

AIG Women's Open

Quick Quotes

Saturday, 2 August 2025

Julie Thomas



Q. How did you find that?

JULIE THOMAS: Excellent experience, superb. Brooke was fantastic to play with. Clearly I'm not a Tour player, and I certainly don't have the length of any of those girls. So for me, that was quite daunting to go in out there. I'm a member here, club champion here, so I just went out and played my own game.

I had good advice from the R&A before I went out that really my brief was to look after Brooke and make sure she doesn't race around too quickly and just enjoy the game.

Q. When did you first find out that it was a possibility that you could play today?

JULIE THOMAS: I was asked a couple of months ago by the club to be a reserve marker. Originally it was Darcey Harry, she was the first reserve marker, so I was quite calm and collected at that point and felt it was highly unlikely it would ever happen.

Of course, Darcey has been flying the flag for Wales all year and done very well and qualified easily for the event. So of course then it was over to me. Then the last few days I was told that if it was an odd number and last night then I would be asked to play.

It's quite tricky because I'm not part of the lineup, so I don't get to play the practice rounds that they do, which I normally do. I'm an amateur. I play for the senior home international teams for Wales. So I would be normally prepping much more than I had the opportunity to do this week.

I'm certainly aware of my place in the event. So for me, it was quite different in that I went out this morning with a yardage chart rather than being able to zap my -- use a course guide for my yardages. That was certainly a change that came upon me pretty quickly.

Q. Obviously I know it's probably different prep or no prep than you're used to, there's obviously an opportunity that you probably couldn't pass up, could you?

JULIE THOMAS: Certainly not. To play in this, which is the biggest event, the AIG Women's Open on my own course, where I'm a club champion, and I've got a real passion for this club and for Wales, I was just delighted when I was asked. I was also terrified, I must say.

But as the hours went on from being asked, I calmed down and went out and really enjoyed the experience.

Q. How did you get on out there? Did you keep your own score, or was it simply to keep Brooke company?

JULIE THOMAS: I didn't keep my own score. I had a few birdies, and I had a few pars, which kept me going because, of course, the tees are set up very differently from what I'm normally used to playing, so the length is a lot longer. The pars are different. They actually make them longer, and I make the pars less, but a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

Q. Obviously I know the tee boxes might be different and stuff, but there's not many people who would know this course better than you. I wonder, did Brooke ever ask you for any advice walking around?

JULIE THOMAS: No, she didn't ask me any advice, and possibly I don't think she's allowed to ask for advice off your playing partner. I'm not sure on that.

Q. That's fine. All in all, a day in the hole. It's actually a lovely way to kind of round this off. Are you doing it tomorrow as well?

JULIE THOMAS: I don't know if I'm doing it tomorrow yet. I'll find out later on. I think it depends on whether the odd number or the last player, first player out, actually has a request to have a player marker. I'll find out my fate later on today.

Q. Just a couple more before we go. Obviously this is a huge event for Wales and particularly for this club. Darcey's obviously in the headlines, and she's doing great. As a member here, as champion here, how nice has it been, this week, this whole buildup, to have this event at your club?

JULIE THOMAS: It's been a tremendous opportunity for the club. We've been planning for the event for possibly two years. Two of our members have been in charge of the whole controllers and also the scoring team. That's our captain of ladies golf. So they've put in a tremendous amount of work.

Also, the local community, seeing all of those clubs come together. We've got different golf clubs, one of them my local club, Pontardulais there on hole 15. They were cheering loud today when I was playing. To see all the local clubs and to recognise so many people out there, it was one of the best experiences of my life.

Also, my family are out there supporting. My husband came and caddied and my son and daughter, they were out watching from the beginning. That was an experience I'll never forget.

Q. Again, for people who may not know, they're just focused on the players who are doing what they do, can you tell us a bit more about the role of a marker? It's a role, I think, everyone knows what a player does, what a caddie might do, but not many people would see or notice the people behind them or the people carrying the scores. Can you give us an idea of what your role entails as a marker, please?

JULIE THOMAS: Yes, my brief this morning is to ensure pace of play is kept, that the player -- a player on their own would possibly play too quickly and be ahead of time so the course wouldn't be prepared. The holes may not be ready. So that was my brief. And to ensure that I also keep the pace of play.

It's not about me and it's not about me looking for my golf score. So to make sure that I spend the time with the player and ensure that they would be not put off. I tried my best not to put her off.

Yeah, I think it's for them to have an experience because, if they're on their own, that can be quite a lonely place. And they might have lines that I can putt before them, and they can see perhaps which direction a putt is going in and how quick a green is. So it's really important to have somebody playing with you. It's really quite difficult to actually play on your own.

Q. And the cut itself, you're not just there to keep her company, you're there to do a role, aren't you?

JULIE THOMAS: Yes, so I marked her card today, and she had an eagle on 9, which was a great eagle. She passed by so many putts, so close I thought they were going in. Her score could have been a lot lower, but she

had a great round of par, which I think is good, a great round for her.

Q. When you see someone as good as that up close, it's just different, isn't it?

JULIE THOMAS: Oh, it's completely different. She was so friendly, and some of the girls, the Welsh girls came out to support her who were at university with her at Arkansas, some girls from our local club, or the club next door, Pyle & Kenfig, they were out.

Of course I'll be out watching Darcey today, flying the flags for Wales. What a tremendous event it has been so far -- the support, the spectators, the volunteers, and the club. The club have been delighted and honoured to host this event.

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