

ShopRite LPGA Classic

Presented by Acer

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

Galloway, New Jersey, USA

Seaview, A Dolce Hotel

Anna Nordqvist

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to the virtual media center for the ShopRite LPGA Classic presented by Acer here in Galloway, New Jersey.

I am pleased now to welcome eight-time LPGA Tour winner, including two-time ShopRite LPGA Classic champion, Anna Nordqvist.

Anna, thanks for joining us today.

ANNA NORDQVIST: Thanks for having me.

THE MODERATOR: First off, you won this event back-to-back years in 2015 and 2016 and also had a runner-up in 2017. Nice stretch for you here.

What do you remember most from those victories, and what emotions come back to you when you return to Seaview?

ANNA NORDQVIST: I have great memories from here over the years. Definitely winning helps to create good memories, and playing so well in 2015 and backing up like defending my title in 2016 was awesome.

My mom was here I believe the first year of those, and that's the only tournament I've had a family member attend that I was winning. So that was a pretty cool thing, just to share that moment with my mom. I can't remember, I think it was even on Mother's Day in Sweden when I won.

Obviously very special, and everyone is so nice here. Definitely it's one of those courses I've always enjoyed coming back to.

THE MODERATOR: I would imagine family doesn't always get to come to events for you.

ANNA NORDQVIST: No. I had my brother come to a few; mom come to a few. This year is hard. Most of the events my fiancée is at, but not always. It's just nice to have when my mom -- like because she's been such a big part of my



journey and always supported me, so just having her there and seeing me win was very special for me.

THE MODERATOR: Absolutely. Speaking of Sweden, a fellow Sweden native and LPGA Tour legend, Annika Sorenstam, won this tournament three times.

It is just a coincidence that two greats, yourself and Annika, from Sweden have experienced such great success here, or is there something about this course that is similar to a course setup perhaps back in Sweden that you grew up playing?

ANNA NORDQVIST: I think we are definitely used to -- like we grew up in tougher conditions. It can blow quite hard here. I think that's helpful. I never got to play with Annika when she was playing out here. She retired before I was a rookie out here.

But I know her game was hitting a lot of fairways and greens, so in that since I think we're pretty similar. Ball striking has always been very consistent. I think it's important out here, because the greens are pretty small, and especially with some of the wind.

So depending on if you can stay out of the rough and put yourself in the green, I think you're in a good spot. So probably one of the similarities I think would help out here.

THE MODERATOR: Obviously being an outdoor sport, Mother Nature can take control. Just how challenging does the wind get on the Bay Course?

ANNA NORDQVIST: We're so close to the water so it's really exposed. Especially those holes out by the water, the 2nd hole, 6th green, 15, 14, and then I would say like 8th green gets really hit hard.

But I think that's kind of part of it. Some of the holes here, when the wind usually comes pretty hard off the right, I think that's the dominant wind here. I mean, you're going to have to commit to something maybe five, ten yards out of the green and into like the hazard lines.

I think that's just a lot of committing to the shots and having fun and playing the wind.

THE MODERATOR: At the 2016 LPGA ShopRite Classic



you shot 17-under par 196 to tie the 54-hole tournament scoring record. Another connection here that's held by Annika Sorenstam.

Looking back, how great of an accomplishment was that, especially knowing -- we talked about the wind -- knowing what the winds are capable of, and have you ever had a conversation with Annika where maybe you specifically talked about this course, the record, this event just in general?

ANNA NORDQVIST: No, over the years I've had a lot of conversation with Annika and she was my captain at the Solheim Cup couple years ago now, too, so definitely cherish those moments and a lot of the experience that she's shared. But ShopRite not being one of them. It's definitely like I'm very proud of that accomplishment, and definitely being able to back up the win from 2015.

THE MODERATOR: When you consistently compete in the ShopRite LPGA Classic and come back and you kind of expect a three-day sprint to the finish, if you will, are there any adjustments that you need to make maybe mentally or strategically in how to play this course specifically over four days instead of just three?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Well, I think we'll see a few other pin placements obviously. We're used to having three of them and they mixed up a few over the years. Seems like LPGA has been throwing us some curve balls this year with some new pins, so I'm definitely looking forward to seeing that.

Like in the past, it's been 54 holes, so I definitely think it's a little bit more the sprinter attitude, and if you're going to be up there you need to have a few low ones. The scoring has always seemed pretty low out here.

I think it is playing a little bit different this year. A little bit softer, cooler. So I don't think the ball travels as far, so going to be playing a little bit longer. I don't think the par-5s are going to be as easily reachable as in the past either.

But I'm definitely looking forward to four day. It usually favors the better player. You got to be consistent all four days.

But looking forward to it.

THE MODERATOR: Across nine starts in 2020 so far, you have not missed a cut, combined with several starts you had on the Cactus Tour during our break in action due to COVID. You probably have played some of the most competitive rounds of any LPGA player this year.

Where do you feel your game is, and when you say it's not far off from maybe a typical year, especially when you've been able to get consistent repetitions?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, I've always been a player that seems to like to play myself into form. I definitely felt like I struggled a little bit coming into the tournaments in Ohio. I had practiced a lot and I felt prepared, but you just never know, because just getting used to like the tournament and the adrenaline.

So I definitely felt like I was pretty off the first couple weeks. Felt like I did a lot of good things both British Open and Scottish Open, but I couldn't quite put it together, and then I felt like I played really well in Arkansas. Putting hasn't been a strength of mine this year. I feel like ball striking has been very consistent.

Just a lot of hard work is paying off. I do feel my iron game is starting to feel much better and giving myself a lot of opportunity. (Indiscernible) really solid, but just struggle making putts. It's something I'm working on, and hopefully this last couple tournaments I'll be a little bit more successful in that area.

THE MODERATOR: Absolutely. There is 21 major champions in the field this week. It's a notable number, because next week is major number three of the year, the KPMG Women's PGA Championship.

Obviously first things first and you have to focus on the task at hand.

But how much of this week is about finding a good rhythm in your game, especially when you know a major is right around the corner?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, I definitely like to play the week before a major. Just kind of feel like I've been playing and not just home practicing.

So it's definitely in the back of your mind, but I try not to look too much forward and I just focus every day on trying to focus every day on trying to improve on the things I'm working on. Just preparing myself and hitting some shots under pressure. Just getting like those tournament repetitions in.

There have been a lot of tournaments lately. We've been very fortunate. So I feel like I have played a lot. I think I probably played seven out of the last eight weeks. So hasn't been a lack of tournament play lately.

But I'm feeling pretty good. KPMG is such a great-run tournament. I never played Aronimink, so it's definitely a

tournament I look forward to. Just everything they do is always so professional, so teeing up in a major is just one of those moments that I practice for and I look forward to every year. It's definitely something I'm looking forward to.

THE MODERATOR: A lot of times with majors, they change venues each year. Could be going from an example, ShopRite and going across country to the west coast for an event. How nice is it knowing this next week you just have a little over an hour drive to the next event?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, it's definitely weird that we can drive to tournaments, less than an hour, which is very nice.

I like the fact that they change venues and you get to go to different courses. Not every course is going to suit your game. I like the mixture. The majors challenge you. So being able to be close by, I just see it as a positive playing this week. We're not too far away, so it should help us prepare really well.

THE MODERATOR: Since ShopRite took over in 1992 as the title sponsor, they've donated over \$35 million to charities, including food banks, healthcare, and education programs in the communities they serve.

How inspirational is it to have a title sponsor that gives back like ShopRite does, and have you ever been able to witness or even just learn about the impact that they've had in any way?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, I love ShopRite's commitment. Being the defending champion I had to come and do some media days here, so I spent a little bit extra time in the area seeing a little bit more the work they do, which is quite remarkable.

Coming here this year and not having any fans, not having the Pro-Ams and just seeing how big this community really is is different, but obviously I hope the support continues and we will be back to running like they've always done. It's such a first-class event and I love coming here, and I know a lot of the other girls love coming here, too just because of the whole community and everything ShopRite does.

THE MODERATOR: Speaking of the Pro-Ams, this is the biggest Pro-Am on the LPGA; spans several days, several courses. It's an extremely fast-paced week when you're bouncing around from appearances to Pro-Ams, and when you get here this year everything is slowed down. How much different is that feeling of you get here and usually it's so fast-paced, but now pump the brakes and it's just really about competition?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, it seemed very quiet out there

today for being a Tuesday. I love the fact that they have Pro-Ams and how involved everyone is and how much the sponsors and the Pro-Am players enjoy coming here.

I miss even the pretzel on the 10th tee today because they used to do so much for us. I feel like that's been the big difference this year. It's hard to get adrenaline pumping as much as in the past when you have the fans and the support. Even just seeing the grandstands.

I think we're very lucky and grateful that we have the opportunity to play right now, so you kind of go with the flow. But I look forward things getting back to somewhat normal as soon as possible.

THE MODERATOR: Lou asks, you, Natalie Gulbis, and ANNA NORDQVIST are all brand ambassadors for MGM Resorts. When did that relationship start for you?

ANNA NORDQVIST: My relationship with MGM Resorts started a couple years ago and it's been a great sponsor. This year I'm staying at Borgata, which is part of the MGM, and my room is about the size of an apartment.

I'm definitely lucky to have their support. I live not too far away from Vegas and had a couple really cool trips there. I've seen Lady GaGa there last year, which was a really cool experience. I was supposed to get married this year, so might have been a bachelorette party that was going to happen in Vegas but got canceled.

Hopefully in the future that will be something they help me host of looking forward to that.

Q. Are you presenting their logo anywhere during tournament play this week?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, so I have MGM on my arm and also on the belly of my golf bag.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned Lady GaGa and bachelorette party. Any other fun experiences through your connection?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Well, my coach Drew Steckel, he lives in Vegas, so I spend quite a bit of time in Vegas. They so many cool restaurants and shows. Me and my best friend from home went to Vegas for the first time a couple years ago. I can't remember which show we saw. It was just really, really cool experience, and it just kind of breaks up your everyday life. You go for a weekend with friends. I'm not a gambler or drinker, but you can still have a very good time.

THE MODERATOR: For sure. If I remember correctly,



you recently fully settled down in Arizona.

ANNA NORDQVIST: Scottsdale, Arizona.

THE MODERATOR: How important has that been just in resettling into your game, I guess, finding that comfort zone again and that game and that level that you have known for several years?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, I went to ASU so I lived in Arizona for three and a half years. I loved every minute of it. And then I moved closer to coach in Orlando back in 2010 and I just never really fell in love with Florida.

I think it was -- ended up being there eight or nine years, but it's still not a place I ever felt I could call home. So I tend to make decisions pretty quick, but I had thought of it, but I went house shopping after the LPGA tournament in Phoenix last year and I think two hours later I had put in an offer on a house.

So it was quite like a rushed, not decision, but I thought about it for a couple years. So me and my fiancée, we love it out there. It feels like home. My college coach is still there. I get to go to the ASU's facility called The Bird down at Papago, and it's amazing. I have great support from Silver Leaf, and I have a lot of family I would say, like as close as family is a going to get in the U.S.

A lot of people who care about me there, so it's been a huge I think part of my happiness, and I look forward to going home so much now. I never felt that way before.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned you had a wedding that got canceled because of COVID in 2020. Any plans for when that will pop-up again in the future?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, so our wedding got postponed a year. We decided to get married in Scotland because my fiancée is Scottish. Hopefully the COVID improves a lot for next summer. We have a new date, so all I can do is keep my fingers crossed. It's been about a year and a half planning most of the wedding, so it was quite sad to see everything having to be postponed. Everyone has been supportive and I hope things will go smooth from here.

THE MODERATOR: Well, you've got the planning part out of the way. Now it's just about reworking everything into a new date really.

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah. So fingers crossed everything will be all right from here.

THE MODERATOR: We'll let Anna go. Thank you for joining, and Anna, thank you for your time. Good luck this

week.

ANNA NORDQVIST: Thank you.

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