

Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational

Thursday, July 15, 2021

Midland, Michigan, USA

Midland Country Club

Maria Fassi Stacy Lewis

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Stacy Lewis and Maria Fassi. Take me through what the last two days have been like for you

MARIA FASSI: I think for me, even let's go back to Monday and being able to kind of pick on Stacy's brain for a few hours. I've been able to learn so much of just how the game should be played, so it's been -- for me it's just been a lot of fun.

I think I've been able to smile really more than I have all year. We've been having a great time. I'm just very happy that we're playing together and that I got the opportunity to learn from one of the best.

THE MODERATOR: Stacy, we've talked in the past about Razorback family, you certainly feel it between the two of you. What's it been like playing alongside Maria for you.

STACY LEWIS: It's been awesome. One, she hits it far, so we had a really good strategy yesterday in the alternate-shot, just as far as who was hitting off the tees on the longer holes.

She definitely helped me out there.

But it's fun to just -- like she said, it's just been fun helping her, and we really haven't talked a lot of golf swing and specifics, it's more just the process and thinking our way through shots correctly. I don't know, just trying to throw little tidbits on her here and there and get some confidence going for her and for myself really. It's just been fun to play together, and getting lots of "go hogs" out there, so it's been a lot of fun.

THE MODERATOR: Maria, how did this partnership come to be?

MARIA FASSI: I kind of was talking about it with my caddie, and we all kind of worked it out together. But I



knew for me it was going to be an amazing opportunity, and I was like, well, maybe she'll say yes.

It's been great. We were talking about it earlier today. I think we've complemented each other's game pretty well, and even today we've been able to -- me maybe take on some more pins. She was also being a little bit more aggressive today, so I think it's been fun, and again, just very happy that we got to play together and play for the Hogs, and we get two more days. It's been a while, so I'm excited.

Q. Maria, how often do you play alternate-shot and when was the last time you played it?

MARIA FASSI: A couple years ago when I played with Jennifer out here. I don't do it -- yeah. I'll play for fun at home with friends, but we never do alternate-shot, so it's kind of a weird thing.

But yeah, a couple years ago.

Q. You and Stacy both alluded to it, that she's given you some advice. You're naturally aggressive. Has there been a point where she's said, whoa, let's throttle it back here?

MARIA FASSI: I mean, a little bit of that, but I think the main thing is that it's just picking the right shot at the right time. There's a time and place to be aggressive and there's a time and place to hit it 30 feet, and maybe you're going to make one of those.

I think for me, it's just been more of knowing when to use my length as a strength and then also knowing when to hold back a little bit more and trust that I can still hit it close with a 9-iron or 8-iron.

Q. Stacy, are you comfortable now giving that kind of advice to a player?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I mean, the best part about it is that she's taking it in and she's listening. Sometimes you try to give advice to people and they don't listen to you, and she's definitely listening and taking it in.



Like she said, it's literally just, okay, what's the lie, what's the wind and what type of shot do we need to hit. Not, okay, it's a pitching wedge. No, what kind of pitching wedge are we going to hit.

The greatest thing about her is that she can already hit the shots. It's like let's pick -- that's why I'm hounding on her, it's just the right shot at the right time. I look back on my career and playing golf shots and hitting well, you're playing the right shot at the right time. Generally you're hitting it pretty good. That's why I've been trying to hound in on her.

I don't speak Spanish with her and her caddie but I can kind of hear some numbers being thrown out and when I hear the right number I walk away because I know they're on the right track, but if they're kind of taking longer than I think they should I'll step in and say something.

It's been cool to watch her grow. I feel like she's grown a lot just since Monday. It's been really fun to watch.

Q. Stacy, I know you've played a lot of practice rounds with Karrie Webb. Who did you learn from in that regard in terms of what shot to hit when?

STACY LEWIS: I feel a lot of it is learning yourself. I love playing with Karrie because she moves the golf ball and she hits shots. That's the way -- I see the ball curving. I don't see just a dead straight ball. I see it turning one way or the other with or without the wind, and Karrie did that. So I think that's what I learned from her the most.

I think I've always just kind of been a naturally smarter player. My coaches at Arkansas would probably tell you that, just that there was a lot of times I just used my smarts to kind of win golf tournaments, by playing to my strengths and laying up when I needed to to a wedge or whatever it was.

I don't know, I feel like it's always kind of been a part of me and how I've played.

Q. Watching Maria up close the last couple days -- this is kind of weird to ask with her standing right there, but how vast is the potential there?

STACY LEWIS: You know what, I think the hardest thing for her was coming out of school there was a lot of hype. Between her and Jennifer, and Jennifer has obviously been playing pretty good, it's a really hard spot to be in because you come out here and you go from being one of the best players in amateur golf to you're maybe middle of the road out here, and so you kind of realize pretty quickly, oh, I've got to get better.

Then it's like, well, how do I get better, you already think you're playing good golf, it's how do I get better. There's been a learning curve for her of how do I get better. But the length itself, she's right up there with all the girls who hit it far, so that's going to be an advantage, but the potential is there.

I tell her to hit a 139, 9-iron and she hits it. It's not like I have to sit there and teach her how to hit it. The talent is there. It's just getting her thinking right and believing in herself. You see some putts go in, and who knows what could happen?

Q. Maria, did you move back to Arkansas? Did I hear that right?

MARIA FASSI: Yeah, the beginning of this year. I think it's the best thing that I've done in a while.

Q. Why?

MARIA FASSI: I mean, I think with COVID and us not playing, I was in Orlando and I was always trying to find my way back to Arkansas for whatever reason. So I was like, well, then why -- might as well just be here to start with. I get to practice with Shawna and work on short game and putting with her, which she's great, and I love the community. It's a community that makes me feel like I'm at home.

It was an easy move, and I'm very happy that I did it. I think I'm a lot happier when I'm back home than when I was in Orlando.

Q. You were talking about how happy you are playing this tournament alongside Stacy. Is it the most fun you've had since fill in the blank?

MARIA FASSI: I mean, I think -- I was talking about it with my mom actually last night, and I was telling her like I think regardless of what happens this week, it's going to be definitely one that I'll remember for the rest of my life. It's just been so much fun. It's been a privilege to be able to learn from Stacy, to play with her, to get hyped together, and we got a couple of funky holes today and we were just get being through them together. So it's always nicer to have somebody else by your side that knows what that feels like and that is helping you out, so I think it's been amazing.

I don't think I've enjoyed a pro tournament nearly as much as this week.

Q. Building off that last question, how does this style

of event help reset the momentum of the season for you?

MARIA FASSI: I was really looking forward to this week, not only because of playing with Stacy but because of the format. I think I was going to take some pressure off my shoulders and just go out and play. That helps when you have a player like Stacy by your side.

I'm very happy with the way I'm hitting it. I'm happy with -- I saw some good putts go in today and yesterday, so I think it's definitely a mood swinger, and I'm excited for the rest of the season. Hopefully I can keep it going after this week.

Q. Do you agree with Stacy's assessment of where you're at, and how difficult has it been to handle the hype that's been on your shoulders since you've come out to the Tour?

MARIA FASSI: Yeah, honestly I think that the biggest weight is my own because I know what I'm capable of doing. I know that I can hit the shots. I know that I can make the putts. It's just after not seeing it happen a couple weeks, I think I started doubting myself a little more than I should have.

So I think -- I mean, what everybody thinks, yeah, that counts, but I think it's more of me knowing that I'm able to play better than I was. That was maybe keeping me from actually playing good.

THE MODERATOR: After this kind of format, this community itself has really rallied around this event. I know you're sponsored by Dow, Maria. What is it like to come back here to Dow and see the community rally around this event and maybe even the changes you've seen from 2019?

MARIA FASSI: It's great. I mean, I maybe get to see a little more of what other players do on what the community does for this event and what Dow does for the community. I mean, I think they've made Midland and the surrounding areas grow tremendously, and everybody is just very happy and grateful to be involved with the event.

There's so much going on outside of the golf tournament. Like you were saying, what she do with their customers and the employees, it's pretty cool to see the even bigger picture of what this tournament means to the community.

I'm grateful for a company like them to support me and to support women's golf the way they do.

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I think this is the first big event that they've really had since COVID. I'm sure people were

ready to be outside. I think we'll just say 7,000 employees are coming out today, and they gave them the weekend off, and their weekend starts on Thursday. It's just great to see, one, the community involvement, but that Dow is -- Dow is really invested in this tournament, in this event. It's just such a cool format and a fun week.

Players kind of let loose a little bit. It's not as serious of a grind as it is normally. It's really a fun week. It's nice to see the big builds back on 18 and just to have some action around here is pretty fun.

THE MODERATOR: As an LPGA mom, we've been following along with Grace. Your family was integral last week. Have you reached back out to Jane? Have you talked with Jane and Pete?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I've gotten the updates. I've tried to kind of leave them alone because I know what they're going through. They're obviously still in Dallas and still going through a lot there. We need everybody to keep praying for Grace. She's improving, though. Things are improving. But they have a really long road ahead of them, so keep the prayers going.

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