

Marathon Classic presented by Dana

Thursday, July 8, 2021

Toledo, Ohio, USA

Matilda Castren

Quick Quotes

Q. Matilda, coming off your finish last week at the Volunteers of America Classic, here you are with a 5-under round, bogey-free on the first day. What was working so well for you?

MATILDA CASTREN: I was hitting the ball pretty good today and I made a lot of putts. I had a few closer birdie putts and I made those. Birdied 17. Had a shorter putt for birdie.

I did have a couple errant shots off the tee, but I managed to make par. And, yeah, it was overall just a good ball striking day combined with some good putting.

Q. What holes were those errant tee shots that you talk about?

MATILDA CASTREN: It was 15 and 16, and 17 I was actually behind -- after my second shot I was behind the leaderboard so I got relief from that being in line of sight. I had maybe 50 yards into the green and hit it pretty close and made the putt.

So those were kind of a little unexpected, especially that one. But making a birdie on that hole, it is really nice. Managed to make par on, what was that, 16 where I was pretty far left.

15 I was left as well. I was in the bunker. Went from a bunker to another and made par.

So those always feel nice.

Q. How satisfied are you with your ball striking, especially after this iron, this par-save kind of day for you?

MATILDA CASTREN: I think I'm in a good place. I think I need to hit a couple 3-woods and drivers on the range and kind of get that sorted out. I think I'm in a good spot going into tomorrow, and my irons have been really well for the past couple -- well, past month really.



So I'm excited about the coming few days.

Q. I mean, just expand on what you just said. This past month you're obviously playing very well. What's clicked for you? What's been different than earlier in the year?

MATILDA CASTREN: I was thinking about it earlier today and yesterday, and I think everything started from the U.S. Open. I qualified. I played 36-hole qualifier. Got a spot out of Colorado. Played in my first U.S. Open.

I think that honestly changed everything, playing well there. I was in a really good position after three rounds, and that just gave me a whole lot of confidence going into the next week.

Then I won, and that just -- those couple weeks have been such a game changer. And to think that I got into the Open because of that 36-hole qualifier, it just means -- like those little moments and like 36-hole qualifier, it was in freezing rain, I mean, Colorado, it was super cold day, so it was a grind.

That kind of like made the whole rest of the season completely different. If that day had been different I don't know where I would be.

Q. Going to today, you're 10 shots back before you step on the first tee box. How difficult is that? Do you try to block that out and go shoot whatever round you can shoot? What's that like to know someone shot a 61?

MATILDA CASTREN: I didn't know someone shot a 61, but, yeah, it means that I have some work to do for the weekend.

I normally don't look at the leaderboard when I play. I always ask my boyfriend can he look at the scores of my friends so then I can say, Kelly, good job, or whatever.

But I normally don't look at the scores myself. I try to just focus on my own game and do the best I can. Yeah, like if I have a good day I'll be happy with that. Not comparing myself to others.

Q. And then I know you have to win one of those LET



tournaments to make the Solheim Cup team; is that right?

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah.

Q. How much of an emphasis, priority is that for you? Are you trying to not think about it? How much do you want to make that team?

MATILDA CASTREN: Well, I want to make the team. I mean, it's one of my dreams and goals since I was a little girl and it would mean everything to me.

Obviously it was disappointing to hear that I wasn't able to be a captain's pick without being an LET member, so I'm just going to go and give it my all I got and try to play my best.

Q. Did you play Inverness Tuesday?

MATILDA CASTREN: I didn't play it Tuesday, but I played it last year. It's a great course. Beautiful. Really, really good golf course. It's going to be a good test.

Q. I was just going to ask, you come off the finish at the Volunteers of America Classic and you go right to this week and then to Finland, you're going to go to Evian. You have such a stretch of events. Have you been able to reflect upon what you did at the VOA Classic, and how do you compartmentalize the next few weeks for yourself?

MATILDA CASTREN: I'm just going to take week by week, day by day, and try to rest as much as possible. I know it's going to be a lot of traveling.

The Finland event is three days, so that'll give me one extra day of rest, one extra day to prepare for Evian and get there.

So I'm just taking it day by day and see where it goes.

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