

# Marathon Classic presented by Dana

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Toledo, Ohio, USA

## Emma Talley

### Press Conference



CHRISTINA LANCE: All right, here with Emma Talley at the Marathon LPGA Classic. Last time we talked to you was off a 63 last week in Dallas, career low. You had opened the week with a 65. You got your usual big smile on your face, but it's even bigger. How are you right now?

EMMA TALLEY: Yeah, when you asked me to come interview I was so excited because I haven't been in this spot in a long time. I started well last week and finished really well. The middle two rounds were so-so, but my dad was like, This was the first time I've heard you be upset about shooting even par.

Yeah, I feel back to myself again. I'm hitting the ball really well and can't wait for this week.

CHRISTINA LANCE: You and I were just catching up about what life has been like for the last two, three years since rookie season. If you don't mind telling us, you had a great rookie year. Things derailed a little but you are figuring out. What's your journey been over the last few years?

EMMA TALLEY: Yeah, I think when I turned pro I had also been successful as an amateur and then was successful on the Symetra Tour and then came out my rookie year and played really well, but I didn't win my rookie year.

So I think I started having a bit of wandering eyes and kind of questioning my process and what I was doing, and I changed up a lot things.

My long-time coach since I was nine years old, we split for about a year and a half. I tried some other things, I tried -- I changed golf balls. I did everything you're not supposed to do, and what got me here.

And then in December I went back to my coach and he looked at me and he was like, What are you doing? So I been working really hard. The last six months I've been working as hard as I've ever worked before.

At one point a couple months ago I was like, Man, I don't

know if I can keep doing this and not seeing results. I kept telling my dad, It's there. I don't know when the results will come. And then finally it did.

It couldn't have been at better time because it got me into a few tournaments up coming. It was really a blessing. I had no idea that last week was an option to qualify into tournaments and it was.

CHRISTINA LANCE: What have you been working on and what's the name of your coach?

EMMA TALLEY: So I've had added a few people to my team but also gone back to my roots. I took -- my swing lessons are from a guy called Todd Tremble in Paducah, Kentucky. I've been with him for now forever minus two years. All my success has been with him, so shout timeout Todd.

And then Barry is also in Paducah, Kentucky and I been practicing with him with my putting. And Gareth Raflewski, he is kind of a new guy on my team, and then I actually hired a sports psychologist in October, which has been huge for me getting back to my roots. His name is Paul Dewland out of Orlando, Florida. He's like completely changed who I am in a good way.

I had never known that I needed a sports psychologist, and honestly he's been my therapist a lot, too. It's nice to have someone to talk to that with help you. I been really working on my mental game the past six, eight months some he's been a huge addition.

CHRISTINA LANCE: The mental game, the physical side, you mentioned you changed golf balls, changed clubs, you changed everything. Are you back to normal?

EMMA TALLEY: Yeah, so actually I'm back to myself. Like I said, everything feels really good at the moment. I'm just excited for this week and the rest of the season.

CHRISTINA LANCE: The good finish last week you mentioned jumped you the priority list or up the CME points and got you into Evian, so that did make that quick stop back in Nashville good, right?

EMMA TALLEY: Yes. I actually didn't even expect -- I had a flight home on Sunday night just because. There weren't

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that great of flights coming here from Dallas. I love my bed I've decided in Nashville, and I don't get to go back. I was like, Oh, I'll just make a pit stop.

Luckily enough I did because I didn't have any warm clothes, so I got to repack my bags. Even though I only got five hours of sleep it was a good five hours.

CHRISTINA LANCE: I hope you waved down the road at my house in Nashville, because I wish I had been in my bed in Nashville. Coming here to Marathon you played really well here the last few years. Pulled up your results: T5 last year; T11 the year before; and T5 the year before that. What is it about Highland Meadows that seems to bring out the best in you?

EMMA TALLEY: Yeah, I'm excited for this week. I actually told my caddie, who is also new on my bag, you know, it's something about this place. I get on the course and I get giddy. I was so giddy yesterday in my practice round. I love this place.

It's manicured so well. It's kind of an old-style golf course which is kind of how I grew up. Trees, big old trees everywhere. Small greens in certain parts. Course and that's what I'm used to and my home golf course looks like in Kentucky, so kind of feels like being back to my roots, which is really cool.

CHRISTINA LANCE: Last year this time we were here under completely different circumstances. There was no build around 18. There were no fans. We were wearing masks. Still wearing masks when we need to now, but we're back to some semblance of normal. What's it like to be back and see the fans and feel a little more adult?

EMMA TALLEY: Yeah, last year actually I lost my best friend due to cancer at this tournament. Different month, but that's another thing that I was thinking about yesterday. I was just thinking about him and the journey he had in his life. I played with Rachel Heck yesterday and she knew him from junior golf and college golf, so that's also a memory I'll be having this week.

To have the fans back is amazing. Last week was awesome. It's crazy what fans can do and what momentum and energy they bring. It's just -- I can't explain how good it is.

CHRISTINA LANCE: You mentioned Cullen who you lost last year. I know right now all of our hearts and thoughts are with little Grace Godfrey and her mom and dad, Jane Park and Pete Godfrey. I know you and you couple other players are leading prayer group this afternoon and sending good thoughts. How has the tour been rallying

around Jane and Pete and Baby Gracie during this time?

EMMA TALLEY: Yeah, this is kudos to the LPGA family. It's amazing what the LPGA family does when someone is hurting. I was last year at this tournament and she is right now. I can't imagine what they're going through, but we love Jane and Pete and Baby Grace, and we hope for the best.

I'm so thankful. I was shocked how many people came this morning at 8:00 am for prayer group and we're having another one at 5:00.

It's just really amazing what the LPGA family does for each other. They've not just done prayer group, but we've sent Venmos, we've sent food, we've tried to do as much as we can.

The LPGA family is a good one to be a part of it.

CHRISTINA LANCE: I agree. I'm proud to be a part of it myself. Questions.

**Q. Obviously tragic hearing what's going on with Grace. How many people were there this morning?**

EMMA TALLEY: I would say probably 50 or 60 people, maybe more. There were some tears shed and it was just a good time. I mean, you don't see your competitors in that sense very often, and it was just a good time to be together and pray for someone in need.

**Q. And what has it meant to you to be the leader in that group, to have that many players come out and support Jane and Grace?**

EMMA TALLEY: When you put something together like that you never know if it's going to be popular or not, so it was really cool to see a lot of girls and caddies and staff come out this morning, and hopefully we have more this afternoon.

But the LPGA sounded the horn as well on the golf course so that everyone that was already out playing could take a moment and pray for them so we would all be in unity prepare fog them. I think I that's so cool. I think the tour did a great job of helping me organize it. I'm so thankful you for Amy Olson and Katherine Kirk as well for helping me get it together.

**Q. What was the process like getting this together?**

EMMA TALLEY: Pretty quick. On Monday night I kind of texted Amy and Katherine and just asked if they would be up for it. I'm not a great out-loud prayer, so Amy EMMA

TALLEY on the prayer group this morning and I kind of introduced it. She kind of took the lead and it was just a great time.

EMMA TALLEY: Thank you so much.

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The LPGA, I asked them to send out an email to players and staff and they were very quick to do so. I think that just shows how -- I always call us a traveling circus, and we're also a traveling family. We're all together every single week and we go from place to place. So just shows we were a family and when people are in need we can help.

**Q. Were there any messages in particular that were shared this stuck out to you this morning?**

EMMA TALLEY: We didn't really share much. Just the update on what's going on with them. Jane has actually been really good about putting updates on her Instagram of what's going on with Baby Grace. It seems like there is hope, and that's all we can ask for. We know that Jesus loves Baby Grace more than Jane and Pete, so we are hoping for the best and also trying to love Jane and Pete as much as we can through this, and knowing what to say and when to say it I think is the most important.

We're all rooting for Baby Grace and Jane and Pete as they are going through this rough time. They're not home. They're not -- we travel week to week, so I think it's a blessing that they were in Dallas at the time and we weren't somewhere overseas.

So there is some highlights I guess to be said for being in a good place at the right time when all this happened.

So I'm happy they're in a good place and have good doctors surrounding them.

CHRISTINA LANCE: That was absolutely beautiful, and I know we're all playing for Grace this week. We will take you back inside the ropes for one last question. Seems like you're in good luck right now. What do you think your chances are out there this week on Highland Meadows?

EMMA TALLEY: Yeah, I mean, obviously you always want to play your best, and as my sports psychologist would say, I'm going to keep my eyes off the leaderboard, off the scorecard, and just play my best.

Last week I hit a lot of greens. I played the Callaway Apex Pro irons and hitting them really well as of late, so hopefully I can keep hitting the greens and making some putts.

CHRISTINA LANCE: Thanks so much, Emma. You'll see me at 5:00 and we'll see you at the first tee tomorrow.

