for you was a little difficult. Still, what a way to end your round.

SOPHIA POPOV: Yeah, I at least gave myself a chance at par. I just don't love that tee shot. To me I'm never quite sure what I should hit. I caught the edge of the bunker. I mean, I carried it two yards too short and just didn't have a shot in. You know, made the best out of it.

Laid up short of the water and hit a good wedge shot in. Gave myself a chance and hit a good putt; just didn't break as much as I thought it would.

I'll take 5-under any day.

Q. Did you learn anything from last week when you were caddying?

SOPHIA POPOV: Oh, yeah. You know, it was a great experience. AVD, or Anne van Dam, is my best friend, so I get to watch her play all the time, which is awesome, because she's just an incredible ball-striker.

I think I learned a lot of stuff from the way she approached different shots, especially at Inverness. It was really tough.



You had to figure out where you want to land the shots. Today I think strategically I was doing a way better job than I usually do. I really picked my spots, where do I want to land these, and played a lot smarter.

I think I learned that from caddying last week, because we had to play so smart. I said, It doesn't matter whether the course is scorable or not. Your strategy really shouldn't change. Give yourself chances and try to make some putts and try to just play some consistent golf and not put yourself into trouble.

Q. You're out there by yourself this week. You've got yourself a push cart. What's this like for you?

SOPHIA POPOV: You know, it takes me back to the junior days, or college days even. I really don't mind it. You know, I've had some great caddies on the bag and there are some good ones out there, but, you know, my push cart never talks back.

No, I'm kidding. It's just nice. It's very quiet. It's just me, myself, my own thoughts. I have no one to express any negative thoughts to. So it really puts me a little bit at peace out there.

Like I said, just takes me back to junior days where I didn't have a care in the world.

Q. What are some of the challenges have having to do everything yourself around the course?

SOPHIA POPOV: You know, I was lucky today. The girls had two awesome caddies that helped me out. They said, If you need anything, and there was a couple bunker shots where they said, We got you. It was a nice relief from last week where I felt like I needed 20 arms in the rain.

But it's a little stressful sometimes because you have to take care of everything. At the same time, I'm a very fast player so I'm never really worried about slowing anyone down. Takes me about ten seconds. Once I get to the ball, make my decision.

So I'm not too worried about it. As long as I have great caddies in the group like I did today. They were awesome and really helped out. It was nice.

Q. So this pull cart did double duty today. What happens when you both make the cut?

SOPHIA POPOV: You know, we're going to have to put another two wheels on it. No, if we both make the cut, you know, it's my push cart. It's obviously going to me. But it's nice.

Anne was pretty happy because a lot of people question exactly what it is, but it's actually -- like in Germany it's a very high-end push cart and very light to pull. People don't realize that, so she was very happy that I gave it to her because she has a staff bag this week.

Yeah, if we both make the cut I'm obviously taking it. I said, We do have a push cart in reserve. There is an alternate push cart. She's going to have to grab that one.

Q. You played on a lot of the Cactus Tour events and had success. How important was that for you coming into the season?

SOPHIA POPOV: It was just a big confidence booster. I mean, Arizona golf, I play that all winter, so I'm kind of used to the courses out there.

At the same time, we had some good competition out there. Mina, Carlota, Anna, Linea. We had a bunch of good players out there, so it was great because you knew, okay, if you can win a tournament out there I'm actually playing some good golf right now. I'm not just playing okay golf and winning a tournament. I'm actually playing well.

So winning three events out there really was just a huge confidence booster. You know, I tried to take all that with me into this week and hopefully next couple weeks, and be nice to have a win again sometime.

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