

ShopRite LPGA Classic

Presented by Acer

Friday, October 1, 2021

Galloway, New Jersey, USA

Seaview, A Dolce Hotel

Matilda Castren

Quick Quotes

Q. We are joined by Matilda Castren after a 5-under 66 in the first round of the ShopRite LPGA Classic presented by Acer. Matilda, you made the turn at 5-under, including an eagle at No. 9. Great start. A little hiccup on the back, but finished strong. Take us through your day and how you felt you played.

MATILDA CASTREN: Well, I actually missed the greens both on 1 and 2. I managed to make up and downs on both. I think that kind of gave me some confidence with my putting. I made a couple like I think they were maybe 6- and 8-footers, so it's always nice to make big putts from that distance, especially for par.

Then I hit a couple close and made some putts, so got off to a really good start. 5-under after 9; eagle was a really nice bonus on No. 9. I was just trying to get it on the green and two-putt for birdie, hope for a tap-in birdie. It was very nice.

And three-putted twice on the back, two bogeys, 15 and 16, so that was kind of unfortunate. On 16 I was kind of like right on the slope. I was very surprised it didn't come back down the hill. It was just a really tough putt from there. Really fast. Just putted off the green. It's hard to stop it, so made bogey there.

Had a pretty close look on 17, and then 18 it fell, so I'm pretty happy overall with my round. Just couple things to clean up for tomorrow.

Q. Just how far was the eagle putt on 9?

MATILDA CASTREN: How tough it was?

Q. How far.

MATILDA CASTREN: Oh, how far. I think it was maybe 20 feet, little down the hill, left to right. I missed it a little bit. I thought it was going to be low on the right side, but it kind of hang on and went in, so that was nice.



Q. And how good is it obviously to come back and birdie 18 after the back-to-back bogeys a couple holes earlier?

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah, it was really nice. I mean, finishing with a birdie is always nice. Kind of lifts up the spirits for lunch time and going into tomorrow.

I mean, it's a short par-5 so I just wanted to give myself an opportunity. I was in the rough after my tee shot. It was kind of a bad lie. Didn't hit a great shot out of there, but my third shot, it was out of the rough as well, but I managed to stop it.

I had maybe 15 feet and, again, a little left-to-righter down the hill and made that.

So obviously really nice to finish with a birdie.

Q. Seems like you say you're in the rough here, you're in the rough here, you missed a green here, you missed a green there. To shoot 5-under and kind of be a little bit all over the place you got to feel I would think good about that going into the weekend?

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah, it was a few shots off the tee that I missed on 1 and 2, and then on 18 and 16 I was in the rough.

But other than that, I'm pretty happy with how I hit the ball. I wasn't always super close, but I hit a few good wedges. Other than those few holes I was on the fairway and I put myself in good spots.

Q. Given the nature of your two wins and you got the winning point in the Solheim Cup, you're arguably the golf story of the year. How does that relate to how you came into the year? What were your goals and expectations and have you exceeded them?

MATILDA CASTREN: This year has definitely exceeded my expectations. I think it's fair to say that I was going into this year really hoping to keep my card and hoping to have a good year. I had a couple good finishes last year, and



that kind of gave me more confidence going into this year, just knowing that if my game is there I got it and I can have some good finishes and good tournaments.

So honestly last year helped me a lot and, yeah, this year has just been a dream come true. A lot of goals accomplished and just really trying to finish it off on a high note.

Q. Do you feel as though you're still riding a wave of momentum toward the end of the year now?

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah, a little bit. I mean, Solheim was amazing, such a cool experience. Yeah, just everything that I expected and more. Still kind of riding on that wave, but also every week is different, every week is a new course, so you're kind of like battling different things every week.

So yeah, just trying to play some good golf and keep it going.

Q. Is there any temptation like at a 54-hole event to freak out a little bit when you drop shots, especially on a course like this where you got to take it pretty deep?

MATILDA CASTREN: I don't think freaking out, but you definitely have to take advantage of the shorter holes, especially the par-5s.

Yeah, you have to be kind of aggressive. The scores are going to be low. It's a 54-hole event; the scores are going to be low. I mean, there is not that many holes in the tournament, so you have to kind of make everything count.

Q. Are there any holes you approach as bonus holes or are they all just green lights?

MATILDA CASTREN: Honestly, it just depends on the conditions. Like in the morning it was pretty windy. It actually died down surprisingly. No. 1 the approach is kind of difficult because the green is kind of like going front to back, so it's hard to stop the ball.

And No. 2 it was downwind, but it's hard to judge the distance with the greens being so firm. So some of the holes you're kind of like hoping to get on the green and give yourself a putt.

There was a lot of the birdie opportunities out there, too.

Q. I guess Solheim Cup is so different than what you usually play week to week. Is there sort of a transition back when you come back to normal stroke play or you're so used to it?

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah, it's very different. Solheim the crowds are super wild and loud and everyone is cheering. There is just like a different atmosphere. I guess people are more pumped up and hyped and fist pumping for pars and fist pumping when they win a hole.

So it's very different coming to a regular tournament. Arkansas was a lot different than Solheim. There was still quite a bit of crowds out there, and especially 17 they were pretty loud. So there was a little bit of similarity, but of course match play versus stroke play, it's very different.

The course is obviously night and day really Inverness and the courses in Arkansas and here, so it is very different. But I had a couple weeks off, so that kind of zeroed everything, and I just wanted to start from scratch.

Q. Does it make it hard to pump yourself back up in a way, get going again, when you're on such a high for a while and you're, like you said, starting over?

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah, I mean, I had those couple weeks off and I kind of got used to just like relaxing a little bit, but I have to remind myself that the season is not over yet. There is still I think six tournaments left, so I did have to kind of push myself again to keep going.

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