

ISPS HANDA World Invitational

Wednesday, August 10, 2022

Northern Ireland

Galgorm Castle & Massereene Golf Club

Pajaree Anannarukarn

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, Pajaree. Welcome back to the ISPS Handa World Invitational. When you come back to a tournament like this after everything that happened last year, what were some of the thoughts and feelings you had since the beginning of the week?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I mean, I would say I've been -- it's been a great like -- I would say it wasn't the best the past week. Wasn't the best for me, but coming back here actually bring back a lot of great memories and special moments, and it's just good to be back soaking in that vibes.

Q. When you think about this tournament, when we go back and you think about what you were able to do last year, especially that final day, what are some of the things, some of the holes that stick out to you? What are some of the memories you have from the final day before you got to the playoff?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I think the important part was, I mean, I learn a lot from that day from starting the day with couple birdies and playing good all the way until the sixth hole where I kind of slip on that.

But I think I learn a lot from just trying to stay patient and, you know, try to just do your best and remember that it's not always going to be perfect. Everything is not going to be perfect.

So as long as you just continue to do your thing and just keep focusing on what you can do, I think being patient and trusting yourself, I think that's really important.

It's good to just look back and remember what it feel like.

Q. When you look back and you remember that feeling once you were able to win the playoff, I was looking at video earlier today of your dad rushing on to the green, picking you up. To win in front of him and to become an LPGA Tour winner, what was that feeling?



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Now that you can look back on it, what was that feeling like for you?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I mean, there is no place I would rather be like together, win and have him there just to watch me. It's been a journey and he has been there ever since I started, so to be able to pull it off like in front of him and he was there to see me, to watch me, I think it's just amazing and special.

I don't know what's the best word to describe that, but I think it's just great, awesome.

Q. Now a year removed you can always call yourself an LPGA winner. What have you been working on as you got ready to defend your title?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I mean, I've been working on just same thing, I mean, like what I been learning each and every week in the past. Starting the year I set out my goals and what I need to work on to improve on every aspect of the game that I can.

Still same thing. To be here this week defending champ or next week just being another player trying to put yourself in contention. I think it's the same as every week, but it's definitely going to be a bit extra on this because people expect you to come here and defend.

Yes, I want to repeat that, but all I can do is just focus on my game and just try to pull out the A game and just put myself in contention hopefully.

Q. Absolutely. Is your dad here this week?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Yeah, he is. He's always with me pretty much traveling together.

Q. So hopefully a repeat of the celebrations on the 18th green.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: That would be nice.

Q. How easy is it for you to sort of zone out the extra noise this week as defending champion, or are you trying to sort of block that out or are you trying to embrace all that extra stuff?



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PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I mean, you always want to embrace whatever comes in. I mean, it's good. It's always good to just come back and defend. Means you're winning and all that.

Yeah, just try to focus on your game and try to just not think about it too much, because I feel like every week is the same, major event or going to the regular even or, you know, any event is the same.

So try to just do your thing.

Q. When you're coming back to somewhere where you had some success, are you trying to repeat some things that you did last year? Are you staying in the same place, going to the same places that you went to last year?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Basically I'm staying at the same place, going to the same restaurant. Obviously, I mean, I've been eating at the same place as last year and staying at the same hotel, but it's -- and we are playing here at the course, you know, Galgorm, Massareene. It's just everything is the same.

But, again, trying to just focus and hopefully do better or just keep trying my best to pull out the A game.

Q. Weather is a little bit different than last year.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Yes, I think the course also play a little different. I mean, the layout-wise. I think they add couple bunkers and renovating like couple holes.

I think the conditions play a little different compared to last year.

Q. After quite a start of the year very consistently, couple Top 10s, tied fourth...

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Uh-huh.

Q. It's actually only really the last couple weeks you haven't made it to the weekend.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Yeah, uh-huh.

Q. I know the Evian course is a very tricked up course and it's just people like it or don't like it. Links golf is a different game.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Yeah.

Q. Was that the way you were looking at the last three

weeks?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Just to look back and...

Q. In terms of the fact it's links golf, it's so different, did that make it more difficult? Would you say that's why you maybe didn't get through the last two rounds?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Yeah. To be honest, I always loved playing at links golf. I don't know if the course liked me back, but, I mean, yes, definitely a different kind of game. Requires a lot of different kind of shots.

You play around with it and I think I enjoy it. I really did enjoy playing Muirfield and Dundonald. So, I mean, my game, I think it was good, but just couple things I need to work on more.

I wasn't hitting off the tee very well. Obviously Evian was tough if you're not putting yourself in the fairway, in the position where you want to hit the greens.

If you're in the rough, deep rough wasn't a really easy shot coming out. Obviously links golf, again, just not the best with my tee shots last couple weeks give myself a little tougher lie on shots to get birdie opportunities or to make the stroke out of that.

So, yeah, I've been working on trying to hit better tee shots off the tee and hopefully hitting more greens and give myself a lot of chances for birdies and putts.

Yeah, overall, just been good. It's golf. There is time when you're like, oh, you've been doing so well until the point where you're like, oh, maybe this is a little off. I'm trying to get back on track.

Q. Have you played 18 holes here and had a look at the courses, both courses?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Here?

Q. Yes. This week.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Yes.

Q. Are you noticing many differences?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I've seen a lot of difference, quite a few holes at Galgorm more than Massareene. I think the conditions at Massareene has been improved a whole lot compared to last year.



And also, Galgorm, they kept the conditions fairly well. I think, again, there are a couple holes that they added bunkers and the layout of the course; they add waters and maybe cut off from the rough in the areas.

I think it's in good shape.

Q. Having good memories must help psychologically as you're swinging the club.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Yes. Yes. Now I know just try to do it, yeah.

Q. You know you can do it.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Yeah.

Q. Pajaree, how did things change for you after last year? When you went on to events after that, did you feel any different just having a win under your belt? Did it sort of feel just the same just you had a shiny piece of silver?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I think, yeah, it made -- I would be lying if said the same. I think it's pretty much give me a little more confidence, and also like the momentum going into like the week after.

Especially I think it's like (indiscernible) golf and then major events, and I played quite well but not the best on the final round, but I feel like I had that momentum going into the next week.

So I think it's great. I mean, as professional golfer, you know, once you turn pro you want to at least get a win for yourself. That's like a gift, a present for you to try to continue to make your goals come true and your dreams.

I mean, you set goal and you want to achieve it. Once you achieve it, it's just a lot of energy booster for you.

So I think it's great.

Q. I suppose going into tournaments after that, up at the top you have that experience of getting over the line as opposed to before this event last year you didn't have that experience as well.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Like to getting the win, right?

Q. Yeah, yeah.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Yeah. I think it's -- sorry, one more time.

Q. Having that experience of winning helps when you're in that position again; you know, like if you're competing at the end of a tournament, you know this is what I need to do if I want to go on and win this tournament because you've already done it before.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Okay. You mean did that help, right?

Q. Yeah.

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I think definitely. It's like you're gaining more experience and you are understanding more of the situations and how you have to manage to maybe pull it off next time.

I mean, it just -- like I think I've learned a lot from that day. Just I think I'm -- it's my first win and I think it's like a lot of things maybe new, but I feel like I was really pleased of how I managed to stay really calm and how like, you know, managed to just be patient with it.

I think like the week prior to coming here last year, like I think there is a couple times that I put myself in contention but I didn't really pull it off. I feel like I think I've learned a lot from those weeks, too.

So it kind of helped me got through the situations until like this week last year obviously. Coming down the stretch I feel like both players, Emma and Jennifer Kupcho been playing really well, but, again, I think it's just all about the timing. I mean, if it's meant to be it will.

As long as you keep focusing on your game and not thinking ahead, that's just really the main important thing, main key that I took out from it.

So hopefully I maybe was able to do it, like repeat that. I don't want pressure, but like you learned and you want to do, repeat it again, but whatever happens is just the way it is.

Q. One more from me before we wrap it up. There is a tri-sanctioned event: The LPGA, the LET, and the DP World Tour. What's it like to have this kind of experience again? Last year when this was the inaugural of the tri-sanctioned of this event. Very exciting to continue that excitement and momentum as the defending champion. What's it like seeing that again and going through that experience?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I think it's fun. Of course fun to see how like we don't get to see the European Tour player, the guys are here in the same week.

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I think it just like -- I believe it's another opportunity for us. I always look at different kind of, you know, players, how they manage to -- or how they like practice. I think it just good to learn a thing or two from them obviously, and also watch how they like prepare for the tournament as well as what we're doing.

You know, I think it's a good, good event. Unique and very special.

Q. Have you picked up on anything you've seen this week or did you pick up anything last year?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I've seen a couple guys that play like different kind of shots around the greens, so I think it's -- I mean, I think it's fun to watch how they like -- I think the girls, I mean, the women do it too, but like the guys tend to go many more like creative around the green.

I think it's just fun to watch. Yeah.

Q. You're not a fan of Niall Horan, are you?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: Oh, I am. I'm a big fan, yeah, too. Like there is a lot of...

Q. (Regarding a lot of girls out there screaming.)

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I was just kind of like telling my caddie, Oh, I'm sure they're here for golf. (Laughter.)

Q. I have to say, too, as part of it, I remember last year the social media bump. What was that like when you won?

PAJAREE ANANNARUKARN: I think -- I mean, obviously I was a big fan of One Direction back in the day. I wasn't really expecting to like get my first win and then get to take a selfie with him, and I actually told him that I was one of his big fan.

I mean, it's great. I was there at his concert when I was 13 or 12, so it's good. It's something you didn't expect it to happen, so, yeah, it's awesome.

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