

# Kingsmill Championship

## Presented by GEICO

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# Natalie Gulbis

## Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us at the Kingsmill Championship presented by GEICO. We have Natalie Gulbis here with us. Thanks for joining us, Natalie.

NATALIE GULBIS: Thank you for having me.

THE MODERATOR: Natalie, this is your 11th start at Kingsmill. How does it feel to be back here this week?

NATALIE GULBIS: I love this place. I have so many incredible memories from this Kingsmill resort when it was previously Michelob Ultra. Not only was I here for the event, but I was also here doing extra events. Then I came back last year and shot a TV show here.

I love coming back here. My favorite thing about Kingsmill is probably my host. I've had the same host family since I started playing in this event.

Just everything about this place. It's so beautiful and we get such an incredible welcome from the community.

THE MODERATOR: You've played well in the past here as well; a couple top 10 finishes. What do you like about the River Course?

NATALIE GULBIS: It was just set up perfectly for us. I know they've made changes over the years that just seem to cater to LPGA players. The conditions, the greens always roll so good. I hit a right-to-left trajectory so there is plenty of right-to-left holes.

But I just I love being here. It's just an area that I've always enjoyed. This area is extra special for me. My caddie is from Virginia Beach. It was just always a place that we loved to come to and spend time at. Just always had that great energy for me.

THE MODERATOR: You just finished playing in the pro-am this morning. It's a little wet outside, but how does the course look this week?

NATALIE GULBIS: It's pouring out there. I don't know if you guys can hear it. Maybe now it's taken a break, but it was absolutely dumping a few minutes ago.



It's good. This course drains really, really well. It was pretty wet still. Not the course, but just in general the last few holes. I know that this week has a lot of weather in the forecast. It'll be really interesting to see how -- I mean, the course will hold up, but with thunderstorms it could be a very interesting week.

THE MODERATOR: To this year. You've battled some injuries through the years. You've contemplated retirement. You made the cut in L.A. How much of a confidence boost is that to be playing well?

NATALIE GULBIS: Yeah, I mean, I've been out here so long I think I've seen a little bit of everything.

I hit the ball really well in L.A. I feel great. This is as good as I've felt in the last five years. Probably as good as I've felt in my whole career. I had another having manage it October which was successful.

What's been different in this last few months is I've been able to practice. I played a lot of years out here without being able to play practice rounds, with just barely getting through pro-ams and getting through tournament rounds because I loved to be out who and I loved to play.

So I would just try to save my body for competition. It's been nice to be able to actually practice and go out and play rounds and be able to practice even after a pro-am. That's something I look forward to, and going to be playing quite a bit in the next couple months.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. I thought one of the coolest things earlier this week was Elsa Diaz came in here and spoke about you guys had talked and you sort of tried to help her along. She talked about wanting to not only be a good golfer, but also good off the course as well. What is sort of your advice for a young player like that wants to excel both on and off the golf course?**

NATALIE GULBIS: Well, she was great because she asked great questions and approached me right away. That's something that I resonated with because that's what I was like when I came out on tour. I remember being so excited to see Beth Daniel and Meg Mallon and Juli Inkster and ask them a thousand questions.

So my advice is to just take all of everything that golf has to offer and just appreciate it. I was actually talking this morning with a couple veteran players. Through the game of golf, the opportunities and the people that I've met has just been like nothing I ever could have imagined.

I had aspirations of turning pro and playing against the best players in the world, but as soon as I got out here I learned that we would get to be around all these different individuals who were in every area of life, from lawyers to politicians, to celebrities, the business-minded, to heads of big charitable organizations.

Through the game of golf I've been able to open up a boys and girls club and be a part of so many incredible charities and meet so many incredible people.

If you just kind of keep your head down and just work on making putts when you're in a pro-am and not really take the opportunity to meet and to get to know these people, you'll be missing out on just some incredible experiences and some people that we all have had the privilege of meeting through the game of golf.

THE MODERATOR: You were recently nominated for the President's Council of Sports, Nutrition, and Fitness. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

NATALIE GULBIS: Yes, I'm really excited about that. In February they asked if I would be interested. Of course, yes. Then last week right before Dallas it got announced. They call you couple days before the announcement and say that you've been approved for the council.

Now it's going to get really exciting because we're going to get sworn in, or I am going get sworn in in two weeks, the week before Atlantic City. We will have our first council meeting in D.C. and get to do this really cool sport day on the south lawn.

It's just going to be an incredible honor and opportunity. Again, kind of just what I said, is through the game of golf, the people that I've had the opportunity to meet and the impact I've been able to have through the game has afforded me so many opportunities.

This is going to be one of the greatest honors and achievements in my career, is to be on a presidential council for three things that I'm incredibly passionate about: sports, fitness, and nutrition.

**Q. You mentioned the opportunities that have been presented to you away from the golf course. Are those opportunities and those people, are they what have kept you around? You've been through**

**so much with the surgeries and such and you've contemplated retirement. Is that why you've persevered?**

NATALIE GULBIS: That's a great question. Actually, a really good question because I haven't really ever considered that, of why I have.

Every year at the end of the year, and especially when I'm injured, I absolutely contemplate retirement. It is difficult for me to practice, and if I can't practice I can't compete. If can't be in contention, it is zero fun for me. I would just play the game recreationally.

Even coming out for the event in L.A. or being out there in Dallas, I loved everything about the tour. I love my friends on tour, I love being in front of the fans, I love the competition, I love the places that we get to go. I have been able to travel all over the world.

So it really is everything. I love to compete, I love the game, but I love it all. I had think that shows when I'm out here, because I do, I really enjoy seeing my friends on tour.

It's always such as incredible reminder of how amazing these players are. When I'm around them, I'm reminded of how much Morgan Pressel gives back. She raises \$1 million through her charity. Players were leaving Dallas to go to another charity event. And how much they give back and how much they're involved in their communities.

It's something that you want to be part of. You want to continue to be part of it. So there are a lot of reasons, and I miss a lot of things when I'm away from the tour.

**Q. You mentioned this course drains well, but when you have a tournament with lot of rain, does that change anything with your strategy, your approach over the course of the weekend?**

NATALIE GULBIS: Yes, it does. It changes a lot of things. I think this is going to be a week of patience. Looks like we could have a lot of delays. We've had delays here in the past. The golf course is going to play quite a bit longer.

Some of the strategy with paying attention to where greens are going to release and where maybe you're going to have targets off the tee, all that changes because you're not going to have the release and the rollout.

The course does drain well, but based on how much rain, it can definitely change significantly.

**Q. Can you just elaborate on the host family story. I thought that was pretty cool. You stayed with the**

**same host family; is that right? How did you first get introduced to them and what's that relationship been like?**

NATALIE GULBIS: So it's a great story. First time that I came to Kingsmill I stayed with Joe. He lives in the community. He actually caddied for me today in the pro-am for the first time. Nine holes; I used a small bag. He was up at like 5:00 a.m. asking me a whole bunch of questions before coffee this morning.

Joe is not only somebody that I stay with here in Kingsmill, he's part of my family. He comes out to other events. He's someone I stay in contact with. My mom is here this week. My husband is coming in tomorrow; he'll stay here this week.

My caddie, Greg, who passed away last year, we actually had a memorial for him yesterday here in Kingsmill. But he stayed with us, so Joe is part of our family. It's just everything about this week. As soon as we got here he made filets for us on the barbeque. He is making salmon tonight. Like he knows all the food that we love, the coffee that we like.

When I got here, because we were having a service for Greg here, he printed out this beautiful picture of Greg and I that he had like made.

It's just everything about this week. Because they become -- it's not only that I'm coming to Kingsmill to a course I love and in an area that I always had a great time in or going to Busch Gardens or going to Colonial Williamsburg, but it's staying with him. It's something that's so special this week.

I have great stories from Kingsmill. One year -- this event is always around Mother's Day. One year I bought my mom a car here and we put it in Joe's driveway and put one of those big bows on it. She walked out that morning and saw -- it was Mother's Day, like my third or fourth year on tour, and like fell down the steps.

So the next thing we knew is she had the car and we have it all on film. Then to fast forward to having a night like last night that Joe was actively a part of helping me put on this event, a celebration of life for my caddie Greg, who's from this area. He was involved in all the details and helping me with things.

Like I don't think he missed a hole or shot that I've hit here. There a lot of players here that -- a lot of players stay in private housing in this area. This is a great community. A lot of players are staying in homes kind of right around where we're at.

He also has a lot of stories about what I was like when I was 18, 20, 22. All the different things I've gone

through as well.

THE MODERATOR: We should bring him in here.

NATALIE GULBIS: He's a lawyer though so, he's not going to give up a lot.

**Q. Through the miracle of Google, Greg was on Kathy Whitworth's bag over in Suffolk for her final tournament victory, which not far from here. Were you aware of that?**

NATALIE GULBIS: No, I wasn't. I saw Kathy in Dallas, but I was definitely not aware of that. You know more of the story? Like to hear the rest.

Yeah, he was out with -- he won several times with Beth Daniel and dozens of time and Kathy and Cristie Kerr. Him and I worked together for 15 years. Hr never missed a day.

He's from Virginia Beach, so it was cool because his family came in yesterday.

**Q. 15 years is a long time.**

NATALIE GULBIS: It is a long time.

**Q. How did that happen?**

NATALIE GULBIS: He's easygoing. We got along great.

THE MODERATOR: How special was it to get to celebrate his life last night?

NATALIE GULBIS: It was amazing. It was incredible, because Sportsmans Grille, we got to -- you guys ever been there? They have like an LPGA shrine there. It's so cool. Of all the players through the years and caddies through the years and moments through the years.

Just to see the support from players and caddies that came there last night, it was really special. I think it was really special too for his family to get to see and hear the stories. Yeah, it was awesome.

THE MODERATOR: Any further questions for Natalie? Okay, best of luck this week. Thanks for joining us.