

LPGA Qualifying Tournament Stage II

Saturday, October 23, 2021

Venice, Florida, USA

Plantation Golf and Country Club

Jessica Peng

Quick Quotes

Q. We'll start with the round today. You had a really good effort out there to really climb the leaderboard and solidify yourself heading into tomorrow. Start with the front nine. Birdie on 1 really got you going and then eagled 3. Take us through that start and especially the eagle, how that happened.

JESSICA PENG: It was actually the distant was between the club, but then I was like thinking, you know, rather staying shorter than like way over and I have a downhill putt, especially the greens kind of fast today.

And then somehow I actually just carry the pin like dead straight. I was like -- I saw the ball was like towards the pin. I was like, Please don't hit the pin. Usually when I hit the pin it goes off the green. That was only thing I was hoping, please don't hit the pin.

And then I think it was landing like two yards behind the pin and I was like, Okay, that wasn't bad. People just like, Whoa you made it. I was like, Wait, did I just like -- did I hit it short or hit it past? I wasn't really sure about it.

Yeah, and then just went in it. Like I was like, Wait, whoa, what just happened. Didn't expect it at all.

Q. That's pretty awesome to get that kind of start going.

JESSICA PENG: Yeah.

Q. Did the 3-under through 3 kind of help set a tone for you to where you felt it was going to be a good day?

JESSICA PENG: I think so. I do think so. Especially my putting has been really good this week.

Q. Uh-huh.

JESSICA PENG: Just like trying to hit closer and be a little bit more aggressive on my putting. So just trying to get more birdies out there too, yeah.



Q. Have you ever played Stage II before?

JESSICA PENG: No, never. This is my first time.

Q. First time?

JESSICA PENG: Yeah.

Q. Okay. When you entered the week obviously top 45 and ties, that's obviously the goal, do you have anything else in mind that you wanted to accomplish here?

JESSICA PENG: Not really. I just want to like finish top 45 and get over this week. Obviously like Stage I was stressed out. Probably the most stressful week I ever had.

This week is actually not as bad. I think because there is more people that I know around. It help a little bit.

Yeah, I think I have pretty good week, so just go with the flow, finish top 45, then I'm good.

Q. To have played Stage I and then to come here, were the nerves a little maybe less?

JESSICA PENG: Less, definitely less. I think as a percentage Stage I take less people than here, right? We have like 304 something and less than...

Q. Yeah, maybe percentage-wise, yeah.

JESSICA PENG: Yeah. So I was like -- and then plus playing four rounds. This one you don't do anything until you finish four days. That one is like every single day is like almost like the first three rounds. The cut like 125, and then you get to like top 95 to come into Stage II. That's a little bit stressful, because I was like at the edge for the first three days, so I was really stressed out, too.

Q. Yeah. Good to be here then.

JESSICA PENG: Yeah, it is.



Q. Looks like you have a good shot to make it.

JESSICA PENG: Especially like there is one thing it's like in the south it's like my comfort zone kind of thing, and it's good to be back in the south after four years in college.

Q. What makes it your comfort zone? Just the fact that you went Mississippi State?

JESSICA PENG: It's just people are more chill here. Like I think people are pretty friendly. I don't know. I just like to be in the south, yeah.

Q. In your southern comfort zone?

JESSICA PENG: Yes.

Q. So when did you graduate?

JESSICA PENG: '17.

Q. Okay. So this is your first time. What have you been doing since?

JESSICA PENG: Since, okay, actually I played the Stage I in 2017 and I miss one shot to last round.

Q. Missed it by one stroke?

JESSICA PENG: Yeah, to the fourth round.

Q. Okay.

JESSICA PENG: Then I just been playing full status on CLPGA and TLPGA, and I was on one of the reality show, so I got to play about 10 events in KLPGA in 2018. It was COVID so I was only in Taiwan for the last whole year. Yeah, because of the lockdown, right before Stage I, that was like first lockdown ever back home, so I just decided I have to like come out and play. Yeah.

Q. Okay. So what reality show?

JESSICA PENG: It was called Cinderella Story of KLPGA.

Q. Was Kelly Tan on that?

JESSICA PENG: She was on season two. I was season one. Yeah.

Q. Okay. Okay. Last year, all of 2020 you were at home in Taiwan?

JESSICA PENG: Yes.

Q. When did you come to the United States this year?

JESSICA PENG: July 2nd.

Q. To get ready for Stage I?

JESSICA PENG: Yes.

Q. Where did you practice?

JESSICA PENG: I was at friend's house in Irvine, California. Just practice there about like three weeks, and then I got an airbnb in Palm Springs and just stay there for the whole month.

Because my permit, like the visa I can't stay longer than 90 days, so I have to flew home after Stage I and get 14 days quarantine and a flight out here again.

Q. So you've had a crazy schedule.

JESSICA PENG: Yes, like after I flew back here the first five days I was just lay in the bed. I don't want to do anything.

Q. Don't blame you.

JESSICA PENG: It's busy. Yeah, it's kind of crazy.

Q. Who's the friend and what was the course that you practiced on in Irvine?

JESSICA PENG: That was the guy that I know that I practice on his course really often and that's his house. That's an empty house because their whole family are back to Taiwan because the COVID.

Q. Family friend?

JESSICA PENG: Yeah.

Q. What was the course that you practiced on?

JESSICA PENG: Testing range. They have a better deal like monthly membership, so it's cheaper to just practice out there.

Q. And you had a couple years where you played with Ally Ewing at Mississippi State.

JESSICA PENG: Yes.

Q. Were you guys friends at all?

JESSICA PENG: Yeah, we are friends. I would say she's



the one keep me very competitive because she's always on top, yeah.

Q. Do you guys stay in touch frequently?

JESSICA PENG: I watch her every year when she plays Swinging Skirt, so she play '17, '18, and I play with her -- well, I also play on Swinging Skirt on '19 first time. Yeah.

Q. So you played with her -- you were there to watch her in '17 and '18?

JESSICA PENG: Yes.

Q. And then you played with her or were in the field in '19?

JESSICA PENG: Yes.

Q. Very cool. What's the relationship like between you two? You said she drives you to kind of be better.

JESSICA PENG: You know, like, okay, sometimes like I think I hit a good shot and she hit it even closer. Like I made a birdie and she made a birdie too or maybe even made an eagle.

It's just like her status-wise, everything, she's just like better. I want to beat her so bad. I say that out loud, Ally I want to beat you so bad.

Q. You're right on your way to having that opportunity.

JESSICA PENG: Yeah.

Q. What was it like to see her win earlier this year?

JESSICA PENG: So excited. Like I know she's the first Mississippian on the tour, yeah, and first winning tournament. She's pretty much the first of everything I think, right?

Q. Yeah. First from Fulton.

JESSICA PENG: Yeah.

Q. Yeah.

JESSICA PENG: So it's pretty exciting. And I was hoping finish top 45 then I will stay here longer. Hopefully she will be in town when I go back and visit. Yeah, so we can catch up a little.

Q. Back to Starkville?

JESSICA PENG: Yes.

Q. Are you going there after this?

JESSICA PENG: I was thinking because next week is homecoming and also my birthday and Ally's birthday, too. Her birthday is coming up. Wait, what day is today?

Q. The 23rd.

JESSICA PENG: Her birthday is the 25th.

Q. Okay, so a couple days.

JESSICA PENG: Yeah. So probably give here a phone call, send a text.

Q. Last one I have for you. Game plan for tomorrow? Obviously back to the Bobcat. You've put yourself in a great position to stay pat and you can advance. What's your mindset knowing where you've positioned yourself?

JESSICA PENG: So far my mindset just like stay calm and just one shot at a time. Like what I have been trying to do, just keep my mind off the result. Just do what I need to do at the time instead of overthinking about it. Yeah.

Q. Is there some excitement for you, ally's competitiveness in the back of your mind?

JESSICA PENG: Not at this time. But this whole week there is a lot of people who care about me giving me all the (indiscernible), and the one thing I really like is when there is a challenge comes to me, then instead of like saying, Why me? Then I will say to myself like, Try me.

And I think that's -- I feel so much better today, especially I was struggling about the chipping on first round. So, yeah.

Q. Got it all in a row today.

JESSICA PENG: Yes, I did.

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