

# KPMG Women's PGA Championship

Thursday, June 22, 2023  
Springfield, New Jersey, USA  
Baltusrol Golf Club

## Marina Alex

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We're here with Marina Alex. How special was it to take the first tee shot today in your home state?

MARINA ALEX: Yeah, it's pretty cool. We'll never get that opportunity again. Big thanks to the PGA of America for doing that.

It's really close to home. Unbelievable golf course. Yeah, it's a pretty special thing.

**Q. Can you give us a little background on where home is and where you grew up playing?**

MARINA ALEX: Yeah, I grew up in Wayne, New Jersey, so it's maybe 20 miles from here, just north and a little east, so about a 30-, 35-minute drive. Pretty familiar with the area. Grew up playing at North Jersey Country Club and did a lot of my high school matches at Passaic County, which I don't think it's called that anymore.

I actually haven't really played here at all over the years. It's a tough place to get out to, and there was not a lot of junior golf tournaments here at Baltusrol. It's a major championship venue. It's pretty much reserved for major championships.

**Q. Do you remember how long ago -- I don't know when they would have made the announcement it was coming here, but just your excitement level to know it was here?**

MARINA ALEX: Yeah, definitely. I think it's been on the schedule for maybe four or five years, so there was a lot of built-up excitement and anxiousness coming into this week, but it's cool to get underway.

**Q. A lot of family here?**

MARINA ALEX: Yeah, Mom is here, close friends and



family. It's good to have some support.

**Q. Were you any more nervous on the first tee shot this morning than you might have been in other scenarios?**

MARINA ALEX: No, I think it was just -- it was an early tough morning. The conditions have been really difficult all day. Kind of more focused on that than necessarily like the first tee shot here at a major, and in my home state, I think I was just trying to get a good round under my belt, which was harder than anticipated.

**Q. If you could kind of give your thoughts on the growth of New Jersey golf. I feel like the summer we've had this year, we wouldn't have had four or five years ago.**

MARINA ALEX: No, there's a ton of amazing venues here. We saw that at Liberty. We've been at Upper Montclair, we've played Mountain Ridge in the past, playing here this week at Baltusrol. There's a lot of championship golf. It's good to see that we're getting to play these venues, and hopefully we can continue to play.

That's just kind of like, I would say, just scratching the surface on some really good golf here. It would be nice to have a very consistent northeast, preferably New Jersey, but there are so many great courses here in Jersey, New York, Connecticut, that we could definitely be playing more regularly.

**Q. I feel like you're the queen of local recommendations. Where are you eating tonight?**

MARINA ALEX: I'm going back to my friend's family's restaurant in east Hanover, Luigi's. I've been kind of sending every player there this week. That's where I'm going tonight.

**Q. Dirty martini?**

MARINA ALEX: No, it's a work night.

**Q. I do remember you also said you went to Luigi's**



**after the Founders a couple years ago?**

MARINA ALEX: Yeah.

**Q. What's it like being in that situation, being from here and as much as you're coming here now, you can introduce players you know from all over the world to your home?**

MARINA ALEX: Yeah, it's really cool. There's a lot of great food here, pizza, bagels, Italian food. That's kind of what's home to me growing up here and what I ate a lot of as a kid. It's good to kind of share that with other players. There's a lot of foodies out here that appreciate good food, and whether it's fancy or it's not fancy and you just want to get a really good bagel with Taylor Ham, egg and cheese, it doesn't matter, but Jersey has a lot of great staples.

**Q. What was it like, that feeling to get to compete on a historic golf course like this?**

MARINA ALEX: Yeah, it is a real championship course. It's a very intimidating golf course. There's really not a lot of margin for error out here. You're one foot in the rough, you can get a terrible lie, and then you have a lot of things to contend with. The green complexes are hard.

It's a privilege to be playing out here. It really is a great golf course. It is unlike anything else, just playing so close to where I grew up.

**Q. Had you not been on the course until this week?**

MARINA ALEX: No, the upper maybe but not the lower. This is the championship venue, and I know that they've had a restoration in the last few years, so I really don't think I played any junior golf here, and if I did, my memory wouldn't be very good of it, and it is a bit different than what it once was. It was a clean slate for me here.

**Q. Can you speak to the difficulty of the start here, going off 1?**

MARINA ALEX: Yeah, it's a tough -- I would say until you get to 7, it's a really good opening stretch of golf. You have to just hit really good golf shots and good putts.

I don't really think there was an advantage teeing off the back nine, either, because those are difficult holes, as well.

I just think the closing holes on the front and the back maybe afford you some birdie opportunities, but everything else from the start to that point, you've got to bear down and play good golf.

**Q. Is 18 kind of set up today to go after?**

MARINA ALEX: Yeah, I hit a great drive, and I had only 203 or 204 to the front of the green and I hit a really good 3-wood, and it still didn't get up there. There will be players that can reach it, but a majority of them are not going to be able to with how cold it is and the wind direction is pretty much straight in. Even on a forward tee it's not that easy and a pretty difficult hole location.

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