

# Meijer LPGA Classic

Tuesday, June 13, 2023

Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

Blythefield Country Club

## Leona Maguire

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome inside the media center here Meijer LPGA Classic for Simply Give.

Get things kicked off. Welcome back to Grand Rapids. We're hearing a little bit of the drizzle, but overall what's it like to be back in this area?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, really nice. Obviously had two very good experiences here the last two years, so always nice to come back somewhere where you have good memories.

I think this part of the Midwest always reminds me a little bit of home, and I guess a little extra today with the weather.

THE MODERATOR: What's interesting is looking through players that have gotten second at both of their appearances, it was Ayaka back in Vegas, and you here in both of your appearances at the Meijer LPGA Classic. What is it about this course and this event that just suits your game so well?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I don't know. I like the golf course. It suits my eye pretty well. I usually drive it pretty well and usually scoring is pretty low, so you have to give yourself a lot of birdie chances.

Yeah, I don't know. Kind of reminds of the courses at home a little bit. Yeah, people are always really nice, friendly. The food is good. Generally a nice week.

THE MODERATOR: Why does it remind you of home?

LEONA MAGUIRE: I think just the golf course, the layout. It's always quite green and lush here. Yeah, I think the people are friendly, like at home. Yeah, just similar I think in a lot of ways.

THE MODERATOR: Last year being in that playoff with Nelly and Jennifer Kupcho, what do you remember about that moment?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I think going out on Sunday I wasn't expecting to be in a playoff at the end of the day. I think I shot pretty low on Sunday just to try and give myself a chance.

Didn't expect to get that close. Yeah, would've been nice to go one better and have won, but gave me some nice momentum heading into the summer last year.

Hopefully can do the same with a busy major stretch coming up this year.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. You guys were joking about Vegas, so maybe something going on I don't know about. Last year when you came here you had missed four cuts in five starts and finished second. It appears that you're playing better coming into this week. How does that feel considering it looks like you're playing better than last year?**

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I mean, played well in Vegas a few weeks ago, Liberty National few weeks ago, took a week off last week. Feel like my game is in good shape. Been playing well, so nice to be on a nice run of form heading into arguably our busiest stretch of the season.

Yeah, I mean, try and keep going this week I guess.

**Q. You already talked about how you like this place, how it feels like home for you. You look at your scores, eight career rounds, 70 is your highest. Seven rounds in the 60s. Does that give your confidence knowing you haven't really played a bad round in any tournaments at this course?**

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, don't really think about it like that. Yeah, it's always nice to come back to a golf course that you feel comfortable on.

I suppose now I'm at the point where I'm able to pick and choose my schedule a little bit more and this was always one that was going to be added straightaway. It's a golf course you know you have to go low on, scoring is low, so



you tend to be a little bit more aggressive when you know it's going to be like that.

Ultimately a lot of times it comes down to who holes the most putts. Greens are rolling nice, so hopefully can roll as many in as I can.

**Q. We were talking to Jennifer earlier and she said the LPGA is setting up courses more difficult this year. Do you see that and expect that out here this week?**

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I mean, it's interesting. I think we've played -- we're coming off Liberty National and Shadow Creek, which were two incredibly good golf courses and good tests, so it allowed itself to be set up tough.

Yeah, be interesting. I think if this golf course gets firm it gets a lot more difficult very quickly. They don't have to do an awful lot of trickery.

When it's soft, well that's when there becomes a lot of chances. A lot comes down to more the course conditions than to the layout, per se.

So, yeah, I mean, they can make this as hard and easy as they want it to be. I always like when it's a bit on the tougher end. I like when you have to think a bit more and pick your spots around the golf course.

THE MODERATOR: From me, kind of following up on what he said, differences, what is different maybe about yourself or your game coming in this year as opposed to last year?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I think I didn't play well on the west coast last year with poa grass and all of that. Yeah, was in a bad run of momentum before this tournament.

This year I feel like I planned my year a little bit better. Took breaks when I needed to and feel a lot fresher, which is nice. Didn't play ShopRite last week. Played it last year.

Yeah, this is a busy stretch, and for a lot of girls this is week four or five in a row. It's nice to be coming in, week one of two, so nice to be showing up here and excited to be playing this week.

THE MODERATOR: We talked about being able to take the week off last week, especially with KPMG Women's PGA ahead of us. You went to Orlando. What were you working on specifically as we got these two events back-to-back?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, one eye on this week and one

eye on Baltusrol, and a very distant glimpse of Pebble in a few weeks' time.

My coach was over for a few days from Ireland. Got to watch me play on Sunday at Liberty National, saw a few things, and then it was nice to have a few days in Orlando to -- no major changes per se, but to fine tune a few things heading into this next stretch.

THE MODERATOR: You went from third place in Vegas, which is technically the semifinal loss. Just putting that in stroke play-match play terms. But also the Top 10. I know a lot of players sometimes it's hard to come back from that. How do you hope to even with your time off use the momentum that you gained from those two events?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I think the big thing, obviously when you play well you're kind of excited to get going. Want to do more, want to do more. The big thing at Liberty National was conserving energy that week.

Took it easy on Monday, Tuesday, and worked my way into the week. It's the same with this stretch coming up. Obviously it's major season and they require a bit more concentration, more mental energy than regular events, so you just want to make sure you're as fresh and sharp as possible.

Feel like this week is a really good warm up for Baltusrol next week.

THE MODERATOR: Stole the question from me. Baltusrol is kind of next week as well. As you look ahead to that, have you been to Baltusrol and what does a course like this do to prepare you for the major season?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, was lucky enough to go Monday after Mizuho. Got to have a quick look around. Big golf course, meaty golf course. Going to have to drive it well, pick your spots well, putt well.

It's everything you expect a major test to be. It's nice. Here it's a little bit tighter off the tee, so nice to get that dialed in. Obviously putting is massively important at a major venue.

These greens are a little bit smaller, so be a little bit different into the greens and things like that. And a lot more shorter clubs here.

A little bit of a different test, but at the same time you want your game in as good shape as possible, so if you play well here it's a good to sign going into next week.

THE MODERATOR: I know this sounds kind of weird

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

because we just felt the rain and the drizzle is upon us, but it's been dry here the past four weeks. Have you been able to get out on this course and have you seen the changes -- not changes, but just is the course feeling different going into this week?

LEONA MAGUIRE: Yeah, I think this course the last two years, it always seems to play a little bit longer earlier in the week and dries out quickly, so it's almost predicting what's going to happen.

There is some of the fairways starting to get firm. Some of the greens the first bounce is quite a big bounce and it checks up.

So you're almost predicting you remember last year when it did this or certain pins just to keep an eye out for. The rough is quite dry. It's maybe not as thick and lush as it has been in past years.

But either way, we're going to try and stay out of there. Yeah, it's definitely quite firm out there. If the weather stays nice, I'd only imagine it's going to get firmer as the week goes on.

Fastscripts by ASAP Sports...