

ShopRite LPGA Classic

Presented by Acer

Friday, June 7, 2024

Galloway, New Jersey, USA

Seaview, A Dolce Hotel

Albane Valenzuela

Quick Quotes

Q. All right, Albane, a nice little day in front of you here. 6-under 65. How are you feeling after day one at the ShopRite?

ALBANE VALENZUELA: Oh, yeah, very happy. Any round under par is a good round. Definitely started really well. Hit approach shots close and gave myself a lot of looks.

Could have been lower, but still very happy with the way I played and handled the breezy afternoon.

Q. Your front nine, to go bogey-free and really take advantage of those scorable opportunities, what was lending itself well to your game today?

ALBANE VALENZUELA: I had a lot of wedges in and I feel like I just left those really close. Then had some good -- really good recovery shot on 9. Kind of hit it from the weed and still had a birdie, so I managed to capitalize on some good iron shots.

Left two tap-ins, which makes it a little bit easier. And the back nine was gusty and was a little bit of a victim of that. Hopefully tomorrow an early start will be good.

Q. Because we're so close to the water, that's the number one thing I think I hear players say, is once the wind gusts up it's really anyone's game. What was it about taking advantage of less gusty conditions earlier this afternoon, especially in the back nine?

ALBANE VALENZUELA: Yeah, I just tried to make as many birdies as I could. Once you have a wedge in your hands you know it's a birdie opportunity, so I tried to capitalize on those. I knew it was going to be a little bit trickier on the back nine. I had some shots I just could not control. Was not too sure how it would bounce. I just accepted it and just tried to do my best.

Q. Taking the medicine and moving on.



ALBANE VALENZUELA: Yes.

Q. To be able to end the way you did, the birdie on the par-3 17th, talking to someone earlier that said it's challenging because it's short but also a scorable one for you. What did you do to get ready for that one?

ALBANE VALENZUELA: Yeah, the wind was kind of swirling at that point of the round, so there was nothing, then it was sideways, then it was into. Once I was about to hit I was about to get a little gap wedge and felt a huge gust and I just reverted back to pitching wedge and just tried to choke it down and ended up being a really good club.

Q. You say we because your brother is back on the bag for the next couple events.

ALBANE VALENZUELA: Yeah.

Q. What's it like being able to do this summer swing with him back before he goes and does his own thing?

ALBANE VALENZUELA: It's the absolute best. I'm literally the luckiest sister to have him. He is an awesome, awesome caddie. I trust him with everything.

I don't hit a single shot without asking him because that's how much trust I have in him. He knows me by heart, so he can just tell me, be careful of your posture, commit to that shot, be aggressive. He's so calm out there and also super aggressive, which is kind of what I needed to hear from a caddie. I just have a blast with him.

Q. The Olympic cutoff is two and a half weeks now. How much is that on your mind?

ALBANE VALENZUELA: It's definitely on my mind. I mean, that's my biggest goal of the season is I want to make that Olympic team more badly than anyone I think.

It's just the coolest event in sports and it would just mean the world to be a part of it.



Q. Seems like athletes from countries other than the United States put more energy into the Olympic movement than we do here. What is it that fuels that passion?

ALBANE VALENZUELA: I don't know. I feel like just growing up in Europe we played so many team events, so we're used to represent our countries. I've gotten to play also bigger events like Junior Solheim Cups and Vagliano Trophies, and I think there is so much pride to that.

It's the coolest thing you can do in sports is to play for your country and something bigger than yourself. My Olympic experiences have been the best thing I've done in golf. I would never trade that for anything else. I would just love to be a part for another one.

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