

LPGA MEDIHEAL Championship

Wednesday, October 5, 2022

Somis, California, USA

The Saticoy Club

Matilda Castren

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome inside the virtual interview room here to the LPGA MEDIHEAL Championship.

I am pleased to be joined by the defending champion Matilda Castren. It has been a wild year since you've been able to become a Rolex first-time winner on the LPGA.

When you think about this tournament, yes and new location but this tournament in general, what are some of the things that stick out to you about what your win was like last year?

MATILDA CASTREN: Well, like you said, it's a new location so it's not the same scenery, but I live only few hours from here, so I've been able to come up here to practice a little bit and see the course beforehand.

It's gorgeous. Nice views. The mountains are cool around here. So I definitely feel very comfortable here. It's a nice feeling to kind of see your face with the trophy. It's definitely new, but something that I would like to get used to.

So, yeah, it's been a long year and I feel like last year's MEDIHEAL it was a long time ago and so many things has happened since then, but I am very happy to be back.

THE MODERATOR: That win really helped jump start a lot of things for you last season, especially leading into Solheim. When you think about the year that you've had when it comes to what you've been able to accomplish, how do you reflect on that and what do you think of the year that you've had on the LPGA Tour?

MATILDA CASTREN: Now that I've had some time to reflect on it, I just feel extremely thankful and lucky to have had those experiences. I mean, it was such a cool year, so many new experiences and dreams of mine that I got to live.

So it's just really cool to think back and have those memories and to have those kind of goals moving forward,

wanting to achieve that and even more.

So it's a pretty special feeling for sure.

THE MODERATOR: When you're able to come back, you said it's a new feeling of being a defending champion. When you walk through and you see your face everywhere, were you a little overwhelmed at first when you saw that or did it kind of fill you with excitement.

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah, it's a little bit overwhelming. It's a new course obviously, so I don't have the same exact memories of playing the same holes and like birdieing a couple of first holes in the final round last year.

So I don't have those exact memories, but, yeah, there is a little bit of I feel like pressure. Like obviously you want to defend your title and do really well. I want to do well to make it to the Tour Championship. I know I'm a little out of it right now.

But, yeah, I'm just excited to see what the week brings. I feel like my game is trending towards the right direction and just trying to stay patient and relaxed on the course. Trying not to put too much pressure on myself and just enjoy the week and enjoy seeing my face everywhere and being the defending champion.

I think I'm in the featured group, so that will be fun playing with Stacy.

THE MODERATOR: With everything that you have been working on, what are some key things that as you take on Saticoy -- you talked a little bit about getting some extra reps out here. What is it that you're looking forward to this week taking on Saticoy?

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah, it's definitely a good ball-striker's course. Quite a few tight fairways and tight greens. You have to miss on the right side. I was trying to get a little feel of that beforehand, before this week. I played this course twice before coming here this week.

Yeah, just trying to really get my swing on the right track and being able to start the ball online and hit it where I



want to and then make those putts. That's going to be the key for me this week, trying to hit a lot of greens and minimize the misses.

THE MODERATOR: You talk about how your goal is to make it into the CME Group Tour Championship. I know you're outside of the bubble now, but just in general, what have you been working on in your game and what are some of the goals that you have leading into the rest of the season that you're looking to accomplish?

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah, last year I hit a lot of greens, so that gave me a lot of opportunities to make birdies. This year it's been a little more challenging. I notice some of the courses we played last year I did really well and hit a lot of greens and everything just felt kind of easygoing, in the flow, being in good him and your game is on track so everything seems like easy.

This year it's been really hard. Just trying to manage those expectations and get on the same groove as last year and play as good as I can play and the same kind of game that I did last year.

So just trying to catch up with that, I guess.

THE MODERATOR: Did you do anything specific heading into this week?

MATILDA CASTREN: I'm working on a couple things with my coach, Chris Mason. I haven't been able to see him as much as I wanted to because the year has been so busy with going to Europe and everything.

But, yeah, working on a couple simple things that will hopefully put me on the right track and get me going this week.

THE MODERATOR: What is one of the things that excites you about being close to someplace you live? Do you have friends or family here with you this week?

MATILDA CASTREN: Well, my boyfriend is coming up tonight. He's been able to travel with me quite a bit in the last year, which I'm so happy about.

Also have a few friends that are driving up from San Diego. It's nice to just pack your car and drive up and have like a kind of flexible schedule in that way.

Especially with all the luggages being lost. I feel like that's been happening to everyone this year. So it's just really nice to drive up and, yeah, have some friends come up too. There is a family with two little girls; they're going to come up to watch tomorrow. Always exciting to see them. I

know they love to be out here watching not only me, but everyone else, so that will be really cool.

THE MODERATOR: That's so cute.

MATILDA CASTREN: Uh-huh.

THE MODERATOR: I'll wrap it up with something a little off topic of this championship, but across the country is the Epson Tour Championship.

MATILDA CASTREN: Uh-huh.

THE MODERATOR: You are an Epson Tour winner. You played a bit on that tour. What does it mean to kind of say that you are an alum of something like the Epson Tour? How much do you reflect on your experiences there and take with you as you're now here on the LPGA Tour.

MATILDA CASTREN: Yeah, I played on the Epson for two years, and I didn't play as well as I wanted to. I played another couple events in 2020 when we had our COVID year just to fill up my schedule. I won an event, which was super cool.

I was never that close when I was playing there full time, so I really felt like playing on the Epson, it's really a grind and it's really difficult. All the girls are playing so well. It did really help me get past those tough times and really elevate my game and realize this is what I wanted to do. I do have to note that there is one Fin, Kiira Riihijarvi. I think she is 8th in the rankings right now, so I've been following her all year really and she's been doing really well, and I am just so proud and like so excited and rooting for her to be out here next year with me. She's doing so well, and I sent her a few messages every now and then just reminding her that she's doing so great. When I played over there I never managed to be even close to the top ten, so it's a really big accomplishment.

THE MODERATOR: I was going to ask about her. I didn't know if you two had type of relationship. How long have you known her and what's it like to watch her journey and be a big piece of support for her?

MATILDA CASTREN: I've known her I would say like maybe four years. We played together in a couple like National Team camps. That's when I got to know her. She's a few years younger than me so we never really overlapped in college or anything like that.

I've been following her and she's been doing so well. I'm just really proud to have another Fin doing well. Hopefully she can be out here next year with me. Just really looking forward to this trend that's going on.

THE MODERATOR: Absolutely. Well, thank you for joining us and best of luck this week.

MATILDA CASTREN: Thank you.

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