

Sanderson Farms Championship

Wednesday, September 30, 2020

Jackson, Mississippi, USA

Country Club of Jackson

Sebastian Muñoz

Press Conference

MARK WILLIAMS: Sebastian Muñoz, thanks for joining us, defending champion here at the Sanderson Farms Championship in 2020. You've had a chance to play nine holes. What's it like? What's the feeling like coming back here as defending champion? Does it give you a sense of pride and confidence walking into the Country Club of Jackson this year?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: Yeah, definitely. I played nine yesterday, played the back yesterday, and I just couldn't help it, every hole I just remember last time I was here. Like on 11 the draw I hit, and on 15 where I made bogey and then that little corner where me and my caddie talked about turning around and making a big hole somewhere.

I just couldn't help it. Then on 18, like walking up the green, it was like, oh, this is nice. It's different, there's not the grandstand, but I can still feel the magic, the aura, the energy of the place just buzzing. So it was pretty special.

Q. Sebastian, have you ever defended a title before?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: To be honest, no, I have not. The time I won in Bogota, I couldn't because I was playing Pebble Beach, and then my wins in Colombia neither because I was already on the Korn Ferry. So no, this is going to be my first time.

Q. Do you feel any differently coming in knowing that it is your first defense?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: You know, I thought about it when I was coming in, and I was like, well, if you think about it, if I don't win, then you couldn't be able to defend. So like everything would be negative if I don't win. Then I just kind of start thinking about it, and that's not fair. So it's like, I'm just glad to be here in a place that I've played really good, that I like, that I like the people, and just try to do my best. It's not like I'm going to focus on just defending my title but just having a good tournament at a place that I like.



SANDERSON FARMS
CHAMPIONSHIP

Q. What have you been happy about with your performance since winning last year, and is there anything you've been disappointed in this past year?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: Okay, I've been really happy with my mental toughness. I think that's a big improvement from a couple years ago. You know, I had a really good fall and then kind of falloff on the COVID and then the tournaments coming back and I was able to bring it back towards the Playoffs. So I was really happy with that.

Something that I'm not pleased with is probably my constant search for perfection. You know, like I still think I can control all the environment and all my results, and it's just not true. I mean, golf is a tough sport, and it's a really tough sport that you might be feeling great but you still might not be getting the results that you get.

I think just kind of having a little more ease on my mind and having golf not -- kind of like take a hit on my emotional senses. Like sometimes you take a hit emotionally with bad results.

I think one thing I can get better at is just kind of not let the golf course play around with my mind at home.

Q. Sebastian, just wanted to get a sense of what it was like playing in the pro-am today.

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: It was totally different. I mean, well, I got a good group. I got the chancellor of Ole Miss and then a guy called David, which was a pretty cool guy. It was nice. It was nine holes. Just totally different from what we're used to. They're having to take their bags and not have any caddies around, so my caddie had to rake all the bunkers, so he was not loving it. But it was good, nine holes actually played pretty fast. It was like under two and a half hours, which for a pro-am is really good, and just different but good in a sense.

Q. Was it any different in the sense -- how did the social distancing work and all that?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: It worked good, like you started from the first hole, they told me, hey, we're not going to do

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

any fist bumping, no pictures, no hugging, nothing that style, and everyone respected it. My caddie was the only one to grab the pins and rakes, and then I helped them read the putts but from a distance, and it was fine.

Q. What was the general sense about having the pull carts?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: It was definitely weird, especially Emily is her name, she's an older woman, and she had to push her cart. But they were pretty smart about it. They went all the way on the cart paths so they didn't struggle with the wet rough, and they just walked to their ball. As soon as they couldn't make par, they just picked it up and go to the next one. They were pretty smart about it.

Q. How did you feel about the rest of your season after the victory? I'm sure that took a lot of pressure off you, but how do you feel like you played the rest of the way, and what are your goals for this season?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: I feel pretty proud of myself after last year's season. It was my first time playing a WGC, I played good in that. Then the Playoffs, I played really good in that. The results were there. Then I had a little bump coming back from COVID, which it was hard to take, but I remained positive and tough and managed to steer around. So really happy, and the goals for this year are keep improving my game, become a top-50 golfer in the world and just keep getting experience from the big tournaments. I felt like I still feel a little more pressure in those events, so just feel more comfortable and see what happens.

Q. I don't want to get too far ahead, but have you thought about making your debut at Augusta National and the Masters?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: Yeah. I've been thinking about that for a while now, like since I won here a year ago thinking it was going to be in April and then moved over to November. It's going to be nice. It's going to, of course, be different without all the patrons. But yeah, it's going to be nice. It's going to be cold. I think it's going to play long, and we'll see how it goes.

The good thing is that I'm going to play that one and then in April, so hopefully I'll get the best of both worlds.

Q. Have you been there before?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: I went over last year actually November after the RSM.

Q. How was is playing in November?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: It was cold. Like I remember the -- I booked for two days, so the first day it was gorgeous. I played like around noon or a little later. It was like 70, 65. It was just long that time, but they told me it was playing different in April. And then the next morning I had an 8:00 a.m. tee time and I looked at the weather and it showed like 45 or 50, and I'm like, ugh, I'm not going to play since it's not going to be this cold at that time of the year so I didn't play because it was going to be too cold.

Q. How much longer was it playing? Can you give me an example of maybe something that surprised you?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: Yeah, it surprised me hitting 3-iron on 11 for my second shot. It surprised me when I hit -- I think I hit 5-iron on 10. I did get on in two on 15 with a 4-iron, so that was good. And also 18, like I think I didn't reach the first left bunker, which they told me was in play, but I think I didn't reach. Yeah, it was just playing longer. They told me, yeah, I should expect to play shorter distance, but it does play longer.

Q. What are you most happy with about your game right now, and what are you concerned about, if anything?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: I feel really happy with my mind, to be honest. I feel like the swing stuff has been working good since a year ago. I mean, there's always little tweaks here and there, but my swing stuff is good, but the thing that's improved the most is I think my head and not making it a big thing and just going out and playing golf, which is how I play the best. And I can't remember the second part. What was it?

Q. If there's a concern, if there's one part of your game you're really working on.

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: Not really. Just my normal stuff. Sometimes I get a little too handsy, sometimes I don't let the body dictate the movement of the club. I just kind of get handsy and help the ball a little bit instead of staying back and letting the body rotate through the shot. It's just a little more tempo, but it's not like I'm preoccupied or nervous about it.

Q. Sebastian, how did you celebrate? Did you do something special? And what was the best perk of being a PGA TOUR winner?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: I finished here and then I did the media and stayed with the sponsors and signed the flags, and then I was probably home two and a half hours later after I was done, and they had burgers -- I was staying with

a host family, and they had burgers for me and beer, and I just -- I think I chugged the first beer, just kind of like thirsty, just kind of like relaxed, and that was awesome. And then I had like two burgers and just talked with friends and just remembered like the shots that I was hitting and what was I thinking in those shots. We just had a great night.

But I think by 10:00 I was just exhausted. I was just drained, so I just went to bed.

Q. What type of beer was it?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: I think it was like a light beer, like a Coors Light or a Michelob Ultra, something like that.

Q. What's the best perk of now being a PGA TOUR winner?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: The best perk, well, now with the COVID status, I get an extra year of being an TOUR, so that's a huge bonus. I feel like I'm playing good. It just takes kind of that stress away about your card, so I can just go out and free-wheel it and just go for big things.

MARK WILLIAMS: Just to finish up, you made the cut at the U.S. Open just a few weeks ago. It's the first time you've made a cut in a major. You mentioned to Steve about doing things better in the bigger events. You've played in all the majors except for the Masters, which you'll be in shortly. What do you specifically have to do to compete in those bigger events better than what you've been doing?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: Well, definitely I felt a lot more comfortable for the U.S. Open. I just felt like it was a little unlucky that my pairing was the last one out of Friday, so I finished like bogey-par-bogey with like barely any light. So I feel like that was a disadvantage for me because then I go early on Saturday and the weather is a lot cooler with a lot more wind, and that just kind of takes you off your chances right there.

I feel like first off, I need better tee times. I feel more comfortable now, and now if I get like a better tee time -- probably in the Masters I'm not going to have any problems because it's a smaller field, but like in the past tee times, British Open I teed off last at 4:20, and then the U.S. Open at Shinnecock I teed off at 6:00 in the morning. So it's just -- like I just need a better luck with the draw, and I think that would help me a lot to make a better tournament.

MARK WILLIAMS: Finally, the Presidents Cup is in 2022. It's a fair ways away, but the way that you've been playing and getting experience in these bigger tournaments, is that

something that's on your radar and that you're paying attention to, and have you had any conversations with other players or captains that have been involved in the team?

SEBASTIAN MUÑOZ: Definitely. Definitely it's something that I want to be a part of. I haven't played a team event -- well, excluding the Zurich in a while, like a bigger team event. It's something I'm definitely looking forward to. It's going to be at Quail Hollow, which I love that course. I love the environment. I love the people. There's tons of people out there in Charlotte. So it's something I'm definitely looking forward to. No, I haven't spoken to Trevor, but what I talked about with Abe and Joaco is that they love the experience, they love the team camaraderie and how everyone comes in together for a team event, so that's definitely something I'm looking forward to being a part of.

MARK WILLIAMS: We appreciate you making the time for us, and good luck this week defending your first title. Thanks, Sebastian.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports