

# Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Orlando, Florida, USA

Lake Nona Golf & Country Club

## Gaby Lopez

### Quick Quotes

**Q. Here with 2019 Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions winner Gaby Lopez. Off to a fabulous start, 5-under 67 today. Handful of birdies on the card. Take us through your round.**

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, today was pretty clean round. I think we barely made any mistakes. My caddie and I did a great job with strategic, just being able to attack the pins that we were comfortable with.

The ones that we were not, just going to be smart. And, yeah, being able to hit the shots that I want, it's really nice.

But also I was having a rough time yesterday at the range, and having my coach with me, it's key. Being able to have and create a good team solid around me, it's just pretty flawless.

**Q. I mean, hitting 16 of 18 greens you must've figured something out. What were you working on yesterday to get yourself in control for today?**

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, pretty much just being able to keep my fundamentals tight. Sometimes I get a little wavy on my backswing. Just trying to be centered and be -- have a solid posture. That's what we been working on.

And honestly, it was just easy. You know, for me it was -- I guess just the energy out there, having to play with Marcus and with Joe. It's amazing just to learn from them.

**Q. Obviously having won this event before you like this format, this tournament. What's it like for you to play with the celebrities? How comfortable are you playing with people like that?**

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, I'm comfortable out there, being able to talk just different topics other than golf and what you did in the holidays. But being able to talk about mentality and psychology out there, I mean with the biggest superstars in each event out there, it's pretty amazing.



So I really take advantage of that. I like to grow internally, not only on the golf course, so that's makes me -- just motivates me.

**Q. Anything that they said today or you heard from celebrity athletes in the past that's really stuck with you?**

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, I think Marcus and I were talking about following your instinct. Sometimes it's the right number and the right club and you just don't feel it. Following your instinct and feeling comfortable and hearing your gut sense, it's hard to do when it's very clear in numbers, but when you step up there and the lie is not comfortable enough, being able to be true to who you are and don't care of the result has been a good lesson.

**Q. You played Gainbridge LPGA here last year. How different is this golf course playing just a month earlier?**

GABY LOPEZ: Oh, very different. I mean, today we had a perfect weather, perfect time today with the wind. It was barely wind. It was warm. I hear the weekend is going to be a little cooler than it is right now. Yeah, it's a little different.

Maybe not as dry as it could be a month later, but, yeah, I think the course is in amazing condition. The groundskeepers and the crew, they do an unbelievable job just rolling the greens and making it so perfect for us.

**Q. And then last question: Off to a pretty hot start. How much confidence does that give you going into the next three rounds with some of that colder, more challenging weather coming on the weekend?**

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, I was just talking to my caddie. At this beginning of some holes they weren't probably the best holes that I could have started off with, but, yeah, being able to create momentum and getting comfortable with different pin positions, because when you play at home every pin position is in the middle of the green and it's not like here when you have 4 off the left, with wind off the right, being able to be very careful with picking the line, target.



So just getting rhythm, momentum, and we'll see what happens in the weekend.

**Q. I wanted to ask about the setup of the course today compared to last year, because this is a golf course that could really trip up the celebrities if you wanted to make it difficult.**

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, for sure. This is a bigger challenge than it was last year at Tranquilo Golf Course. But I do believe that it just brings the best out of them as well. They know they have to focus a little bit more because the fairways are much tighter, greens are slopey.

So they know they have to bring their A game to play this golf course, and I think they like the challenge. All of them, they've dealt with pressure and they know exactly what a smart athlete needs to do when they feel uncomfortable. I feel that's exactly what all these guys have in common.

**Q. Do you thrive in this situation? You have won regular tournaments going down the stretch where there is pressure, but being able to talk to Marcus Allen and not have everything focused so much on the next shot, does that open up your relaxation at all?**

GABY LOPEZ: For sure. Being able to, like I said, talk to Marcus about different things, about football and then talking to Joe about NBA, and then talking about baseball, just different topics and different games, it makes us relax. Yes, it does.

I feel that I also have a good relationship with my caddie that I can do that even if they're not here.

So I like to chat. I like to just open up when you have to, but also laser focus when I have to.

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