

Portland Classic

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Portland, Oregon, USA

Columbia Edgewater Country Club

Maria Jose Marin

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, joining us ahead of the 2026 Standard Portland Classic is Maria Jose Marin. Maria, you earned your exemption into this tournament by winning the 2026 Augusta National Women's Amateur. Can you just talk about that event and everything that winning that event has meant to you?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: That event is just a dream. The whole thing is I think one of the best, if not the best, tournament there is in amateur golf right now. I think everyone looks forward to play that week. And of course getting to play at Augusta, I'm always going to remember that week as one of the best in my life, just the excitement, all the feelings that I got to feel walking up 18. Yeah, just getting to celebrate the win with my parents, with my friends, and yeah it was an amazing moment. It was pretty special.

Afterwards my life changed. I think a lot of people started to recognize me and just say, yeah, I recognize you because of ANWA. Saw you on TV. Which is amazing. And then, yeah, just opening doors which is getting to play this tournament which is also a privilege.

Q. In addition to being exempt into this event you also were exempted into four of the five women's majors. How has it been to get that experience playing on the LPGA Tour this year?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: Getting to play in the majors, it's always amazing. It's really, really fun. I think it kind of prepares you what the future can be on this Tour, and, yeah, you're measuring yourself against the best of the best and in stages, courses that are pretty hard and they really show you what your game is at.

It's been fun. I've got to get my family around me, some friends sometimes in most of the tournaments, which is always, yeah, nice to have that support. Yeah, really looking forward to this week. I've gotten to recognize the course and I like it.

Q. You played in your pro-am today with Nancy Lopez.

Talk a bit about playing alongside her.

MARIA JOSE MARIN: Nancy, she is -- I can say she's iconic. She's one of the best players in the history of golf. She's really wise. All that she has to say is extremely interesting.

I didn't know that I was playing with her, so when I got to ten and saw her and said hi, I was like, okay, this is going to be an interesting round. I think I'm going to learn a lot.

Yeah, just got to ask her a lot of things that she has done, and of course she has done on this course, and yeah, talked a little bit about ANWA.

Q. Also in the field this week is Farah O'Keefe who I know you're good friends with. You guys played in the final round for NCAAs together this year. Talk about get to go stay so close with the other amateurs that you are competing with you're-round?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: So with Farah, I got the chance to play with her. She's one of my good friends and an amazing golfer as well. It's just the fact that we get to compete against each other that I think levels up our game, and week by week, Nationals and Augusta and all of those weeks, just I think it pushes you to be better and it pushes you to work harder and, yeah, just to achieve great things.

I think it's amazing that we all are playing in a top, top level. It's just going to help us for the future.

Q. And then looking ahead at this week, you were exempt into the field. You've known you would be playing this event for a little while. What are you looking forward to this week at this golf course and how would you measure success this week?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: One of the first things that I'm going to do is to have -- I'm going to have a lot of fun. I think it's a really fun course. I think it suits my game. You have to be pretty straight out of the tee and I have a lot of confidence with my driver, so I think it's going to play a little bit of an advantage for me.



Also have my dad on the bag this week, which last time I had him on the bag was last year, so it's going to be fun, too. He knows me. He knows my game. I have a lot confidence in him, so hope to make a lot of the putts long his side.

And then success is of course all of the girls that are here are amazing. Of course making the cut and looking forward to get one of the LEAP points. Yeah, just advancing on that path.

Q. As you mentioned, you are at 17 LEAP points. You've had a great amateur career. You're going into your senior year, and I know you still feel like you want to play at Arkansas and play for Coach Shauna. Can you talk a little bit about what Arkansas and being a part of that team has meant to you?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: Arkansas has been my family away from home. I got to college when I was 17 so I was pretty young. Shauna and Mike just hugged me as their own as I was their child basically. They helped me a lot to grow my game, to mature as a person and of course mature as a golfer.

All the girls on the team have been amazing. They're amazing. They're like my sisters too and helped me grow my game, too. They've helped me to get to this point, to get to this level, alongside with my family, with my coaches, too.

And, yeah, they mean a lot. I decided to stay in Arkansas because I still want to have my senior year. I think that experience, you only get to live it once. And, yeah, that experience of getting all the way it Nationals and getting to do something bigger than yourself is, yeah, you got to live it.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

MARIA JOSE MARIN: Thank you.

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