

# Portland Classic

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Portland, Oregon, USA

Columbia Edgewater Country Club

**Juli Inkster**

**Jenny bae**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome to the media center. We have Juli Inkster and Jenny Bae, who's this year's recipient of the Juli Inkster Award.

Jenny, tell me how excited are you to be here? Are you honored to accept this award with the great Juli Inkster?

JENNY BAE: Honestly I'm still really shocked and really, really fascinated that I'm actually here in person and actually get a chance to play the Portland Classic, which is also my first LPGA tournament.

I mean, it means a lot to get this award, and especially be sitting next to the legend, Juli Inkster. I really, really have to thank you for this and Workday for sponsoring this tournament.

I mean, really it gives me a great start to my LPGA debut and also brings out my confidence going in and finishing up the remaining of the Epson Tour season, too.

THE MODERATOR: Juli, somehow excited are you to give her this award? What are your thoughts on her? All good things.

JULI INKSTER: Yes. You know, she's an amazing player. I got to follow her a little bit from Georgia when she was creeping up the leaderboard for the highest ranked senior.

We talked a little bit. I'm super shy, so we have trouble. But, no, for Workday to help sponsor this award, I mean, coming from the collegiate ranks to the LPGA is a big jump. In college you have everything planned out for you, when to practice, how to travel, you don't have caddies, you carry your own bag, how much do I pay caddies.

My thing is, one, get these great young ladies to stay in school for four years and honor their commitment to the their team and coach and school.

From there, to just help them transition from golf to the

LPGA. I take that personally. I don't just hand them the award and move on. To me, if Jenny ever needs anything, anywhere to go or who to stay with, you know, I'm not playing the greatest, I'm struggling or playing great, you know, so I'm just there for them.

What's great is my last award winners, we really build a great connection and I feel like they can call me any time. I know kind of sometimes it's kind of weird, I'm calling Juli Inkster, but I don't look at it that way. I look at it like they're my set of kids and I want them to succeed. I want them to be successful.

Golf is a super hard game and you're going to have some peaks and valleys. You know, it's super humbling but super rewarding. I really want them to succeed in their dream like I was able to do that myself.

THE MODERATOR: Amazing. Jenny, Juli just talked about the transition from college to pro sports. I know you've been playing a lot on the Epson Tour this year. How has the transition been for you?

JENNY BAE: I think there is both a little bit of difficulty as well as a bit of I know how it's going to go. I kind of know and I have been taught how pro life is going to be.

I think that's the one thing that college does best, they really set you up. It's a little hard that once you turn pro you have to do everything on your own, but once you get a routine it becomes a habit and becomes a lot easier.

THE MODERATOR: Has there been any advice from Juli or that anyone has given you about the transition that's stuck with you?

JENNY BAE: At first I really freaked out about how I'm going to do this on my own and no coaches and teammates to be next to me. I think people have been telling me that it's just going to become a habit, it's going to be a routine. Just going to be like you're going to warm up on the range and going to go from the lowest, the wedges to the driver. It's going to be the same thing.

So they just told me to take it step by step and you're just



going to go up there.

THE MODERATOR: Juli, what is some advice you've given, Jenny, and just Jenny, but other players transitioning from college?

JULI INKSTER: She's done a great job all right. Won two tournaments on Epson Tour. I think she knows what she's doing. I think Georgia really prepared her for the next stage.

But also right now it's maybe a little overwhelming, but it'll settle in. The main thing is right now I'm sure she's trying to soak in everything, play in everything, practice, but my philosophy you really need that time to get away from the game and have other outside activities that keep your mind fresh.

So my thing is, yeah, when you're out there, you play, you play, you play, but then you're home you need time to rest, you need down time. Then you get back to working.

It's not about the quantity it's more about the quality. That's kind of what I try to stress to these players just starting out.

THE MODERATOR: As you mentioned, Jenny, two-time winner on the Epson Tour this year. Natasha also playing really good. How much pride does it give you to see their success out there as they're fighting for their LPGA Tour card?

JULI INKSTER: I think it's great. It just says that's schools really prepare them on and off the course for LPGA life. I think they learn a lot about themselves going to school, a lot about doing their wash and knowing they can't stay out all night and get to an 8:00 class.

I think that builds a lot of confidence in themselves that when they do run into a bump somewhere along the line they'll be able to handle it. So I think the really prepared them.

And they're hard workers. This is what they want to do. You can tell that this is their passion. You know, you can't really put a price tag on that.

So I'm just looking forward to them finishing out their Epson Tour and hopefully be on the LPGA next year and following them and helping them as much as I can.

THE MODERATOR: Jenny, as you said, this is your first LPGA Tour event. How has the Epson Tour prepared you for this and any expectations for this week?

JENNY BAE: I think Epson Tour, especially the timing and how fast you have to play and all that, it's definitely a bit more quicker than college, especially when you're out there you're on your own.

I think that really helped me just kind of think on my own and telling myself to stay patient. I also feel like when you're out there it's you and the golf ball. I think that I had a little bit of struggle with that the first couple tournaments.

I got used to it, and whether I'm by myself or not, I just feel like I'm at home on a golf course.

THE MODERATOR: This week for you must be exciting. Any expectations not just of yourself, but how the week will play out in general?

JENNY BAE: I think as expectations go, I'm just going to go out there and try my best on every hole and shot that I have. Just being able to have the opportunity to participate in this tournament is a huge accomplishment for me.

I think I'm just going to go out there and try to enjoy myself as much as I can.

JULI INKSTER: First of all, I hate to give them props, but want to thank Tom Maletis. When I brought this up to him and said, you know, I'm starting this Inkster Award and I would really like to have them be able to have their debut LPGA for the Portland Classic.

He was all in. It's been great for them to get their feet wet before they really start next year on the LPGA. I would like to thank the Portland Classic and Tom Maletis for doing this. Hopefully we can continue it because I think it's really great to grow college golf and get the kids to stay for that fourth year and have something to shoot for.

It's still new, still growing testimony with Workday and Portland Classic and these amazing players, I think we're just going to keep moving forward.

THE MODERATOR: I was just going to ask what you thought made the Portland Classic such a great jumping off point for these players and you being a past champion?

JULI INKSTER: Yeah, but it's kind of like my home. '84 was my first year playing here, and I don't think I missed one. My career I think I played every one, and I know one of my daughters was starting school and I flew home that day and flew back just to be able to be here. My husband has family here in Milwaukie.

I made the Hall of Fame here in '99 winning the tournament here and being a qualified for the Hall of Fame. I consider

it my home golf course, my home tournament, and for Portland to do this for the Inkster Award and Workday to help me finance it, it all comes together as one.

**Q. Jenny, you talked about the award a bit. Talk to us about that first phone call that you got from Juli that you were the Inkster Award winner in May.**

JENNY BAE: When I first got that phone call from Juli, I think I did get a heads up a little bit from my coach before. Make sure you keep the phone on, you're wide awake. You're going to get one the biggest important phone calls of entire life tomorrow morning at 9:00.

I was like, oh, okay. So I was freaking out the entire night. Woke up super early. Just couldn't sleep. I got the phone call and she says, hi, I'm Juli Inkster, and she told me -- and announced the award and I think I was quiet for about 30 seconds or so.

JULI INKSTER: I was like, are you there?

JENNY BAE: I was so in shock. I was like, is this really Juli Inkster on the phone with me right now telling me I just got the biggest award of the year? I was super excited, super pumped.

After our phone call I called my coach, my parents, guess what just happened and who just called me. That day, I can say, is one of my best mornings I've ever had in my life.

**Q. You mentioned that your coach Josh Brewer, was one of your first people you called. Josh is on the bag caddieing for you this week. Talk about that for a little bit, that Josh is going to be caddieing for you this week.**

JENNY BAE: Well, Josh has always been that type of person in my life where I can almost call him my dad, I can almost call him one of my favorite people and most important in my life. When he caddied me for Augusta National twice I think it really calmed me down, especially the second year in the final round. I was shaking. I was like, I'm very nervous.

He was like, you know what? It's just a golf course. It's greens and tee shots. You're just going to do what you do and everything else will take care of itself.

I was like, okay. And throughout every round he's been with me all he does is try to make me laugh, eat, goof off. I think that's one the key things for me, because I think I make the sport just as hard as it already is.

Having that type of role model and person in my life it's super, super important.

THE MODERATOR: That's amazing. Thank you both.

JULI INKSTER: I'm just looking forward to following her career and achievements. She's off to a great start. You know, if JS doesn't mess it up, I think she'll be okay.

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