

KPMG Women's PGA Championship

Saturday, June 24, 2023
Springfield, New Jersey, USA
Baltusrol Golf Club



Leona Maguire

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Here we are once again with Leona Maguire. After day three how are you feeling walking off of Baltusrol?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, a steady day today. It was more of a mixed bag than the last few days. Had to scramble a little bit more today. I had a few key up-and-downs out of bunkers today to keep me going and keep me in it. Always nice to finish with a birdie on 18.

THE MODERATOR: I know a lot of people want to talk to you, so we'll take questions.

Q. Going off last Saturday at a major, were you pleased with your comfort level in that spot?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, first time I had ever been in that position. I feel like he handled it pretty well and tried not to treat it any differently than any other round, just like last week. I think same mindset tomorrow. Just me and Dermot will enjoy one more walk around this really nice golf course tomorrow.

Q. You've been hitting a ton of greens. How sharp does the iron game feel?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah. I mean, I feel like it played a touch longer. We hit a lot of 5- and 6-hybrids today. I feel like I'm hitting my targets pretty well.

I wasn't quite as disciplined today maybe as I should have been. We picked really good targets. I kind of just got off a little bit on the back nine.

But, yeah, for the most part executing really well and just need to do that again tomorrow.

Q. Leona, I was asking Stephanie, and I have to ask you too. We have the memory of Shane winning at Portrush. My question is, how does an Irish woman

celebrate winning a major, and how will they celebrate at home?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I think there's a lot of business to take care of between now and then, so not getting too far ahead of ourselves. I think Dermot said Seamus Power is actually here today, which is cool to see.

Yeah, I mean, it's never been done before, and obviously there's a lot on the line tomorrow, but trying to treat it no different than any other day tomorrow.

Q. Kind of the words of encouragement or messages that you are getting these days from people in Ireland or...

LEONA MAGUIRE: I have massive support back home. I always do. Irish fans are the best fans in the world. They're rooting me on. I think there was quite a few out there today as well.

Yeah, I mean, I haven't been paying too much attention to social media this week. I won't tonight again and just do what I've been doing and keep my head down for one more day.

Q. You got that second win finally last week. How much did it do for you mentally to get that monkey off your back finally?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I wasn't thinking about it too much. It seems like other people were thinking about it a lot more than I was.

I felt like I've been playing really good golf, and it's always great validation when you do win when you think you're playing great golf. It's one thing to thinking you're playing great golf, but really I think the nice thing was to be able to execute down the stretch on Sunday when I needed to.

I did it at Chevron to make the cut on Friday. I did it in a few of my matches in Vegas. So it was really nice that it culminated in a win last week.

Yeah, I mean, ultimately trying to finish up with a good



round tomorrow and finish as strong as I can.

Q. Assess your putting, if you could. I know ball-striking is key out here, but you have to be able to two-putt and make birdies like you did today. Just tell me how the putting is going, and how well have you been able to see the lines out here?

LEONA MAGUIRE: I feel like you have to be conservative on some of the pins. You just have to accept that it's going to be a two-putt, and then there are other pins that you can sort of go straight at and give yourself a really nice chance.

So I feel like I've been reading them pretty well for the most part. I think they were definitely a touch quicker today. Not as much moisture on them, so I raced a couple by today. My pace wasn't quite as good today, but holed a few nice ones coming back to keep me in it.

Q. Just a couple of caddie questions. How long have you two known each other? How did the relationship come about, and how does he help you the most?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I mean, Dermot started caddying for me. His first week was Mediheal 2021, so I guess just over two years.

He comes from a long line of caddies back in Ireland, so I knew of him. I didn't "know him-know him." He knew my coach. He obviously knew Pdraig really well and knew Paul McGinley really well. So he was well known in golfing circles in Ireland.

He caddied for Shane Lowry for eight, nine years. So I think the biggest thing is he has given me the confidence. I think he has believed in me in times where I haven't believed in myself. He is just a really steady presence out there.

I think he doesn't get too excited when things are going well, and he doesn't get too down when things aren't. I think we're quite similar in that regard.

So, yeah, I mean, just enjoy one last walk together around this week. He has been here before, which is also -- I think the experience of being here for a men's major, he knew how the golf course was going to change, how things might be set up. So I think that was a nice sort of added bonus to have this week.

Q. Then, obviously, Stephanie was in here a little bit ago. When did you first meet? How far do you guys go back?

LEONA MAGUIRE: A long time. A long time. I probably

have known Stephanie since I've been about 10, 11 years old.

We played on caddie teams together and played on Irish teams together. We played Curtis Cup together. We played foursomes together. We roomed together.

I've known Steph a long time. We've been good friend a long time. We've done battle many times before. It's great to see her playing so well.

Q. After you're done here with us, what's kind of going to be your nightly routine to prepare for a round like tomorrow?

LEONA MAGUIRE: I'm not sure what time it is, but dinner and bed pretty early I think. My sister came over today. First time I've seen her in a month or two I guess, so catch up with her I guess and have dinner. Yeah, pretty early to bed I guess and be ready to go tomorrow.

Q. What are going to be the biggest mental keys for you tomorrow to pull this off?

LEONA MAGUIRE: I think just staying patient. One more day of patience. I know it's a cliché, but I think this golf course really demands it. And just one more day of being, yeah, super patient and really disciplined out there.

Q. When did you start using AimPoint?

LEONA MAGUIRE: I'm going to say end of 2020. Yeah, it's really helped my putting. I think I've been able to commit to my putts a lot more. It's worked pretty well for me.

Q. Just on that note, do you feel like AimPoint helped you out this last couple of days feeling really confident over the putts out here? Greens are pretty challenging.

LEONA MAGUIRE: I think there's a lot of big breaking putts, especially when you get on the wrong side of the hole. So it's definitely helped sort of committing that there is as much break there as there looks. It's just a case of sort of matching that speed to that line that you see.

Q. Yeah, and then the weather has been changing. Do you feel like that kind of impacted your strategy out on the course? Maybe make it more aggressive with lines as the greens were softer and then kind of adjust as they firmed up?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I would say they were a touch firmer today. We seem to keep waiting for that really

heavy rain and thunderstorms, and they just never come. So I think we've been incredibly lucky the first three days. Hopefully more of the same tomorrow.

It actually got really, really hot and humid out there today, especially on the back nine when the sun came out. The ball was definitely traveling a little further than it was yesterday, so we had to adjust for that it.

It was a different wind today, so the last few holes played quite a bit different than they did the last few days.

Q. You're no stranger to winning. Two LPGA wins, a great college career. How does your mindset tonight going into tomorrow -- how is it kind of different compared to some of the other times in the past that you have had an opportunity to win going into a Sunday?

LEONA MAGUIRE: I don't think it's any different. I think it's one more round of golf. I have to hit one shot at a time tomorrow and play some really good golf.

It doesn't matter that it's a major. It's really no different than any other day, and I'm not going to treat it any different.

Q. Leona, what you do think of the par-5, par-5 ending to a round, especially as it's going to end a major, a Sunday? I think we saw a couple of eagles at the 18th today and also some missed short putts, so maybe it's not as easy to putt. What are your thoughts on that in general?

LEONA MAGUIRE: They're two very different holes. 17 you have to get your ball on the fairway. Otherwise, you can't get over those bunkers. I didn't do that very well today.

Yeah, I think 18 is a really good hole. You have to get your drive away, and that sets up the second shot, but it's not an easy second shot. You have to hit a really good shot in there.

It's a tricky ring. There's a lot of slopes on that green. That pin today was sitting on a little bit of -- just a little bit of a nub. So I left it in a really nice spot, so it was a nice two-putt, but if you hit it above the pin at all on 18, it's a tricky, tricky putt.

Q. As you chase another trophy two Sundays in a row, what's the role of momentum for you tomorrow?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, obviously I feel good. My game is in good shape. Yeah, I mean, if you had offered it for me

last Sunday, I would have taken it.

My energy levels are good. I feel like we've executed our plan really well this week and tried not to think about it too much. Yeah, just one more day of doing the same thing.

Q. What do you feel will be the biggest key for you?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Tomorrow?

Q. Yeah.

LEONA MAGUIRE: Like I said before, patience and discipline. I think not making it into anything bigger than it is. It's just one more round of golf.

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