

Kingsmill Championship

Presented by JTBC

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Julieta Granada

Quick Quotes

Q. Golfers are used to standing over a nervous tee shot or a nervous putt. Do you think this will be kind of a nervous moment when you get to carry your country's flag in the opening ceremony?

JULIETA GRANADA: I think it will be -- I think I will be nervous, but good thing I don't have to talk, right? I just have to walk, so I think that will make it better, make sure I get my grip right and just walk down. It's such a big honor, seriously. It's something that I think as golfers we never even dreamed to have the possibility, right. So now like that dream came suddenly. So it's all like together. We don't really have time to understand what's happening, but it's such a big deal. I'm super proud and honored to be elected.

Obviously trying to do the best I can to get Paraguay a medal because we only have one in the history, so it's a big deal for us.

Q. You mentioned having been elected. Is that how this was determined? How did this honor come about?

JULIETA GRANADA: Yeah, like -- well, I don't know how other countries do it, but we had a meeting, and they asked me if I would like to do it, and I said, obviously I would love to do it. That would mean that I have to go down -- the opening ceremony I think is the 5th of August, but golf doesn't start until the 16th, 17th.

Q. 17th, I think.

JULIETA GRANADA: Yeah, so what I'll do is I'll go down, be there for the opening, and then I'll come back up, practice for a week or so, and then go back down. That was the only thing that was kind of like undecided if I was going to be able to do it, but they said you do whatever you need to do, come and go as many times --

Q. Go back to Florida or go back to Paraguay?

JULIETA GRANADA: Go back to Florida, yeah. It's no time change, so it should be okay. But that was one of the things we talked about in the meeting and just kind of going through the details, I guess, of how it worked. And the closing ceremony is on the 21st, and we finished on the 20th, so I'll stay an extra day for that. So it will be super nice, yeah.

Q. Do you find that -- I guess we've known for five,

six years that the Olympics were coming or that golf was coming to the Olympics, but now that it is the Olympic year, how much more buzz is there as you travel on the Tour and talk to your peers and that type of thing, like I've got a chance at this?

JULIETA GRANADA: Yeah. I mean, I was just at home, so Paraguay was obviously super excited, and there was a huge buzz. Like every interview I talked about that. There was nothing else important other than the Olympics. So it's obviously going to be a huge thing for us athletes. We only maybe have 10 or 12 for the whole Olympics, so they know us by name. Like the whole country know who is going, right, so I think it's a really big deal, and everybody is super excited.

With golf being back in the Olympics, it's sort of unknown, like how is it going to work and how is it, the experience and everything. It will be interesting. It will be super fun to experience that for the first time.

Q. As soon as you heard that golf was coming to the Olympics, did you immediately think, that's something that I want? I don't know if you're a list maker when it comes to goals and such, or --

JULIETA GRANADA: I think I didn't really notice it right away until I had a meeting with the Olympic committee, and they were like, oh, we're three years away, and this year we have the South American championships or the South American -- I don't know how you call it. They're our South American, and then last year was the Pan-Americans, and then next year was the Olympics. Once I noticed what was happening in the calendar then I got more involved because obviously I'm learning more and more about it, so I got to represent Paraguay in the South American, in the Pan-Americans, and now obviously the Olympics. So it's cool because you go step by step, being first to South America, it's a little smaller, and then Pan-American, which is all of America, and then you go for the rest of the world. It was cool to see the progress of how much bigger it gets, so I can only imagine from the Pan-American to the Olympics that it's going to be a huge step again.

You know, I like that I did that. I didn't start noticing until I started going to these events and being there and seeing that golf was just one more sport. It wasn't the sport like we're used to. So everything is different



in that regard. We come here and we play the tournament, but we're it. We're the stars. And you go to those games and you're just one more sport.

That's something to get used to, so I'm glad I had the practice already of going through these stages, I guess.

Q. How do you foresee yourself staying, in the Olympic Village?

JULIETA GRANADA: Yeah, that was one of the topics, too. I agreed to stay in there, so that will be interesting. I don't even know what to expect. They say it's such a cool experience. Obviously I've been inside the Pan-American village, which is kind of like the same thing where you have the food 24 hours and then you have like buildings with dorms and each country has like certain rooms, depending on how many athletes, and everybody is walking around all different sports, and you're just like, so what do you do. You know?

Q. I've told some people this before: I covered the '96 Olympics a long time ago, but every athlete I talked to said, yes, I'm here to win; yes, I want to compete. But they all talked about being in the village, how cool it was, to meet athletes from different sports, different countries, and that those were the memories that they thought would really endure from the experience.

JULIETA GRANADA: Yeah, I think the whole experience is such an amazing opportunity, right? Like I think every athlete in any sport, that's what they dream of. So just to be able to be there, it's amazing, and to experience all these things as a player, it's on another level, right. So I'm definitely looking forward to it. I'm going to stay there, and I'm going to get to experience it all, so we'll see how that goes. I'll let you know how that goes. I tell my Olympic committee, I said, you know, us golfers, we're a little bit more spoiled than the rest of the athletes. I'm like, we're a little bit more spoiled. So you know, it's going to be interesting.

Q. You're not going to have a courtesy car or --

JULIETA GRANADA: I'm like, where's the Starbucks' around here. So it's going to be interesting. We got a gift in Singapore, which is like a -- what is it called, Air Wave, that you put on top of the bed? So I'm like, I think I'm going to take that because it's probably a little different than the Marriott hotels we're used to staying at. So those things you don't think about, right? But because I've been to the other games, I guess, like I know what to expect, so I'm like, yeah, I'm going to take those, and the president of my committee was like, we'll take whatever you want, just take everything. I'll take you my pillow if you want my pillow.

Q. And you just learned about carrying the flag last

week?

JULIETA GRANADA: Yeah. Well, I don't know if it's official-official, but it's going through the process. But it's going to happen.

Q. Did they give you a phone call or was it come meet us and they told you in person?

JULIETA GRANADA: What was interesting is they ruined is because the newspapers in Paraguay had already put it out, so I already read it, and then we had the meeting, so it was like, I heard on the news; is it true? And they're like, well, would you like to do it?

Q. This was last week.

JULIETA GRANADA: Yeah.

Q. Will any of your family be able to --

JULIETA GRANADA: Well, my mom is my caddie, so she'll be staying in the village with me. We're going to have our own little apartment. And then she's going to experience the whole thing with me. So maybe my dad comes on the side. It's so hard to get rooms and stuff like that. But we'll see. Definitely I know some friends are coming up, and it's going to be a big deal.

Q. Do you know anything about the course?

JULIETA GRANADA: No, not yet. I've seen pictures. Kind of looks linksey, but other than that, I couldn't tell you much.

Q. How many more athletes are expected from Paraguay?

JULIETA GRANADA: Right now we have eight that are qualified, but obviously there are still chances. I think swimming has a bunch of events to qualify, and I think we have hopes in tennis, and maybe beach volleyball. I'm not sure. So it's going to be 10 or 12 max.

Q. You said that Paraguay has one medal?

JULIETA GRANADA: One medal, yeah.

Q. One medal or one gold medal?

JULIETA GRANADA: One medal, silver.

Q. Do you know what and when?

JULIETA GRANADA: It was 2004 Athens soccer.

Q. Men or women?

JULIETA GRANADA: Men, yeah.

Q. So no individual athlete from Paraguay --

JULIETA GRANADA: We have one medal. That's it.

Q. I mean, you could make history.

JULIETA GRANADA: Yeah, it's a big deal for our country. It's definitely -- especially golf because we're going to have a man going to play golf for the men, and

then me as a woman. Two golfers, it's pretty big. Golf is definitely some room for improvement and some room for growing, but I think we're already in the right track. It'll be exciting.

Q. Having the games in South America, which is a continent where, like you said, golf has some room to grow in popularity and access and courses, do you even have any expectation of what this could do in terms of South America as a whole and Paraguay, just in terms of awareness as well as movement in accessibility, players, et cetera?

JULIETA GRANADA: Yeah, I think the main thing for the kids is to be able to see it and see that if they can do it, then we can do it, because there's obviously those role models in soccer, right, where they go to Europe and they play in the Premier League or whatever, but in golf, the LPGA or the European Tour in the case of the men, it's really far away. It's really hard to get related because it's not -- they can't really see it.

But being in Rio, they're going to have a lot of coverage, and for the kids to say, hey, look, they're over there, and we can do it, too. It's huge. Like in Paraguay a lot of kids start early and then they quit around 12 to 17 or 18, which is the important age to keep it up, and then they pick it up again when they're 25.

So I think for that step where they quit, it's going to be huge for them to keep going and say, hey, look what they're doing, I can do that. In Paraguay there's a lot more accessibility now. We have a public driving range, which is a huge deal.

It's growing, but the Olympics will put golf in a different -- can I say platform?

Q. So some countries will have a couple golfers but you'll be the only one from Paraguay?

JULIETA GRANADA: There's going to be a man golfer.

Q. You'll be the only female golfer?

JULIETA GRANADA: Yes, only female golfer.

Q. How do they determine who gets one, who gets two?

JULIETA GRANADA: It's by the rankings, yeah. You have to be ranked at a certain number to get in.

Q. Where are you now, do you know?

JULIETA GRANADA: I don't know.

Q. You were talking about the kids noticing and such. How did you come to golf?

JULIETA GRANADA: So my grandparents played, and they played with like the British people that came to do

the train --

Q. Railroad?

JULIETA GRANADA: Yes. I just went home and all of a sudden my English went blank. So anyway, they played, and they belonged to the golf course that was being built, and then there was another one, they belonged to that one, and then when my mom grew up, she started when she was young. She quit, again, the same age, and then she picked it up again, and then she had me, and she's like, I want to keep playing, so you're coming with me. So she just left me in the clubhouse like here, and she would go and play, and then after, what, two hours, the four-year-old would get bored so I would go to the range with the teachers and I would hit some balls, come back in, and then go meet her on like 15.

It was obviously a very special time, as well, that you could be able to do that, but all the members were like, yeah, Rosa, your daughter is walking in between 15 and 16 again, grab your daughter, so that's how I started. I went to play a few international tournaments and nationals, and I won, and obviously winning as a kid helps with the motivation, right; you're good at it so you want to continue. All of a sudden like my mom quit and now I was a golfer. It's definitely like a family accessibility. If my grandparents weren't members, then it would be a little harder.

Q. Have you had to be drug tested?

JULIETA GRANADA: Not yet. Well, yeah, for the Pan-Americans I got tested when I was then, and then in the South American championships, I got drug tested then, but nobody came to my room yet.