

ShopRite LPGA Classic Presented by Acer

Wednesday, September 30, 2020

Galloway, New Jersey, USA

Seaview, A Dolce Hotel

Stacy Lewis

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.

Pleased to welcome now 13 time LPGA Tour champion, including two-time ShopRite LPGA Classic champion, Stacy Lewis.

Stacy, thanks for joining us.

STACY LEWIS: Thank you.

Q. There was a week off coming into this event, probably a little different than past years. How did you spend the week, and anything that you enjoyed doing in the golf sense? Did you work on anything to get your game ready for this week?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I took a few days off just to kind of recover from that west coast and get my body back feeling normal again after being in the smoke in Portland.

That actually took a few days, a lot longer than I thought. Just enjoyed time with the family. Practiced pretty good at the end of the week. Really wanted to work on ball striking. Was off in Portland, so just kind of get things back to where they were and really looking forward to the major next week.

Also you want to play well here too, but it's about building and playing better golf into next week.

THE MODERATOR: You made your first appearance at this event in 2010; finished T14. Since then you've won twice and only missed one cut across ten starts.

What do you remember from your victories in this 2012 and 2014, and what emotions come back to you when you return here to Seaview?

STACY LEWIS: This tournament has always been special to me. When I won in 2012 I became the top-ranked



American, and I think I got to No. 1 in the world in 2014 with the win.

So two pretty symbolic wins. It's just a golf course I enjoy playing. It's very links-y, you have to kind of handle the wind and handle the conditions a little bit.

So it's just one that's fit my eye over the years. I don't know why. Just always seem to play well here. But I always enjoy coming back.

THE MODERATOR: You beat me to it with the win in 2014 that propelled you to reclaim No. 1 in the word rankings.

You also won by six strokes, which is the largest margin of victory in this tournament, so a lot history here for you at ShopRite.

STACY LEWIS: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: How, if at all, do you draw on those experiences to perhaps give you an extra boost this week, when especially this tournament is known for the pro-ams and the fans and the hoopla.

STACY LEWIS: It is, it's been so strange this week not having people on site, especially today. I guess it's usually Wednesday, Thursday pro-ams. Just not having the people here it's definitely been so strange.

That's one thing you kind of look forward to in this event. I've had some really fun groups over the years, so missing playing with those guys.

But I don't know. I think just playing this golf course, I've played it in all different winds, all different conditions, some years easier than others. So just having that experience and that win in 2014, I think I made a double every day and still won by six.

It just shows that you you're going to make a mistake here and it's okay, that there is opportunities to make birdies. It's going to be a little tougher this year. The golf course is softer so the ball is not running out as much as it used to. Also makes the shots into greens a little bit easier, so might balance out.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah. What is it about the Bay



Course here at Seaview that makes it a unique track on the LPGA?

STACY LEWIS: It's old school. You don't see a golf course like this anymore. There's not many that trees come into play. Tee to green is pretty close; it's a short walk. And the breaks in the greens are very subtle. It takes playing here a few times to figure it out and to figure out different ways to play it.

And actually, right now the greens are probably better than they are in June when we normally play. The poana is not growing in, like it's already in now.

So I don't know. I mean, it's going to be different this year, but it's still the same golf courses.

THE MODERATOR: Takes maybe a couple times, like you said, to get it figured, but once you do get it figured out. But once you do get it figured out, I want to say that you're one of four players who have won this event multiple times.

It seems like once you do get it figured out, a lot of good things can happen.

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, you know, there are just certain places that fit your eye and you don't know why. It just kind of happens that way. You don't want to give away all the secrets, but there are a few holes you take your par and move on.

Then there are some you got to attack, and when you got wedges in your hand you got to make some birdies.

So it's playing smart and taking what the course gives you.

THE MODERATOR: What makes it a challenge, and how is playing it at this time of the year especially different? You mentioned not rolling out as much.

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, that's usually the hardest part is how firm the golf course, and playing in the wind you're kind of dealing with doglegs and keeping the ball in the fairway and stuff like that.

So that is maybe not as much of a factor this year, and probably length is an advantage. All the girls that bomb it are probably going to have an advantage this week.

But the intricacies of the greens and there are really subtle breaks, and if you get on the wrong side of the hole putts can be really fast. This week especially it's going to be dealing with spin and how much the ball is not releasing and controlling wedges.

And the fescue is down, too, so who knows what that year is going to bring.

THE MODERATOR: Maybe a really low score.

STACY LEWIS: There you go.

THE MODERATOR: This tournament is playing as a 72-hole event this year. That's only happened one other time in tournament history back in 1990.

When you have consistently competed in an event like ShopRite that is a three-day tournament, you kind of expect that three-day sprint to the finish.

STACY LEWIS: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Are there any adjustments mentally or strategically that you have to alter just a little bit to play this course specifically over four days instead of three?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, normally three-day events are sprints. You really can't have a bad day to win a three-day event. You have to play really solid. The fourth day just kind of gives you a little cushion if you do have a not-so-good nine or 18 holes. It still gives you a chance.

But just nice to, in a year where we're not competing a ton, to just have another round of competition to work on your game and just see where things are, especially heading into next week.

THE MODERATOR: Speaking of that, 21 major champions in the field this week, including yourself. Next week is the KPMG Women's PGA Championship. First things first, focus on the task at hand.

But how much of this week is about finding a nice rhythm in your game to where you can play well here, but also take it into next week?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, that's really what this week is about. What I like about this is you have to hit it good on this golf course. You have to hit golf shots, and that's what you're going to need next week at Aronimink, too. It's going to be playing long, it's going to have rough, and different sidehill lies, elevations.

So it's definitely good preparation ball striking-wise just to get ready for next week.

THE MODERATOR: Have you played Aronimink?

STACY LEWIS: I played the 18th eight time if that counts.

I did a sponsor outing there, so I've been on property, the gotten a feel for it. Obviously haven't played all the holes yet, but there is definitely a lot of elevation, sidehill lies, and things like that to get ready for.

THE MODERATOR: So when it comes down to that 72nd hole you know what to expect.

STACY LEWIS: I know what to do on 18, yes? (Laughter.)

THE MODERATOR: Since ShopRite took over in 1992 as the title sponsor, they've donated a little over \$36 million to charities, including food banks, healthcare, and education programs in communities they serve.

How inspirational is it to have the support of a title sponsor that gives back like ShopRite, and have you ever been able to witness or learn of their impact firsthand in any way?

STACY LEWIS: Well, it's amazing. You think about how many years we've been coming here, and that's a credit to ShopRite, to the tournament group, Tim Aaronson and his company that runs this tournament. To keep us coming back here for so many years, I know we kind of had to skip a year so the longest running title is probably gone, but they deserve a lot of credit for it.

You know, and the way ShopRite impacts the community, they do a ton with food banks, especially given what's going on this time this year and people are struggling. You know, for them to still do this event and be a supporter of us is a really big deal. They also realize too with this tournament we're able to donate more money and to help other charities in this area.

Over the years we've visited the food bank and done things with the kids around here, so it's important that we're playing this week.

THE MODERATOR: We will now open it up for questions. We'll start with Rick. Rick sent in a couple questions earlier. Rick asks: First off, how has your attitude toward golf changed since having Chesnee?

STACY LEWIS: Attitude has changed a lot. I have a lot more patience now than I used to. With an almost two year old now, we break down and cry over little things. You know, found that if I get upset it just makes things worse for her.

She's taught me a lot of patience, balance off the golf course, having something to go home to other than golf. She doesn't know what I shoot. She's excited to see me either way.

THE MODERATOR: Then he had a follow-up to that. What does it mean you have to the support of Smuckers and the LPGA child care program available to you?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, what Smuckers has done for I guess it's about 27 years now in supporting our tour and doing something that I don't think it's done in any other women's sports, professional sports league, is offer daycare and a safe place for Chesnee to hang out during the day.

She's learned so much there already. It's crazy. She was acting like an frog on the floor the other day, and I don't know where she gets this stuff from. It's crazy the stuff she's learned so fast just from being in that program.

It just allows me to know that she's safe and know that she's growing, learning new things, and it's just -- I don't know. It's a comfort I guess more than anything.

Q. I just wanted to ask, given the restrictions in this area of the country and the importance of the pro-ams for this event, how high was this on your concern list for might not happening this year?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I mean, any of the events where we have the two-day pro-ams, Walmart, this one, we know how important they are. (Indiscernible) because of it. So it was definitely on the concern list, but it's just a credit to the tournament staff for making it happen and a credit to ShopRite for stepping up, too.

Q. I know, as you said earlier, this is an odd year for the course conditions being so much different, but it's a who's who list of champions that have won this tournament. The best of the best on the LPGA. Why is that do you think for this particular golf course?

STACY LEWIS: I just -- you have to play good. You have to hit it good I think more than anything. You can't kind of slap it around this golf course. You have to hit golf shots. It's tricky. The greens are tricky, so it requires some experience of playing there.

But I think more than anything it's a ball-striker's course, if you can control it in the wind.

Q. Last one that's kind of random. Annika turns 50 soon, and I know that your careers didn't overlap exactly.

STACY LEWIS: No.

Q. You just missed her. What are your thoughts on

what she's meant to the game as she reaches this milestone birthday, and would you like to see her play as a senior maybe in the Senior Women's Open.

STACY LEWIS: That would be pretty cool actually. I never really thought about that. It's crazy to think she is turning 50.

But just -- because I didn't know her -- I didn't play when she was playing; I didn't really know her before that -- but just to see the impact she's made since she retired is pretty amazing. From all the stuff with kids to her women's clothing lines to her investment, college golf has awards named after her, she is still doing stuff for the LPGA.

Just that she continues to give back to the game and continues to support us and she's watching and paying attention to who is winning, and, you know, being around for Solheim Cups. It's important that kind of our legends, our great players, they stay involved in what we're doing.

Q. Do you think you'll play in the Senior Women's Open at 50?

STACY LEWIS: I don't know. Be kind of fun. See how any body is feeling at that age. Yeah, I definitely put it on the radar probably.

Q. Quick question: You mentioned the pro-ams before. It's a lot of times controlled chaos over there at Seaview these days. Just if you could just expound a little bit what's it like, the atmosphere, no grandstands, banners, how much different does that make the event? Do you miss it? Is it calmer? Nicer? What is your take on it?

STACY LEWIS: I don't know. This event is so unique in the pro-am, and it's just a fun -- the guys come in for two days and they get to play a fun couple rounds. The golf course is strange not having the big build, especially 18. They just have some signs, sponsor signage behind the green, but that's it.

17 you don't realize that there is a back bunker back there, because usually they build the stands over the bunker, so it's a different look there. And the wind gets blocked from all the grandstands. It plays different, looks different, it's quiet, it's weird, but it's 2020.

THE MODERATOR: You are off No. 10 tee tomorrow at 1:06 with Anna Nordqvist and Lexi Thompson, five championships at this event between you guys. Have you ever played in a group with that kind of firepower at one event?

STACY LEWIS: I don't think so. Not that I can recall at all. What'll be interesting is that you'll see three different ways probably of playing the golf course. You'll have Lexi who will bomb it; Anna and I are probably going to hit it pretty straight and hit it good.

So it'll be three different ways you can win, and be fun playing with people that are obviously comfortable on the golf course. Hopefully see a lot of the putts go in.

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