

# AIG Women's Open

Quick Quotes

Tuesday, 20 August 2024

## Karrie Webb



**Q. As one of our most decorated winners of the AIG Women's Open, what does this event mean to you?**

KARRIE WEBB: It's always meant a lot to me, actually. Even winning it the first couple of times, as a non-major, I always came into the Women's Open thinking of it as a major. I think because it's the men's Opens had such a long history in Australian golf and growing up and getting up in the middle of the night to watch it, you know, for me playing in a Women's Open was always as important as any of the majors we played.

In 2001, it becoming a major, I think was long overdue. And the tournament's only grown a lot since then. We started playing the Old Course and Carnoustie and Troon, places where women's golf had never been played before.

So it's very special to be back here. I was looking for my yardage book from 2013. I missed the cut when I played in 2013, and I was, like, next time it's here I won't be playing golf again, I won't be playing again. So I threw it out, so I couldn't find it.

But it's good to be back here. I wouldn't have thought 11 years ago I'd be teeing up here again.

**Q. So your decision to come back was that mainly based on getting your (indiscernible) back on The Old Course or just coming back here?**

KARRIE WEBB: I think this will be my last opportunity to compete at St Andrews. So even if it's on the road before I'm 60, these girls are too good for me to be trying to tee it up when I'm 56, 57.

I didn't think I would be playing professional golf at 49. So, yeah, I'm just looking forward to having a good time out there as much as you can with the weather forecast, but just see what happens.

**Q. And talk to me about links golf. You're, in my opinion, one of the best players we've had in that area. What's the keys to playing links golf well?**

KARRIE WEBB: I think what I love about it takes me out of

my technical mind and gets me being more creative and hitting shots that you don't normally hit. And I don't think judging the wind is as precise as it can be on the other golf courses. I think just here it's all feel and visualising different shots.

And here at the Old Course, too, I think it's knowing that you can hit it in the rough. Aiming at the rough on purpose as you miss off the tee because that gives you the best angle into the greens.

It's just trusting that that's what the game plan is that day for that hole because the next day it could be hitting driver off the tee and hitting it way down there because it's playing downwind.

**Q. And it's exciting for me to see that one of our hall of famers still has that glint in her eye when walking into St Andrews. What is it about this place?**

KARRIE WEBB: I've not figured the golf course out. So I wouldn't say it's a course that I'm in love with because I could play it a hundred times and still not think I have the keys to how to get around here really well.

But I just think when you make the loop at the back end of the course and you head back into the town, I think the town of St Andrews is just so cool. And the backdrop of the town all the way into the 18th is just a wonderful setting. And I think part of it is just the history of the game here at the Old Course that it just makes it feel different.

**Q. You've been part of many historical moments in our women's game, and you've given so much back to Australian golf. You must be incredibly proud of the prodigies that have come through and the major champions since you were one?**

KARRIE WEBB: It's great to see. I think ensuring that women's golf is as healthy as it's ever been out on tours around the world. I think we've probably similar numbers at times on the LPGA, but the depth of the numbers we have on tour, I think all those girls are very capable of having really great careers and winning tournaments and winning majors. And that's exciting for me to see.

And what I love, too, they're all great friends and they're all



there to support one another. I think that's really important when you're out here for many years that you have a great group of friends like that.

**Q. When you were a child, you went to watch Greg Norman play in the 1986 event down in Australia, and you said to your parents that you were going to be a pro golfer. Looking back, do you think you've done all right?**

KARRIE WEBB: Definitely the dream of all dreams for sure. I don't think my dreams ever went as far as my career ended up. So I feel very fortunate for that.

**Q. Very fortunate to be here right now?**

KARRIE WEBB: Yeah, I'm loving being here.

**Q. On your memories of the three victories you had, any standout moments? They were three quite different victories as well. If you could take maybe a few sentences on each of the three. You've won three times this event could you run through those special moments?**

KARRIE WEBB: I think the first one at Woburn, it was probably very unexpected. I think that was my first year on tour, and a member of the LET. And I played fairly good for it being my first season on tour. But I think going into the British Open, obviously I felt that was a major because of growing up watching the Aussie men doing so well in the men's Open.

But I just remember I know I was paired with Mardi Lunn on Saturday, and this amazing up-and-down I made from right of, one of the holes on the back nine -- she still talks about it daily -- it's like I hit the shot yesterday.

But then just being in the last group on Sunday, and I was paired with Val Skinner, who was a very intimidating person. But she got off to a bad start and I got off to a great start. Not long after that, she was my cheerleader for the rest of the day.

For me, my biggest memory was standing on 18 with a five-shot lead, and I had to back off three times because my sight line off the tee was the British Open logo. And every time I looked up I was, like, I'm going to win the British Open. I just couldn't believe it.

So that was really special. And changed my life. So that win made people know who I was and that I was going to be around for a while.

And then Sunningdale in '97, I mean, what a great golf

course. If we're ever going to not play links at the Women's Open I'd love for it to be at Sunningdale. I think it's such a great golf course.

I don't have specific memories, I just know I won by a lot, seven or eight shots, I think. Just played well every single day. Just loved the golf course, I think, and just really suited me. So that was really special, winning there.

And then we started playing on links courses in '98, and we got to Turnberry in '02, so it was a major for the second year. I just fell in love with Turnberry. It's one of my favorite links. And had an up-and-down week. I think I started quite a few shots back on Sunday.

But the weather was pretty iffy at the beginning of the day and I just knew if I got off to a good start, I could be close to the lead by the turn and that's what happened. And just played a really great final round. I think I was a couple of groups ahead of the leaders. But when I holed out on the last, I had won. I didn't have to wait for the leaders to get in. Just a really great final round of a major.

**Q. What's it like to win the AIG Women's Open?**

KARRIE WEBB: Very special. All three times have been amazingly special to me. And I think winning at Turnberry as a major made that a little bit more special just because of the venue and also it being recognised of the importance of the event.

**Q. The evolution of the championship, in '95, what the championship looked like, what the players were like compared to today. And how do you reflect on the evolution of this wonderful championship?**

KARRIE WEBB: Well, from when I first played it in '95, it was an LPGA-sanctioned event but not all the LPGA players came over to play. It wasn't a major -- so the buy-in from the LPGA wasn't there as much to -- in the next few years when they started playing links, and the LPGA players came over more, to it then being a major.

I think that's been great in the history of the women's game for this tournament to be a major.

And I think as far as the players go, I just think every generation evolves into a better version of the last. And I think it's exciting to watch how good the girls are. And I think it's probably just deeper, the field, than when I played in '95. There's so many girls that you could say they're favorites for this week and none of them be up there, and five or six names that no one's ever heard of except for a few out on tour and you know how good they are.

**Q. Do you think you can win it?**

KARRIE WEBB: There's always lightning in a bottle. But a lot would have to go right, I believe.

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