

The LPGA Drive On Championship presented by Volvik

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Ocala, Florida, USA

Golden Ocala

Ally Ewing

Press Conference



AT GOLDEN OCALA

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon. Welcome to the virtual interview room for the LPGA Drive On Championship presented by Volvik at Golden Ocala.

We are joined now by 2020 LPGA Drive On Championship and Reynolds Lake Oconee champion and the current No. 37 in the current women's Rolex Rankings, Ally Ewing. Thank you for joining us.

ALLY EWING: Yeah, thanks for having me.

Q. When here hear the words LPGA Drive On Championship and Reynolds Lake Oconee champion, how good does that sound?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, it still sounds pretty cool. And obviously I saw a couple of the highlights that LPGA posted last night with the reshowing of the tournament, so obviously brings back great memories, and hopefully I can channel some of that good play I had that week for this week.

Q. So the replays aren't just for fans. They're for players, too.

ALLY EWING: Yeah, I mean, I think any player that can draw some confidence off some shots that they hit or pull back some good memories, it's always good for your golf game. To relive certain shots and just draw some positive feedback from it is really good.

Q. Absolutely. What do you remember from your first win on the LPGA tour last October?

ALLY EWING: I remember it was my birthday. I remember my family was there, mom and dad, and just being at a golf course that was kind of close Mississippi, one of our closest tournaments that we have being a Mississippi resident is just a lot fun to win in the south, get that first win.

It's just been an incredible confidence booster for me and just kind of trusting that the process that I've had since junior golfer, college golfer, has paid actually off in achieving one of my goals and winning on the LPGA.

Q. Just to see how the LPGA Tour DriveOn campaign had blossomed over the last two years to where sponsors like Volvik are picking up and calling Mike Whan wanting to associate with an LPGA DriveOn Championship event, what's that like to see from player's perspective the LPGA brand and how it's taken off?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, I think it's awesome. Obviously the Drive On Championship for me is always going to be a special one. But I think just the message that the LPGA is trying to send with that campaign. I think it's reaching far beyond golf. But to use our platform, the LPGA Tour, to reach the younger generation or even kids who are just constantly being reminded to Drive On, whether you have a deficit or a setback in life. Maybe you have Type I diabetes. Maybe you have something in your life. It's just a reminder to Drive On in this life and in golf.

Q. You mentioned you are one of those who suffer from Type I diabetes. Can you talk about the low points at which you thought, Man, I don't know if I should be doing this anymore and how you fought through those moments?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, when I found out right after I got my tour card from Symetra Tour the overwhelming feeling for me when my doctor called, it just felt like, how am I going to actually overcome this and I'm just now getting started on the LPGA.

So for me specifically it was kind of like an, Oh, no moment. In reality, doctors, technology, have advanced so far in the Type I diabetes community that if you really take care of yourself there are so many things out there for you to be able to manage it.

It's not my fault that I have it, but it's something that I have to take care of. I had a doctor put that in perspective for me. He was like, It's not your fault you have fault that you



have Type I diabetes, but it is your problem that you have to take care of now.

That was kind of a huge eye opener for me in just knowing that it's an everyday battle and some days are different than the others just to manage it stay on top of things.

Q. We played this golf course several years ago. It was different. A lot colder then. We had 50,000 fans out here, a ridiculous sum. What do you remember about those times?

ALLY EWING: Well, I didn't play specifically this event in 2015. I remember watching it on TV a little bit. Heard from a lot of girls how cold it was and obviously the fans, but I think we can draw back even from 2019, just the familiarity of having fans and how nice it was and how nice it's going to be when we're able to get there. Because we are going to get there.

It's different right now, but I think it doesn't take away from the golf tournament, from the passion we have to play out here. Obviously having fans is just a different type of feeling, but it's still a lot of fun to tee it up every week and compete and do what we love.

Q. We talked a little bit earlier about the way the schedule is going to be after the next break.

ALLY EWING: Uh-huh.

Q. To have the first three events in Florida, it's kind of refreshing to start off with a nice Florida swing, isn't it?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, it's super refreshing, especially for me. I was in Mississippi when that winter storm hit and was stuck indoors for five or six days. I was starting to get pretty anxious and feel pretty just not prepared at all for golf.

Even though I played in the Diamond, it still felt like it had been a while since I had competed. It's great to be in Florida. For the most part we can rely on pretty good weather. Obviously we can have some showers, but temperatures should be pretty good here.

So I love starting in Florida. Getting on some familiar golf course, familiar grass. For me growing up bermuda is a big grass in my state, so it feels pretty comfortable here in Florida, and hopefully we can have a good week this week.

Q. The Aon Risk-Reward Challenge this week is the par-5 12. That's a tribute hole to Augusta National's Par-5 13th.

ALLY EWING: Uh-huh.

Q. First all, how awesome has it been to see the dedication of Aon to the LPGA tour members with not only the prize money, but their devotion to a winner at the end of the season?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, I mean, I think we saw the huge success that it was in 2019. Obviously last year Aon still stuck around but we did things a little bit differently with not having the risk-reward hole.

But just to see a hole dedicated on the PGA Tour and the LPGA to play for an equal type of prize money, I think it's pretty cool. For them to step up and hang in last year during a pandemic and still now, still struggling.

But it's a huge hole and it's a fun hole because it replicates obviously a hole at Augusta. It'll be fun to see how we play it this week. I know today we play the back tee, but they have a potential up tee for it. It definitely presents its challenge with the water in front and the bunkers in the back, so we'll see how it plays.

Q. You beat me to the second question. What does to play like with the water? How did you approach it when you stepped on the tee today?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, today I hit a really good drive, but I did want to go ahead and try and take a crack at the green, even though probably in a tournament round I probably would not have gone for it under the situation.

But I tried to -- sometimes in a practice round I try to get myself out of my comfort zone and hit shots that I might not normally hit just in case the opportunity presents itself that I need to hit that shot.

From the back tee I could see how with the right wind it might get downwind and then you can go for it with the comfortable yardage, but the back tee for me, I feel like I'm going to take a more comfortable approach and have a wedge shot in.

The up tee I definitely feel like it's going to be attainable to go for it.

Q. Well, 2020 was a crazy year for everybody. You got married last year to Charlie Ewing. He is the head coach of the women's golf team at Mississippi State University where you are now an assistant coach as well. First of all, how has married life been? Second of all, how is the coaching gig?

ALLY EWING: Married life has been great. Things are getting really busy now, but it's been a lot fun to kind of step in and just be around the program. Obviously still being in west point but not as a volunteer. I was kind of around the program but I didn't get super hands-on or anything like that. Charlie asking me to be a volunteer right now, it's been a lot of fun being around the girls.

Hopefully from their perspective they can just see that they can learn a few things from me, but most of all I want them to feel comfortable to ask me questions and just to know I'm just a normal person. I do play on the LPGA, but as a whole I want to be there for them throughout life and for them to be able to lean on me as kind of the coach's wife type situation.

So it's been fun. COVID has not been very good for us to kind of have them over and kind of entertain and see them from that perspective, but it's been a lot of fun to be on the golf course and hit some shots with them, play a couple rounds. I'm going to be going to the Liz Murphey with them in a couple weeks and help him coach there.

Yeah, I just love it. I'm happy to see him in a role he loves and he's going to do a great job with the program.

Q. Have they had any of those moment where, Wow, we have an LPGA Tour pro here with us. Do you notice that at all with them?

ALLY EWING: Couple times, but I feel like they have definitely warmed up to me. I try not to give off any sort of intimidating factor. Just let them know that I'm really personable. They've been really great. We gotten to have a much better relationship and I think I comfortability, which I think is really good.

Q. This is a Solheim Cup and Olympics year. Obviously Olympics postponed a year. Just the two up together. You competed on Team USA for the Solheim Cup in 2019. How high on the priority list are those events in your 2021 goals, and what will it take to achieve them? Is there a specific one that's at the top?

ALLY EWING: Solheim is definitely at the top for me. Competing in the last one and losing makes you definitely want to get back on the team, and that event is just super special. Any time you get to represent your country I think it's a huge privilege, an honor, and I'm going to make a -- I'm not going to necessarily do anything different, but I feel like if I take care of what I can take care of and be me, that is perfectly going to be good enough to make the team.

There are a lot of great players that are making a push to

make the team and I know it's going to take really solid golf from here until the team is selected to make it, but, yeah, I feel like if I take care of what I am supposed to take care of, I should have a really good chance to be on this team.

Q. Last one we have: March is Women's History Month. In honor of that, take your time. Think about it.

ALLY EWING: Okay.

Q. Which woman outside of your family - can be in golf, doesn't have to be in golf - which woman outside of your family inspired and you why?

ALLY EWING: Hmm, tough question, because my mom and my grandmother would obviously be a great answer. I mean, I feel like there are so many women specifically in the golf world that paved the way. I don't know if I can put a name on any one in general.

I'm just going to go against your question and say my mom. I'm going to give my mom all the credit. She's definitely a huge inspiration to me. And just to see how she treats everyone and the life she lives and how she loves others, it's just a huge -- away from golf like just one of the hugest privileges I have is to call her mom.

Q. Is there any quote or mantra or saying that she's ever said to you growing up are anything that's stuck with you over the years that you maybe carry on still today?

ALLY EWING: Nothing like just in particular, but, you know, moms -- she always had the right thing to say. Whether it was good round or a bad round, she kept things in perspective. Sends my Bible verses and just has always been a huge loving person. She never meets a stranger. She's willing to smile, ask someone how they're doing. She could never have met the person.

So I think just in that way, every day of my life I hope to just bring a smile to people's faces. Because, I mean, even though COVID has happened, the people that I bump into on tour say, When are we going to see your mom? That's the type of mark she makes on people, and I think it's really special.

Q. Makes people remember her.

ALLY EWING: Uh-huh.

THE MODERATOR: Awesome. Thank you for your time and best of luck this week.

ALLY EWING: Thank y'all.



THE MODERATOR: Hope get another Drive On
Championship win under your belt.

ALLY EWING: That would be nice. Thank you.

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