

Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions

Saturday, January 22, 2022

Orlando, Florida, USA

Lake Nona Golf & Country Club

Gaby Lopez

Quick Quotes

Q. Here with Gaby Lopez who is making herself get warm. It's chilly out there, completely different, but you still played well today. Three birdies, including a nice clutch one on 18. One stroke off the lead. Tell us the story of your day. A little different out there than it has been this week.

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, my caddie and I played some unbelievable golf today. I gave myself a ton of birdie chances.

Actually, I mean, the one, the drop were clutch, so I think that takes away from sometimes the feeling of not making any.

Yeah, very happy with our game plan, how patient we stayed, how much fun we had; the relaxed feeling that we had out there was very cool.

Q. I know you said over the break you had some great down time at Punta Cana. Couldn't be more different out. What's the challenge of playing in conditions like this, cold, some rain, a lot of wind? What's the challenge of being able to put together 18 solid holes of golf?

GABY LOPEZ: I think just hitting the fairways. With the rain the rough can get thick, can get really very, very dense, so being able to hit the fairways -- I missed a couple out there and I was in trouble, so I don't know, I was just very happy with the way we hit our irons.

I was not hitting it this good probably the pro-am day. And my coach stayed actually one extra day with me today to have just things tied up, being able to work on whatever I have to work for tomorrow and the next few weeks.

So just very comfortable with the process that we been doing, the internal work that I've done with Gaby.

Q. Do you think there is a little bit of an adrenaline



rush with the music and the feeling and everything going on here?

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, for sure. Being able to have the crowds back to the golf tournaments, it's unbelievable. I feed off them, so for me it's great.

I've learned a lot through the years how to handle those moments, and, yeah, very happy with that.

Q. How exciting is it, first tournament out, to give yourself a really good look at winning tomorrow?

GABY LOPEZ: Oh, it's great. Honestly, you know, coming with low expectations, coming with a fresh start, with just kind of resetting myself from last year and probably the tiredness and how I was feeling the season, in 2021, being able to come back with good intention and a lot of bravery I think.

Being able to step up with Gaby without her demons and with her doubts and the moments of uncertainty. Being able to step up and say, Hey, I'm here for a reason. I worked my whole life for this.

So, yeah, it's pretty cool to see it's not going to be the only chance in the year. Whatever happens tomorrow is going to be fine. I'm pretty sure we're going to play some solid golf this year.

Q. What iron did you hit to 18? How close were you? What do you think you had found in your iron game?

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, my caddie said right away, That was a hell of a shot. I had 162 to the pin, into the wind; it was cold. We had 5-iron to 12 feet, and I just felt -- I mean, just followed any instinct and that putt dropped in the perfect moment to close a perfect round.

Q. You said you found something in the last couple days with your irons. What was it?

GABY LOPEZ: I mean, just a couple things that I probably need to keep working. It's setup feelings. Sometimes I set up to the right, and being able to set up with my hips correctly to the left, that prevents a little bit of draw.

So, yeah.



Q. You spoke all week about keeping expectations low. First event of the season, but you're going to go into the final round a shot, maximum two shots, out of the lead. Do the expectations change now that you're going into Sunday?

GABY LOPEZ: I mean, they're going to probably change throughout the round because golf is like this emotionally. (Indicating a roller coaster.) But I'm really working on trying to believe that this is not going to be the only chance.

So I'm going to give my 100%. If that 100% ends up with a trophy, that's great. If not, I know for sure that we're going to have way more chances. You know, having the intention, having the commitment and the determination that I can hit the shots that I want it's all I can care of and all I can control.

Q. You won here -- well, you didn't win here two years ago, and that's kind of the question: How much confidence do you take from winning this tournament even though it wasn't here?

GABY LOPEZ: A lot. I mean, honestly being able to recall those moments, lots of pressure and tension and just tell myself, Hey, you've done this. Don't doubt your instinct. Just be the tournament, be aggressive when you have, be smart, be patient. Today I stayed patient for, I don't know, maybe ten holes in a row, and it was very hard for me because I was hitting it very close.

So it's just a game that proves and tests every game, I mean, every single area mentally, physically. We had a long break on 14 and 13. We had to wait a long time, so being able to swing it aggressively as I was doing it, it was hard; I missed a couple shots, but my short game has been great.

Q. Had you played with Chad before? Does he inspire you watching him play golf?

GABY LOPEZ: It was the first time I played with him. We talked a lot about how much golf he's played over the last quarantine and pandemic and everything. He's done an amazing job. I think he inspired me a lot.

I was asking him, Hey, what's one of the best habits you have in your career? He said, just waking up early. Being able to take advantage of my whole day and not waking up late and I lost already quality time with our kids.

So, yeah.

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