

Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational

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Midland, Michigan, USA

Midland Country Club

Jane Park

Paula Creamer

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome it to the media center, everybody. On my right welcoming Jane Park back to the LPGA competition and alongside her playing partner, Paula Creamer, this week. I'll kick it off. Jane, obviously you've been on quite the journey since you last played on the LPGA Tour, so just want to know how excited you are to be back here on the tour with your friends and family around you.

JANE PARK: Yes. Well, I just found out from Angela Stanford that we are in a featured group, and she's following us. I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing (laughing), but it's an honor to play alongside Paula. We've played a few teams before in team competition.

Yeah, we feel really comfortable together. We did a lot of laughing in our nine holes yesterday. It's an honor and pleasure to be back.

THE MODERATOR: Paula, you're going to be playing along Jane this week. How excited were you? Who reached out to who about this partnership, and how excited are you to see her back out here and to get to play alongside her?

PAULA CREAMER: Like Jane said, we've played a bunch of team events, and for her first one back I'm super honored that she even gave me the phone call for that.

I know her and Tiff wanted to play this, so we can't take all the credit on that one because Tiff would be here in a heart beat if she could be. It's like a three triangle right now. I'm like the point on the other end of it, and I'm three-wheeling. I'm the little tripod.

It's so great to be able to be here with Jane and obviously Pete and Grace and her family as well. The LPGA has done such a great job of constantly having a reminder of the great things that Jane is doing through what has gone

on in her life and her family's life and to be able to be out here and see her happy and laughing, and taking 30 seconds away from reality of what's going on in her life is probably one of the greatest things that can happen this week. I'm glad I get to witness that and be by her side.

THE MODERATOR: Speaking of, your daughter, Grace, is here onsite this week. How happy are you to be sharing these moments for her and for Grace to get to interact with your friends on the tour and be a part of this experience?

JANE PARK: It's everything. I share a lot of our lives on social media, and just to see not only the players and staff, but fans come up and interact in a way that Grace will react to, it just shows how great social media is.

It's a way for people to stay in touch with us without having to bombard us with questions or feel like they're bothering us, which they never are. I love hearing from everybody.

Yeah, it's a bit of healing that goes on while I'm out here when I see all my old friends and family out here.

THE MODERATOR: For those who may not have social media, I saw your post the other day. What are some of the ways to interact with Grace this week for those that come out and see her?

JANE PARK: Oh, dear. She likes it when men cry in her face very intensely. I don't know why, but she thinks it's hilarious. Also, coughing gets her laughing. The word "food."

PAULA CREAMER: Like mama.

JANE PARK: Just like me. Man, yeah, she's a strange little girl, and she has her little quirks. Those are the three major ones. Oh, Ms. Rachel and Baby Shark are given.

PAULA CREAMER: Like all kids.

JANE PARK: Like all kids, a you.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. I have a couple. With your husband on your bag



this week, your daughter here, with Paula next to you, it looks like you're getting a tremendous amount of social -- you're getting a lot of support out there, a lot of emotional support. Is that really going to boost, do you think, in your performance this week?

JANE PARK: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Well, first of all, I've got a major champion as my partner, so I plan on riding her coattails quite a bit.

Yeah, she's like a security blanket really. I just know what Paula is capable of because I've been beaten by it a lot of times (laughing).

But, yeah, perspectives change because we both have daughters, and family comes first. I keep saying this all week, but the golf is really secondary. Just seeing everyone out here has been honestly the cherry on top and seeing everyone interact with Grace as well.

Q. Sure. As a follow-up, I see that they're selling hats, I understand.

JANE PARK: Yes.

Q. That would probably be awesome to see some of those hats around. Maybe people tipping their hats to let them know that fans are thinking about you as you're walking around the course. Do you think that would --

JANE PARK: I don't even know where they're selling the hats. I should know, but I don't.

THE MODERATOR: All over.

JANE PARK: Okay.

Q. The ladies broke another barrier a few weeks ago playing at Pebble Beach. I said, I don't think the women have ever played a major at Pebble Beach.

JANE PARK: That's so cool.

THE MODERATOR: Then the purple for epilepsy.

JANE PARK: So cute.

Q. Did you think about that at all? I mean, about Pebble Beach and not playing that course ever, and now the women have broken through, did themselves proud, played for a record purse. Do you have thoughts on that?

PAULA CREAMER: It just is showing the way that

women's golf is transcending in that direction. You can see it for KPMG. You can see it in all of our major golf courses now. They're part of the men's list.

I think that it is 2023, so it's nice that that's finally happening, but we have a lot of support that's going through that.

The LPGA is talented. There's a lot of great athletes out there, and we should be playing on the best courses. It's nice now to see that line-up that we have coming for all of the majors.

JANE PARK: It's about time.

Q. Excited to see you both out this week. Jane, what does this mean to you to be able to be out here as a representative of the community that you're in?

JANE PARK: Man, it's everything. I hope I can do them proud. Hopefully we get some eyes on the difficulties of dealing with disability in America, and it's really my honor to be out here.

I didn't think I would ever find myself back at an LPGA tournament. Yeah, it's been a long few years. Somehow our family has made it out of the rubble, and to be here with my family again, it honestly means everything. I would have never even dreamt that this could happen.

Q. I know that having both Pete and Grace onsite playing alongside Paula, but have there been any other moments this week that have touched you in any sort of way, notes in your locker or maybe just people coming up and having not seen you for a couple of years?

JANE PARK: No notes in my locker. Still waiting.

PAULA CREAMER: There will be one tomorrow.

JANE PARK: Still waiting for my note. So through my online community I met other disability parents, and there happens to be a very good friend of mine who lives about an hour and a half away. She brought her kids, her three kids, out. They stayed for an hour. They had to leave pretty quickly.

But her youngest Alistair had a hemispherectomy, which means he had very severe epilepsy and had half his brain taken out. He is a walking miracle.

Paula met Alistair, and she would have never even guessed. He just inspires me so much and so does Sarah, his mom. The amount of trauma that we go through caring

for these fragile kids -- you know what, they're not even fragile. They're so resilient. Us as moms are fragile. We're very fragile.

But, yeah, the online community has been monumental in my survival and our family's survival. I'm so thankful for them. So thankful.

Q. Just as a mom to a nugget of your own Hilton, what does it mean to you to be able to be alongside Jane in this moment, and how much does she inspire you in your own motherhood?

PAULA CREAMER: Oh, goodness. Actually Jane was the first person I told I was pregnant, believe it or not, when we were watching. Came over and I was watching Gracie for a little bit and playing.

You know, being a mom is tough. It's hard. It challenges you in so many ways. If you would have said two years ago Jane would be standing here and being able to be an advocate for what she's doing, it's honestly -- she's one of the strongest women I think I've ever met.

She's resilient just like her daughter, just like Pete, everybody around her. Gracie is who she is because of her parents who just love her so much, and the fact that I get to see that and I'm out here playing golf and doing what I love, it just puts everything into perspective and puts me going to pick up Hilton afterwards -- I mean, it's just -- golf is, like Jane keeps saying, it's secondary.

My mind is not what it used to be. Being a mom I think kind of softens you in ways, and you definitely have to be a fighter out here, and I've had to kind of figure that out and put my big girl pants on when I go out there.

I can't tell everybody what to do, you know, like I can kind of with Hilton. Maybe I'll do that with you today.

JANE PARK: Yes, please.

PAULA CREAMER: It is. It's awesome, and we have a platform, and we have a voice that we can talk about, and I've had to learn so much about disability, about epilepsy, about all of these things, and I'm teaching Hilton, and I want her to understand it, and I want to be able to have that a part of her life.

I think it's important. It's tragic that it is this way, but it's also such a big learning experience for everyone, and she's going to help so many families out there... moms, daughters, sisters, brothers, all of it. If I can kind of help that with Hilton as well, then I think we're doing a great job.

JANE PARK: Absolutely.

Q. I'm just curious to know kind of what the daily routine is now this week that you're not only a mom, but also a golfer?

JANE PARK: Oh, man. I had an 8:30 tee time today. Got the to the course at 7:00. Had a 45-minute slow breakfast. I had a coffee. I hit chip shots for ten minutes and then I was on the tee.

PAULA CREAMER: Nice.

JANE PARK: I'm saving my energy as much as possible so that I can try to perform for my partner. Yeah, my body isn't used to playing or even hitting balls, so I am trying to save all of my energy as much as possible. Yeah.

Q. Then what's the routine once you are done with your round each day and you go home?

JANE PARK: Honestly the same stuff that we do at home. Try to keep Grace happy.

We had a bit of a scare this afternoon in dining. She was having what we thought was an allergic reaction, and she was having breathing issues. I asked for a doctor, and the staff took a very big precaution and called the paramedics, the ambulance. So we had a lot of people around.

It was a lot, but she's doing much better thankfully. But we're just trying to get her to bed. That is the end goal, and I'm sure Paula can attest to that, getting Hilton to bed. Getting our kids to bed warm, safe, and fed, that's really it.

Q. This question is for Jane. How does it feel to make your return in Michigan and in this community, especially at this invitational?

JANE PARK: Well, I first want to say people in the Midwest are so nice. They are so nice. I came out of the elevator yesterday, and this nice man said, I hope you have a great day.

I said, That's kind of weird. I've never -- that doesn't happen anywhere. I thought it was so sweet.

But, yes, it's a great town to come back to. I'm going to take Grace to Gibbs Gardens. We're going to enjoy some of the outdoors, and I'm just really happy to be back. I'm happy to be back with my family again.

Q. Earlier you kind of talked about how you never saw yourself getting back on tour.

JANE PARK: Absolutely not, no.

Q. What moment really transpired you to get back, and also do you feel you being back is creating a platform for your daughter and also disability awareness?

JANE PARK: Yes, absolutely. Obviously these hats are being sold to raise awareness for the Epilepsy Foundation. Epilepsy is a very, very underresearched disease, and one in 26 people have it.

Whether it's super severe like my daughter's or if someone has a seizure once every six months, it's debilitating. If you have one seizure, then you are not allowed to drive for six months. And as an adult who is a functioning adult in a community who can't drive, that's six months of work that this person can't go to.

So in that way if a person with epilepsy as a disability, if they can't work, then what supplementations are in place from the government? It's not much. It's really not much.

For being out here I never thought -- the only reason I am out here is because I have an amazing support system. My family, my extended family, my sister-in-law, and the LPGA in general. Everyone every step of the way has reached out, said what do you need, what do you need, how can we make this easier?

They've been here step-by-step making sure that we have what we need. Yeah, we're very, very lucky. We're very lucky that we've made it this far.

Q. Then just my last question: Have you had some conversation with your daughter about being back on tour? What are those kind of conversations looking like now?

JANE PARK: I feel like I talk to her a lot, but she doesn't really listen to me. I'm sure you understand that.

Yeah, I talk to her all the time, and she says a few sounds back, but I hope she understands some of it. I'll keep talking and see if she responds one day.

Q. Jane, can you walk through when you first thought of playing this week and what the process was like to get ready to play?

JANE PARK: It was a lot of soul-searching that went in. I hadn't played in so long. Two years; over two years competitively. I really hadn't been doing much practice at all.

People at Outlyr, they reached out to us and said, you

know, we would love for you to come. If you can, bring Grace to play in Dow because I do post about it every now and then on social media.

When I first played it in 2019, Tiff was my partner. She now works for the enemy at Southern Cal at USC, but she couldn't make it, but I have a major champion.

PAULA CREAMER: I'm second best, and I'm okay with that.

JANE PARK: I'm so honored to have Paula as my partner. Like I said, she's going to -- I'm going to be a heavy anchor.

PAULA CREAMER: You wouldn't have thought that yesterday when she was playing. It was nine holes. I was, like, okay, go back into the clubhouse. Save those things. It was impressive.

JANE PARK: I need to save my energy for sure.

Q. What are your hopes for the week between your family and the golf?

JANE PARK: Oh, man. Honestly I wish I could stay present on the golf course. I mean, there are so many times where even during practice rounds or the pro-am today my brain wanders to how Grace is doing: Is she okay? Is she screaming? What is she doing?

My goal is to stay as present as possible and enjoy this opportunity because, you know, not everything is guaranteed. I have definitely learned to live life in moments and not take anything for granted. The fact that we're here, the fact that I get to play with an amazing partner and raise awareness for epilepsy and disability.

So, yeah, it's a lot of things that I want to do. There's a lot of things that I want to do or say, but once the tee ball goes up tomorrow, it will just be me and Paula, and we're going to have a lot of laughs for sure.

Q. I know you mentioned you never dreamed of the opportunity to play on the LPGA again. What kept you to maintain your membership over these years?

JANE PARK: So the LPGA -- I was on maternity leave when this happened. So they decided to, I guess, freeze my membership when this all happened. This type of situation had never happened on tour, so they didn't really know how to categorize me and our situation.

So I guess they put a hold on my membership so I was still eligible to play. Yeah, I guess we wanted to take



advantage of the situation and come bring Grace up here.

Yes, it was hard traveling here. And, yes, it's definitely hard day-to-day, but just to see her out kind of in my happy place where I grew up, it's been an honor. It's really been so healing for our family.

Q. Have there any highlights with Grace in particular so far this week?

JANE PARK: Honestly every day is a highlight. I don't say that to be cliché. Yeah, every day is a highlight because -- and I don't know if Paula feels the same way, but any time she sleeps past 8:30, I'm worried. I go, and I check that she's breathing. I go and check that she's okay.

Highlights, honestly, strangers coming up to me saying hi and then start crying, so I'm --

PAULA CREAMER: Don't cry.

JANE PARK: Don't cry in front of me. They're super excited to see Grace. Just to see the type of impact that Grace has had on the general public and just to see that our story has touched them in a way that has left an indelible mark on them, that's an honor.

It's my honor to share Grace's story because I feel like so many people and so many children with the same disease and disabilities that go unheard and to have a sort of platform to sing praise to her story is an honor. It's really an honor for me honestly every day to be her mom is the best thing.

THE MODERATOR: I will wrap things up then with one last question for you, Jane. I know you put a lot of thought into playing this week, and I don't know if you know the answer to this, but can we see you playing again soon on the LPGA Tour, or what does your future look like on tour?

JANE PARK: Honestly I might come back to this event if they'll have me because I think I've run out of status. Unless we win this week. Yeah, unless we win this week.

PAULA CREAMER: No pressure.

JANE PARK: No pressure at all. I would love to come back here. You know, it takes a little pressure off because I've got a partner.

And, you know what, if this is it, if this is my last go-around, it's almost like having a proper sendoff, you know what I mean, because everything was cut short so abruptly. I never had a chance to say goodbye.

If this is the last of the last, then I can say we had a good run. We went through some trials and tribulations, and we still made it back somehow, and yeah, I'm very proud of that.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies, for your time.

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