

# ShopRite LPGA Classic

## Presented by Acer

Wednesday, June 8, 2022

Galloway, New Jersey, USA

Seaview, A Dolce Hotel

## Celine Boutier

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome inside the virtual media center here at the ShopRite LPGA Classic presented by Acer.

I am pleased to be joined by defending champion Celine Boutier. Celine, I want to go back to last year, especially on that final day. When you think of this place, when you think of that victory, what are some of the first things that come to mind?

CELINE BOUTIER: I just remember a lot of the putts that I made especially. It was kind of funny because I normally don't really think about that stuff and I don't really remember much about my shots in general, like the courses and stuff.

But yesterday I played the front and I just like could remember the putts that I made and like just the shots that I had on the last round, which was kind of fun. It was pretty nice round and just overall just pretty good memories.

I also remember the first time that I played here, first time playing this course, and I kind of really liked it from the start. So I felt like it was kind of -- from the start I feel like I just fell in love with the course.

**Q. So you talk about thinking of those putts. What holes in particular when you were playing the front nine yesterday did you say, oh, my gosh, I remember making that one?**

CELINE BOUTIER: I think the first one was on No. 2. I was in the back of the green and the pin was in the front. It was quite long. I was just trying to get the speed right and it just went in.

That was my first birdie. No. 2 is quite long, it's quite a tough hole, so I was like, okay, let's get this going.

Then No. 3 was a par-5 and I hit it maybe like five feet for eagle putt. Obviously missed it but still made birdie. I was like, okay, I'll still take a birdie, and then just kept going

throughout the day.

Yeah it was pretty cool.

**Q. Do you remember the feeling you had of looking at the leaderboard or kind of chasing that lead and being able to finish on 18 and realize where you were and who was coming up behind you?**

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I just remember not paying too much attention to the leaderboard actually, because I feel like I was pretty far behind. I was five shot back, and I feel like on this course I kind of feel like everyone was going to shoot a pretty decent score, so I was just trying to shoot as low as I could.

And then maybe middle of the back nine I think my birdie train kind of slowed down a little bit, and then I got to 16 and I had a pretty decent chance. After making it I was like, you know, I feel like if I have one more birdie -- and knowing that 18 is a par-5, I felt like I would have a pretty good chance to at least try to make a playoff or Top 3.

So, yeah, I just remember really realizing I had a decent chance when I got to -- after my birdie on 16 I guess.

**Q. You earned your second victory here on the LPGA. First one in Australia a few years ago. When you won here at ShopRite, how much did that do for your confidence in general, especially within the storyline surrounding Solheim Cup as well?**

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I mean, it was awesome. I feel like my first win was definitely something special just because it's the first one, but I feel like the second one was also almost a relief for me just because it had been like a good solid two years until -- from my first win.

I feel like the second one you just want to confirm that it of wasn't just a lucky week or, you know, just that you can win more often than you think.

And I was trying pretty hard, but I feel like, yeah, that win was pretty good for my confidence. Also felt a lot of relief



just being able to confirm that it wasn't just a random week that I won in Australia.

And yeah, that month in general was crazy with Solheim, and just was able to feed off that. Also coming off -- I had a win at home, at the French Open, like maybe two weeks before that, so it was just a really good month for me. (Laughter.)

**Q. Probably the best month of your career I would say.**

CELINE BOUTIER: Probably.

**Q. You talked a little bit about 18, about that is quite a unique finishing hole. Kind of synonymous with this course. It is at Aon Risk Reward Challenge hole this year. What is it about 18 you like and what's your strategy when you tee it up this week?**

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah it's an interesting hole because it's a par-5. It can be reachable. Obviously the wind is huge factor on this course in general. On this hole you definitely want to give yourself the best chance to be able to reach it or get it as close as you can, so a solid drive is definitely something you have to focus on here just because it's going to be able to set you up for the rest of the hole.

From there, if you have a chance of going for the green or just short of it to be able to chip, it's a huge advantage.

And then, yeah, I feel like even the chips cannot be that easy because the front is very tilted and then there is a bunch of slopes and stuff.

So, I mean, you have to be honestly really careful throughout the hole, but it's a good finishing hole because lots of things can happen.

**Q. To build off that last question, how much do you have to take advantage of par-5s on this course to play well and be in contention this week?**

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I think the par-5s are huge. Obviously depends a lot on the wind, but I feel like a lot of them are reachable if you hit a solid drive, so it's really all around the greens.

If you can take advantage of them you're already, what, 3-, 4-under, so that's definitely a huge factor.

**Q. How have you found the course this year? We're back to our traditional spring dates. Is there a difference in the course now as opposed to what it was back in I guess September, October, last fall?**

CELINE BOUTIER: Well, yesterday it was quite windy, I think more windy than when we had the tournament. I don't know if it's going to stay that way for the rest of the week, but it was definitely windy.

The major thing I noticed is the greens were a little bit softer, like a lot softer than I remember they were last year. I think we're expecting a little bit of rain, so I don't know if that's going to be like softening the course a lot more.

I thought that was the main difference. Oh, maybe the bunkers, too. I know they redid them and there is definitely a lot of sand in them.

**Q. And one more. Karrie Webb was just in here before. She is making her return to the tour this week at 47 years old. Can you see yourself playing at that age and what do you think of her just longevity and how long she's been out here and how successful she's been?**

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it's definitely very impressive. I think she's definitely someone I look up to just career-wise, just to be able to have that long of a career, but also that good of a career. Like she's good for very long time.

It's definitely something that I admire about her, I think to keep the passion. It's very like energy consuming to be here. You're obviously giving yourself everything you have every week so it's very tiring, and to be able to do it for that long is very impressive.

**Q. We are about a good third into the season I want to say. Just as you take a look over at your past events and the state of your game, what are you working on heading into this week and how do you assess the state of your game?**

CELINE BOUTIER: I have been struggling a little bit with my long game the past few weeks, so just been trying to get a hold of that. I think my swing is feeling a little bit better week after week, so hope to be build off that and have a solid next few weeks.

**Q. What goes into that kind of work? What is it, just grinding it out or let the experience take its play on you?**

CELINE BOUTIER: In this case I'm trying to change a little bit of my swing, my plane coming down on the downswing, so that's just a lot of reps.

And then just being able to make it so I don't have to think about it so consciously on the course is the goal.



**Q. For you to come back here as defending champion and being able to defend a championship here in Jersey, what does that mean to you? This community rallies behind this event. What have you seen since you stepped on the site? What's it like to be back in this environment in general?**

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it's really cool. I think I just really like the atmosphere about this tournament. Like you said, it's small community, but they're all behind the tournament.

It's really cool to see that even a lot of people recognize me. It's kind of weird to see also my faces in the ShopRite stores.

I feel like they really embraced my win. I mean, it's been pretty nice.

**Q. When is the last time you saw yourself in a ShopRite store?**

CELINE BOUTIER: I don't think I've ever seen it. And I haven't been to the store, but just people keep sending me pictures of myself at the store, so it's been kind of funny.

THE MODERATOR: Kudos to ShopRite. Well, thank you everyone and thank you Celine for coming in. Best of luck this week.

CELINE BOUTIER: Thank you so much.

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