

JM Eagle LA Championship

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Los Angeles, California, USA

Caroline Canales

Asterisk Talley

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, I'm very pleased to welcome here to the media center at the JM Eagle LA Championship presented by Plastpro Caroline Canales and Asterisk Talley. Welcome.

Caroline, we'll start with you. Local resident, Calabasas, so very close to El Cab. Tell me what it means to be competing here in your first LPGA Tour event in your hometown.

CAROLINE CANALES: Yeah, I am so excited. Obviously I live just down the road. It's like a 15-minute drive in the morning, so I can stay at my house and enjoy my mom's cooking all week; although she'll be out here watching me, too. So, no expectations for her to cook.

So excited and grateful for the opportunity to come out here, make my pro debut and LPGA debut at a course that I know pretty well, and I'm just so excited for the event.

Q. Asterisk, second start on the LPGA Tour. Same question. I know you live a bit farther north. Playing in California, getting another LPGA start under your belt; how does that feel?

ASTERISK TALLEY: It's great to get more experience; super grateful for the invite and getting to play here again. I love playing here. This is a great course. It's good to have some course knowledge, experience here. It's just great to have just a drive down to this event and get another start under my belt.

Q. Speaking of which, I know you finished second at the Girls' Junior here. What was your experience like here at El Cab and how excited are you to have less rounds this week?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, definitely tiring at the U.S. Girls' getting to play like 11 rounds in a week. But it's always fun playing here. Such a great course, and I'm excited to be here again and have a little less pressure, not playing 36 in a day or anything.

It's going to be fun.

Q. Caroline, what's your experience with El Cab prior to this week?

CAROLINE CANALES: I know a very nice member. Our dad's are friends, so he's been nice enough to take me out a couple times. He's going to be out here this week I think.

I know some members. It's obviously very close to my home club, Calabasas, so a little bit of overlap, yeah.

Q. Both of you coming off ANWA just a few weeks ago; tell us a little bit about your experience there and how it might have helped you prepare for this event.

CAROLINE CANALES: Yeah, it was my first time playing ANWA, so it was a really exciting week. My whole family was out there. Was pretty impressed by both courses. I had to learn them very quickly in one practice round, but Champions Retreat was great. It provided a great challenge for the field and determining that cut line.

Greens were pretty firm and fast, and then obviously Augusta was incredible. The number of patrons was shocking for me my first time there. We were treated like we were playing the Masters. It's a week that I think all the players will remember forever.

I wish I could play it again.

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, the Women's Am is always the best week in women's amateur golf. It's the best preparation I think for a pro event, especially with the course and the patrons. The courses are always tough and it's a great test of golf.

That's what really prepares you for tournaments like this and getting to feel the pressure with such a strong field and getting to play with such great players. I think that's what prepares you for tournaments like this with even better players and more pressure and patrons and things like that.

Q. This is a question for both of you: Can you speak



to your knowledge of the course and how you might think that can play into your favor? Caroline, you've obviously played I believe before and after the renovation, kind of the differences in the course that you found.

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, the greens are always tough. That's something you kind of have to get used to on the course, you know, some changes in the course and the renovation. So I think the course is still something you have to get used to every time.

But the course knowledge really helps you with knowing the quirks of the course, knowing where to hit and not to hit. And especially playing the holes in a little different order this week, that's going to play a part in how you finish and how you start.

So I think that's something to get used to as well, something that's going to help me through the week, knowing that I've played here before and I know a little bit about the course to help me get through.

CAROLINE CANALES: Yeah, agreed. I think it's a scorable course if you're placing the approach shots in the correct areas. There are quadrants of the greens, so definitely some opportunities, and also some areas that maybe you need to respect a little bit more with those approach shots.

I played it a couple times before the renovation. It was beautiful. I think they've definitely removed or have lost a lot of the trees. I think it's a little bit more open on the tee shots and obviously all bermuda now, so I think it drives a little farther unless it's super cold.

Obviously I played well before the renovation, so I'm not an expert on the course prior to the renovation, but that's what I'm seeing this week. I think it'll be a good test but there is also some opportunities.

Q. Asterisk, when you're out here, I know you've obviously played in a major as well, but can you talk about your confidence factor and what it's like? Is it a little bit shyness around all these players, a lot of them you grew up watching as well?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, I think I'm pretty confident coming off a couple good tournaments this year already and just knowing I'm played events like this before and I've done well enough to compete with these players. I just try to treat every tournament the same and not put one above the other or anything.

I any I'm pretty confident coming into this week. I'm pretty

calm.

Q. Caroline, what is it that your mom cooks that's so good?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Her Bolognese is really good. Should try it.

Q. Why turn pro here and now?

CAROLINE CANALES: That's a great question. I definitely wanted to play ANWA, so I played the first three Epson Tour events of the season as an amateur so that I could experience ANWA.

I'm so glad that I made that choice because it was just such a memorable week. I'm really blessed to have received this sponsor's exemption, and it just worked out perfectly that I could finish up ANWA and turn pro right after it finished and come play here.

Q. You posted on your Instagram at ANWA saying you were making your eight year old self pretty proud. What would your eight year old self say about what you're doing here this week?

CAROLINE CANALES: Yeah, she would be pretty stoked. I started golf a little later. I was playing tennis and soccer and golf was the third sport that my sisters and I tried.

We really loved it. Our family joined Calabasas, our club, and we were off to the races. My older sister is very close in age to me so we were constantly competing against each other.

Yeah, started golf at eight years old. I think if someone told her she would be playing at Augusta National in front of that many patrons she would be pretty wow'd, yeah.

Q. And what do you think she would say about this week?

CAROLINE CANALES: Similar reaction. Similar reaction. To have an event of this caliber be my professional debut, it's really cool. I'm so grateful. When we got the call that I was going to be one of the sponsor exemptions I was in Florida for one of the Epson tournaments, and my whole family was on the phone call and it was an awesome moment.

Very excited.

Q. Asterisk, even though you're an amateur, I feel like this is becoming a frequent thing, us seeing you at these LPGA Tour events. How do you feel like you've

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

grown as a person and player having these experiences?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, just knowing that I've got more comfortable with these types of players, that even in amateur golf there is players that are better than like what people think I am. People think that I don't measure up I think to people that are here and in other amateur events.

I think I'm trying to prove my game every week to show how good I am in my eyes and how in other people's eyes as well. I just think it's great to get experience and to prove myself and build my confidence in these events and bring that with me to other events I play in in the future.

Q. What would you have to do this week to feel like you proved yourself?

ASTERISK TALLEY: I think just play the best I can. Of course make the cut. Try and get up there on the leaderboard. Try and climb.

But I think just learning from my game is always something that I try and do every week, and even if I don't play well this week, just trying to learn from playing in such a good event and playing as best as I can and seeing what I can improve moving forward.

Q. This tournament wants to serve as a light for those that were affected by the fires. Caroline, obviously you grew up nearby here. What does it mean to you getting to participate in this tournament with all that it's doing for all that helped fight the fires and were affected?

CAROLINE CANALES: Yeah, that is a great question. Obviously my house is nearby. We weren't evacuated but we were on warning. I have a number of friends that were affected by the fires, some of my UCLA friends closer to Westwood, so it's really meaningful for me that tournament sponsors are doing so much to help the wildfires and playing for a bigger cause.

Yeah, I think it's rare to meet someone in LA right now that doesn't at least know someone that was affected by the fires, so to play for this cause is, yeah, awesome.

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, just knowing that we're trying to give back in tournaments like this is really meaningful. To know that courses and houses were affected by the fires around here is really sad for all of us. Giving back to those around this course is really meaningful to get to play in something like that.

Q. For you both, you can talk about how you got your

sponsor invite. I know Caroline, Mr. Wang talked about the long letter you wrote. Asterisk, did they reach out to you? Can you describe when you found out for both of you?

CAROLINE CANALES: Yeah. I wrote a handwritten letter to Walter and Shirley not expecting much. Obviously I am just getting my professional career going, and luckily he took an interest to my story. I'm just really, really grateful that he did.

Hopefully I see him at some point.

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, I reached out to the director of this tournament just hoping that I can get more LPGA starts under my belt with the way I've been playing, just hoping I can get more experience in these types of events.

I got into the Monday qualifier through U.S. Girls', and he reached out to me not long ago saying that I got the exemption, and I was very thankful for the experience I'm getting to have.

I'm grateful for him reaching out to me even though it was so soon, and I'm just really grateful to be here. I'm thankful that I got the exemption and that I didn't have to play in the Monday qualifier and then go back home and try and get ready for this.

So I'm really grateful for this.

Q. Are you missing school this week? Are you guys on spring break? Where were you when you found out?

ASTERISK TALLEY: I'm on spring break this week, which I'm thankful for as well. I'm pretty sure I was at ANWA last week when I found out. I was playing well at ANWA and I got the exemption and it just was euphoric feeling getting to play here and at Augusta at the same time.

Q. Asterisk, you are in the major next week. Got an amateur exemption into The Chevron Championship. How are you going use this week to prepare for another major?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, again, extremely grateful to get into Chevron next week. I'm going to try and hopefully learn from this week and play my best here and see what I need to improve on for next week and see how this experience is going to help me for next week and getting to play another major before the U.S. Open as well.

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