

Gainbridge LPGA at Boca Rio

Thursday, January 27, 2022

Boca Raton, Florida, USA

Boca Rio Golf Club



Gerina Mendoza

Quick Quotes

Q. We're joined by Gerina Mendoza after a great start to the 2022 LPGA season, a 5-under par 67. Gerina, solid day for you all around. How did it feel to first off just to open your year like that?

GERINA MENDOZA: Yeah, this is definitely a dream start and kind of what you go for working off the off-season. Coming in the first tournament you kind of don't know kind of what benefits you're reaping from your hard work in the off-season.

So to come out here and be bogey-free, worked really hard with my coach back home, and definitely clicked today.

Q. You started on the back nine; only one birdie at No. 15, but then you made the turn with four straight birdies to really solidify a strong afternoon at Boca Rio Golf Club. What was it about that turn that allowed you to turn it on?

GERINA MENDOZA: Actually, when I turned and went to 1, I thread my drive a little right and there was like these three trees, the only three trees on the hole and I was right behind them, so I had to kind of chip out with a 58.

Ended up having to hit an 8-iron into the green, so kind of a backwards par-5. Made the putt and just was really solid with my ball striking all day today.

The next one I hit pretty close, followed with the next two, so ball striking is really, really good. Just kind of going back to kind of pre-baby, kind of the same thoughts that I had before I got pregnant.

Q. What's some of those thoughts, so pre-baby thoughts that run through your mind, one or two of them?

GERINA MENDOZA: Yeah, so I felt like the last couple years there has been a lot of body, arms, and hands thoughts, and obviously you don't hit the ball with where you body, arms, and hands.

You hit it with the club head, so I'm like, Why am I not thinking about the club head? Because I've kind of lost sense in spatial awareness of where my club head is.

So that's what I've been working on, is being really aware of where my club head is and how do I get it to make the ball do what I want it to do.

Q. And you also mentioned a round like this kind of really makes you feel good about your off-season work. What were some of the things you did in the off-season on the golf course to get you ready for this moment and to start the year off on a good foot?

GERINA MENDOZA: I think just getting, like I said, getting back to my roots. I'm definitely a feel player, and I may have strayed a little bit off the beaten path on being a little more technical.

So just trying to be more feel, and like I said, just focusing on the club head and my body will move according to that.

You know, just golf is hard because it's not a reaction sport. I grew up playing all reactive sports, and, you know, if you can understand how to make the ball do what you want it to do, that's I think when you play your best.

I feel like that's where I'm at.

Q. Then what do you remember from this event here? I know it's been a couple years. What do you remember from Gainbridge LPGA 2020?

GERINA MENDOZA: I remember it was a tough course, and still is a tough course. My caddie and I counted up seven shots that we hit with an 8-iron, 9-iron, and pitching wedge.

Other than that, I hit two 7-woods into greens, one on a par-4 and one on a par-3; 5-irons, 6-irons, and so it's definitely playing a lot longer this year with it being a little softer.

But lots of bunkers, so it's definitely a ball-striker's course, and you got to be pretty precise off the tee and into the



greens.

Q. You recently participated in the annual Morgan and Friends. What was that like to be back out supporting not only a good friend, but a good cause in the Boca Raton area?

GERINA MENDOZA: Yeah, she is someone that's very dear to my heart, not just my friend. The work that she does with her foundation and raising money for breast cancer awareness is incredible.

To be a part of that is really special, and I couldn't be more proud of her and how she has worked so hard to do that and carried along an amazing career.

Now she's doing awesome on TV, and to do this behind the scenes, it's pretty incredible. It's very inspiring.

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