

The LPGA Drive On Championship presented by Volvik

Friday, March 5, 2021

Ocala, Florida, USA

Golden Ocala

Leona Maguire

Quick Quotes

Q. Nice couple days. Sitting at 4-under right in contention heading into the weekend. How does it feel and how does the game feel today specifically?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I've been playing really solid last couple weeks. Felt comfortable with my game heading into this week. Been hitting my irons a lot better, which is something I spent a lot of time working on over the off season not.

It's nice on these greens when they're so firm and sort of the rough areas around the greens trying to avoid chipping as much as possible this week, and so far I've been doing a pretty good job at that.

Q. Last year you had I believe it was 28.81 putts per round; this year you're just above 31. Obviously we haven't played that many so we don't have a big dataset to work with. What is it with your putting that's going on right now?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Why? Is the number higher?

Q. No. Why is it so good? I mean, you lead the tour last year.

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I mean, it's something I guess if college my coach got sick of hearing I'm hitting so many greens and missing so many putts and I could have been so many more under.

So we spent a lot time on it, learned AimPoint, and my green reading has been better, I think. Yeah, I suppose that putting is a game of confidence really, isn't it? The more putts you see going in the more that seem to go in, which is nice.

Q. You birdied the last two holes both days. What is it about those two?



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LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I mean, I guess they just suit my eye. Played them very similarly both days. It's funny, 18 all the practice rounds I went for it in two and last two days I've laid up.

Yeah, I have been working a lot on my wedges so 18 has been good to me. Just hit two really nice shots in on 17 both days. Obviously played them in different orders today, but hit a really nice 7-iron in to about six feet today and nice 8-iron in same today, so...

Q. I want to go back to your putting for a second. A lot of times the stats can be deceiving. You can hit a green in regulation and have a lot of 60-footers where you're just not going to make those; and you can hit a green in regulation and have a lot 15-footers. You're going to make more of those. Is your ball striking contributing to the good putting stats or just making a lot of good putts?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I think it's a bit of both. Even last week I had so many chances last week I felt like that didn't quite hole my fair share. When you're hitting that iron as good -- I suppose I didn't know I was leading the putting stats for most of last year because it didn't feel like I was putting that good because I felt like I was missing more than I was getting.

Overall it added up to a lot lower number than I probably thought. Yeah, my irons are something I've relied on heavily throughout my career, especially in college and after, the amateur game, and again when I turned pro. The better I'm hitting my irons it takes a little bit of pressure off my putting I guess.

Q. When did you learn AimPoint?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Midway through last year.

Q. Who taught you?

LEONA MAGUIRE: My coach back home. So I had been use greens books before that, but I guess I wasn't using them properly. Yeah, now that I'm doing it properly it helps a little.



Q. Did you pick it up quickly or did it take some time?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Something pretty natural actually. It was something I stayed clear of for a long time. I didn't like the idea of AimPoint. I liked playing quick and I didn't want it to slow me down. It's actually is really quick and I really like the new way of doing it.

It's really helping my an breaking putts, which I suppose you have to allow for grain and stuff these last few weeks in Florida. But it's really helped me on those ones, seeing the ball go in, especially when there is a lot of break.

Q. Where you are on the greens specifically and with your putting stroke and how comfortable you feel over a putt, and you mentioned working on your short game, do you feel like some aspects like working on your short game are just the next step to where we can find Leona the winners circle sooner than later?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, it's just I think fine tuning everything. Just making as many birdies as possible and get myself as far up the leaderboard as possible. I didn't hit my irons as well as I would've like last year. A lot of 30-plus finishes; it was consist, but it wasn't consistently high enough. I think that's been the difference these last couple events starting the year.

Q. Was last year a nice - especially with the guaranteed two-year at least, was it nice to ease into things last year?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, for sure. I mean, I suppose it was nice to see some of the golf courses that we actually got to play the second half of the season. Got to play in a few majors, which was nice as well.

Just tried to bank all that experience. Got a whole year's work in with my caddie, Gary, which was nice getting used to each other and seeing different shots and yardages and all of that.

Yeah, tried to learn as much as I could from last year and bring it into this year.

Q. I got to ask about the ISPS Handa World Invitational. Golf company you worked with. How exciting was that when you heard the news that it would be officially on the schedule this year?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, it's really exciting. The Vic Open has been really fun the last few years to play in and it's going to be a similar format, so equal prize money, which is massive. It's fantastic we have an event on home soil. I guess the only shame is it's the week before the

Olympics and we're going to be traveling that week.

But, yeah, I think it's great. Hopefully they'll have some fans out. Irish people love their golf and it'll be well supported. It's a great venue and should be a great week.

Q. What's your favorite replica hole?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Out here?

Q. Uh-huh.

LEONA MAGUIRE: I mean, 11. 11 is probably -- I've never played Augusta, but seems pretty realistic to me.

Q. What do you hit into that green?

LEONA MAGUIRE: We've been hitting either 7- or an 8-iron. It's tricky. The wind has been swirling lot the last couple days so you're really not quite sure until the ball lands where it's going to go. It's a tough hole. All of the replicas really are. Thankfully I played the postage stamp replica, I said to my caddie, Gary, a lot better than I played it a few months ago. That's progress, too.

Q. Is Troon the only course that has the replica out here that you've played. Have you played Muirfield?

LEONA MAGUIRE: I have not. St. Andrews. Played St. Andrews. They're the only two. I haven't had the pleasure to go to Augusta yet.

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