

# NW Arkansas Championship

Thursday, September 23, 2021

Rogers, Arkansas, USA

Pinnacle Country Club

## Brooke Matthews

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, everyone, welcome inside the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship Presented by P&G virtual media center.

I am pleased to be joined by Brooke Matthews. Now, Brooke, you were able to get your sponsor invite for this tournament through your win at the Blessings I believe in 2020.

What was that experience like for you to be able to not only play last year in COVID time, but earn a spot into this year's tournament?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah it's a dream come true, especially being here at Pinnacle. Last year was such an amazing experience. I'm just so excited to get to do it again, and year with the fans I kind of get the full experience and just have a good time.

THE MODERATOR: And we were just talking, and this is me just not knowing, but this is a hometown event for you. How difficult is it sometimes to put away being pulled in every which way and kind of focus only the golf?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, I just see it as like a privilege and it's a good thing. If people want to talk to you and want you to do stuff it's because you're doing something right.

Yeah, I mean, as soon as I got out tomorrow it'll just be about the golf, kind of how it always is. I'm hoping that I have some support out there tomorrow, and I know I have some people coming to watch me.

So, yeah, just soak it in and enjoy the experience, and hopefully it's not the last time.

THE MODERATOR: You had the experience last year. It was your first time competing in event, and this event means so much to those that attend the University of Arkansas that are on that golf team. How special was it to be able to go through that event last year, and what did you learn about yourself, your game, and also what you



**Walmart**  
NW ARKANSAS  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
PRESENTED BY **P&G**

see out of your future?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, any time you get to tee it up against the best in the world it's already an awesome week just starting there.

Getting to play last year I learned to much. I was fortunate that I actually ended up playing pretty well and I ended up played on Sunday and making the cut. It was so, much fun. I had my swing coach on the bag and we were just having a great time.

We learned a lot about what's out there. I feel like I played good but realized we still have a long way to go, which is kind of what I been working towards this past year and something I'm going to continue to work on.

THE MODERATOR: We mentioned it earlier, but when you won at The Blessings, being to have the opportunity this year, what's the focus, the mentality as you take on yet another LPGA Tour event?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, first of all, just enjoy the experience because it's a special week for me. It's not something I get to do every week.

But at the same time learn, try to take advantage of the opportunity just to see where I am against the best in the world.

THE MODERATOR: We were also talking about this off camera, over here breaking some records going into this week's tournament. I know recently I believe in South Carolina breaking the NCAA scoring record. You've probably talked about it a million times, but I got to ask: What have the last few weeks been like for you since that accomplishment?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, it was crazy. I literally tell everyone I played the best golf of my life that week, those three rounds. Everything kind of came together and I was doing everything well. Drove it well and hit my irons well and obviously putted really well to shot some scores like that.

It was nothing that I ever, well, dreamed of or had on my radar. When I walked off the course and during the presentation when they told me the record I was like, Wow,

**ASAP** sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

that's crazy. That's bigger than something I could have thought I would've accomplished in college golf, so it was really cool.

THE MODERATOR: Going into a 54-hole tournament now this week, what does that do for your game just competitively, and not only just what we'll see on the course, but mentally when you're teeing is up against these professional athletes?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, I think the best thing I can do is just take confidence out of it. I know the chances of me going out and shooting 25-under is probably pretty low. Just knowing I have the capability of doing it or something like it.

Yeah, just going out there with the belief that I can play well. Whatever that number ends up being it is. Just going out there and feel like I belong.

**Q. I know you have a lot of family and friends coming you said outside the ropes, but inside the ropes have you been able to talk to any of the alumni that have come through?**

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, I just came from Blessings in Fayetteville, and Stacy actually talked to our team for a little bit and I asked her a couple questions, and so that was cool. She's always been really good to our program. Same with Maria. Just getting to talk to her and seeing her around Blessings a lot now, it's just been really cool.

THE MODERATOR: I think we mentioned this to Stacy, because Stacy back in 2013, also an amateur coming through this tournament. Sorry, Gaby an amateur coming through this as a freshman; Stacy playing and winning this tournament as an amateur, still a student at the University of Arkansas. What's it like to be able to see the rise of people that have come through the same program you're going through right now?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, it's really awesome seeing what they've been able to accomplish, knowing they were kind of in my shoes at one point. Just makes me hopeful for the future and makes me want to accomplish something close to what they have, and it just, yeah, motivates me a lot.

THE MODERATOR: How much do you wish to take out of a week like this? You were able to get through Q1; you're anticipating Q2 coming up in October. What do you hope to take from this week as you hope to get to Q2 and make it to Q-Series?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, in an ideal world I would

take some momentum into Q-Series and also we're playing the Blessings tournament in a couple weeks first.

Yeah, take some momentum, but also just learn. Because I know there is so much I have to learn, and what better way to do it than to now play alongside the best in the world.

THE MODERATOR: Who are some of the friends and family you'll have out this week?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: I have some family that flew in from Colorado, my aunt and uncle and cousin. My boyfriend is here and his brother ended up being able to come too. Yeah, I just I have a lot of local friends, neighbors who I think are all going to come out.

And again my teammates are going to be able to watch this year, too, so really excited. And play along with them, too.

THE MODERATOR: I was going to say, they might be the loudest on No. 17 there. We might hear the chant a couple times or two. You also have another player on your bag for the week. Could you just tell us a little bit how that came to fruition? Did you ask him to be on the bag?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, Luke Long, he's one of my best friends. I've played so much golf with him. I probably played the most golf with him, especially during the summer, than anybody. Known him forever. He just knows my game really well. He knows how to keep me calm, and he's going to be able to help me, too.

It was just kind of a good fit for this week.

THE MODERATOR: Did he get to miss a couple classes?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, I think he did, so I think he was pretty happy about that, too.

THE MODERATOR: As we begin to wrap it up here, this experience in general, this community really comes for this event. They really dig their heels and make their presence known. How excited are you to take in that kind of experience when you get to No. 17, hear that loudest hole on tour, see the crowd, the structures here?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, I'm so excited. It's something I've been on the other side of No. 17 cheering and calling the hog so many times for girls. It's going to be a dream come true. I'm sure I'll be a little nervous, but it's so much more than that this week.

Just to see all the hometown support really means the

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

world, and I'm really grateful to be a part of it.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Brooke, for tagging along and giving us some of I don't you are time.

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

