

Pure Silk Championship Presented by Visit Williamsburg

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Williamsburg, Virginia, USA
Kingsmill River Course

Lauren Coughlin

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the virtual media center at the Pure Silk Championship. We are joined by the loan Virginia native and University of Virginia graduate, Lauren Coughlin.

Lauren, thank you for stopping by today.

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Thanks for having me.

THE MODERATOR: This is your third career start in this event at Kingsmill Resort. You were a sponsor's invite in 2018, competed as a Tour member in 2019 and finishing tied for 50th.

What does this tournament mean to you?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: It means a lot. I grew up, you know, in Chesapeake, Virginia, so 45 minutes down the road. I played junior tournaments here. I came here and watched almost every year once my parents moved here from Minnesota.

So I mean, it's -- playing in it is very meaningful, and it's one of those that I'm like, obviously you have career ones you want to check off on winning and it's one that would probably mean the most to me for sure outside of any of the majors.

It's pretty much a dream come true. I still have to pinch myself a little bit that I'm playing in it to be honest, even with like some of the people like I grew up coming and watching, Paula Creamer, Natalie Gulbis. At my parent's house I still have some hats that Annika have signed, Lorena.

Yeah, it's very meaningful for me.

THE MODERATOR: Do you have one specific memory that stands out here from your visits as a junior and somebody you met that left a lasting impression?



LAUREN COUGHLIN: I always loved Laura Davies and how far she hit it. Now that I've interacted with her a little bit, too, she's the best. Yeah, that would be one I always really liked coming and watching her.

THE MODERATOR: What have you learned from playing here twice before on the LPGA Tour that will help you to climb the leaderboard this weekend?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Just a little bit -- just feeling really comfortable about my lines, and the greens, especially, they can be really fast and really quick. And so just having that knowledge of where to be and where to miss, just because I've played it so many times.

THE MODERATOR: After first glimpse this week, how is the River Course, maybe playing any different from years past?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: It's a lot different. I, found out today, which is why they didn't overseed like they normally do, and so the greens are still pretty -- as quick as I remember. But they are a little bit more firm and we are getting a lot more roll in the fairways because they are not overseeded, as well.

Yeah, and it's just a little bit less -- less rough, because the dormant bermuda is still a little bit dormant. It has not quite grown in yet.

So it's playing a lot different than I think -- like I came out and played on Saturday. I drove down and played Saturday for like an extra practice round and I was like, whoa, this isn't what I was expecting to see.

THE MODERATOR: Nice to have a little different feel to the course, or did you like the consistency year-in, year-out when you knew you were coming here?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: I mean, it's still an awesome golf course. So I'm really happy to be here. Yeah, I think it's going to play a little different, so I think it's going to be interesting.



THE MODERATOR: You mentioned playing here in your junior collegiate career. Take us through those times and what it was like back in the young days of your career.

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Yeah, it's funny, I played with my former assistant coach, Brian Bailey, on Sunday because he still lives in Charlottesville. I was telling him the story, I played in an AJGA event my junior year of high school and had not been recruited yet by Virginia. I had sent them stuff but not heard much back outside of the normal stuff.

He came out and watched me on front nine of one of the days, and I shot like 40. And I was like, oh, no, like of course he sees me do that. He leaves, and I shoot 30 on the back nine. And I'm like, great, he just saw me. Why couldn't he have seen me fir the other nine holes? I was really like -- really mad.

He was telling me, he was like, "Yeah, little did you know, that before I even had left the parking lot I was calling Coach and tell her about you and stuff."

THE MODERATOR: So the 40 wasn't too bad.

LAUREN COUGHLIN: No. But at the time I was like, oh, my god, of course that's when he sees me play.

THE MODERATOR: Junior in high school, you shoot 40, not too bad. You shoot 30, you're probably getting calls left ask right.

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Yeah, but of course. He didn't see me do that, though. He only saw the bad.

Q. For those of us who have no clue, can you describe what it's like trying to make it on Tour?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Oh, man, I mean, it's really, really hard. Not just like the golf and getting better at golf and having to play really good golf, but the mental side of it, the travel is really difficult, especially for me. I have a husband and I'm a homebody and I like being at home and I don't like missing out on a lot of stuff in terms of like my friends getting married and things like that.

So that took a really, really long time to get used to. It took me a couple years. I mean, I still don't like it but I'm used to it now at this point, being on the road as much as we are. I joke with my friends. I'm like, yeah, about March through November, if you have anything going on, like you might as well just not even ask. Like I'm most likely going to be gone in a tournament.

Outside of that, it's just really, really difficult. Financially it can be difficult. It can put a lot of strain if you're not playing

good. It takes a lot of money. But at the end of the day I'm playing golf for my job and there's only so much that I can complain about at the end of the day.

Q. Along those lines, maybe you just answered my next question, just the pressure of having to produce, what's it like and how do you deal with that?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Again, it's taken a long time to get used to that but sponsors help a lot. I have a couple really good sponsors that have kind of helped take the initial financial burden off of me, which, I mean, once that -- that really bothered me a lot in the beginning. I'm less concerned about it now just because I'm just used to it and I don't think about the money so much as I used to.

But yeah, I mean, it's hard. My husband pays for most stuff outside of the golf, and it puts a lot of stress on not just me but him and my family.

Q. You mentioned John a couple times. He's been on the bag previously at Kingsmill. Is he on the bag this week?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: No, he's not on the bag this week. I have a full-time guy who has been with me for the last year and a half-ish, but to make it easy, his name is also John (laughing). Makes it real easy, really simple.

No, I mean, I joked a lot, some girls are able to do it but just for me, it's a lot of time, and I joke that, you know, I want to stay married, and so that's why he's not on the bag full-time. But I mean, like I said, and he knows that. We're just -- it's just a lot of time to be spent together if he were to be on the bag with me but Caddie John is great.

Q. What is Caddie John's last name?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Sudduth.

Q. Are you close with Elizabeth Szokol?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Yeah, she was actually one of my bridesmaids in my wedding.

Q. So on Tour, do you all hang out? Obviously she's in the field this week as well.

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Yeah, I mean, for sure, I have a very good, not a big group but a close group of friends and she's in it. It's been a little bit difficult just because she's been out on the LPGA for the last like year and a half, whereas I've been going back and forth through Symetra. I haven't seen her all that much.

Now that I'll be hopefully week-in, week-out on the LPGA, I'll see her a lot more and she's in that friend group that I have.

Q. A couple months after you played here in 2018 was when you won on Symetra. What did that do for you and your confidence?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Yeah, it did a lot. It's funny because that week -- I had taken a couple weeks off -- well not a couple weeks off. I wasn't in the British or the Scottish so I had a little bit of a break in that schedule. So I went and played in that event to warm up for the last little stretch that I was going to have on the LPGA, and I was in a really, really bad place mentally with my golf and stuff and I remember being in the parking lot two hours before my tee time bawling to my husband and not wanting to be there and being like really, really miserable with golf.

He basically just told me to calm down and like if you want to be done in the next four weeks, like you can be done in the next four weeks. Just get through it and calm down and enjoy it. And I went out and shot like 5-under that day. And kind of after that, played, shot 5-under again and shot 6-under and next thing I know, I won the golf tournament. It started from like wanting to quit golf three days before that.

But yeah, it did a lot and I still kind of look back. It was one of probably those moments that it's like, hey, I can do this, even though it still took me a little bit longer to get -- each day, each week is getting better in terms of my confidence and my belief in myself.

Q. How would you describe the state of your game right now?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: I think I'm playing some of the best golf I've probably ever played in terms of like my ball-striking and getting comfortable out here is the big thing -- has been big thing for me, not feeling like a fish out of water essentially, being like, whoa, who am I? I'm out playing golf on the LPGA. It's just wild. That's been a big thing.

But no, I feel really good about my game. I have had -- I started working out in 2019 and that kind of changed everything. I've lost 35 pounds since then and I picked up a lot of distance and it's just kind of changed everything for me. Made it a lot easier on the road. I can get into a routine.

Pretty much always am going to be going to the golf course and the gym. It's made my mental side, me being good off the golf course a lot better, which if you can be happy off

golf course, it's a lot easier to be happy on the golf course.

Q. What is the workout routine like?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: My college coach, her husband, whose also name is John, I just kind of do whatever he tells me to do. But I mean, I'm lifting weights, some Olympic lifts. I like the Peleton a lot. Those are kind of my go-tos.

Q. Who is your favorite instructor?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Dennis is probably one of my favorites.

Q. Denis Mortimer [sic] (Morton).

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Yeah, and Alex is another one, Toussaint.

THE MODERATOR: Few new faces out there this year, fans will be back on course. It's going to be a weird thing to see since we haven't seen that since early 2020. Any friends, family we can expect coming out?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Yeah, so my husband is from Richmond, so my mother-in-law and brother-in-law are coming. I think at some point, I'm not exactly sure what day or when. My parents would have made the trip up from Houston but my brother and sister are both graduating college this weekend. They won't be coming even though -- and my dad is like, of course, the one tournament I can't come to, like the one they want to come to the most but kind of can't miss graduation, Louisiana Tech graduation. My brother and sister, obviously both there. My mom and dad went there. My mom's parents went there. So the only one.

Q. You broke the lineage.

LAUREN COUGHLIN: It was allowed because my grandfather -- well, Louisiana Tech didn't have a women's golf team, so it was okay.

THE MODERATOR: You played in the Lotte Championship last month, your lone LPGA start in 2021, T-43 result, you should be out here the rest of the year. Do you have any specific goals with John on the bag this week to really cement your improved status for the rest of the year?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Win. Win Kingsmill would be awesome. No, I really want to get to be playing in Asia and the CME at the end, that's kind of the goal, get to those and I should be doing pretty good.

Q. What time are you going to be at the range tomorrow or what time are you going out tomorrow?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: I'm in the Pro-Am. I'm roughly like 3:30; so I'll probably get to the course around 1:00-ish.

THE MODERATOR: You joined the No Laying Up team as an ambassador in 2020. They have quite the social media presence as many golf fans know. What has it been like to be part of that team and have there been any special projects that you've worked on with them?

LAUREN COUGHLIN: Yeah, they are the best. I've gotten to know all five of them -- well, seven of them I guess now, really well. But I mean, their support has been really, really great for me. My social media following has gone like way, way up, but not just that. I have gone some done some of their videos they do on YouTube. They have some funny names.

But like Tourist Sauce, I played Pinehurst No. 2, Pinehurst No. 4 and Pine Needles with them, and they did like a course -- a review-ish, yeah, of them.

I went and played -- I did a match at Sweetens Cove outside of Chattanooga, a Ryder Cup-style match with them. It was me, Rob Collins who is the designer and architect of Sweetens Cove, and Soly and Randy against Danny Woodhead, Tron Neil and -- who was the other one, oh, Jason Bohn, and like a four-on-four like Ryder Cup-style thing. That was a lot of fun.

DJ has come and caddied for me on a special event when Caddie John had a wedding to go to. They have become really, really good friends. My husband was out playing on a golf trip with some of them this last weekend in Seattle. But no, their support has been really, really great. Now they have Madeleine out here who is another one of theirs, and they have Lakareber Abe and Meghan MacLaren on the Symetra Tour, as well, that they sponsor.

THE MODERATOR: Good to see their presence go in the women's game.

Lauren, thank you for your time.

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