

Cognizant Founders Cup

Saturday, October 9, 2021

West Caldwell, New Jersey, USA

Mountain Ridge Country Club

Maria Fassi

Quick Quotes

Q. Maria, obviously bittersweet kind of round for you today. We've seen a different Maria Fassi this side of the season to what we saw at the beginning of the season.

MARIA FASSI: Yeah.

Q. Can you explain what that difference is for you and how you feel about your golf game now?

MARIA FASSI: I mean, I was on the phone with my mom this morning and I was like, Hey, I think I remembered how to play golf. It was a tough start. It was just not the way I like to play the game.

Then my knee surgery kind of added onto that. Very happy with the way that my game is right now. I think we're playing a lot smarter than I ever have, so that is definitely paying off.

And very excited to be under par, to be in contention, and hopefully go out and get after it tomorrow.

Q. So after a finish like today, how do you regroup to go out to have another good one tomorrow?

MARIA FASSI: I love this place. I think it's an unbelievable golf course. You got to hit good golf shots to score around here. I'm hitting the ball very good. I just got to keep doing what I'm doing.

We have an amazing game plan. Just got to trust what I'm doing, trust our lines, and just keep having fun, keep enjoying the crowds that we've had.

I think it's going to be a good day tomorrow.

Q. Maria, not the finish that you wanted, but how do you assess your round today?

MARIA FASSI: I mean, it's a tough golf course. I kind of got in a great rhythm in the middle of the round and then missed a couple shots here and there.



But overall, I think I played very solid and I'm very happy with the round. Of course 16 and 17 weren't right just where I wanted them, but still very happy with an under par score.

Definitely very excited for tomorrow. I'm hitting it well and I'm excited to go out and just go gas pedal down and take on the course tomorrow.

Q. It's been kind of a tough year for you with not a great start and then obviously your knee issues; now we've seen the Maria Fassi of old the past month or so. What have you found that's just kept you calmer and got you back to playing where you know you can play?

MARIA FASSI: I mean, there has been a lot of changes on my team from my coaches to my caddie, and I been working very hard the last nine, ten months.

I think it was really just a matter of time for me to start playing like I wanted. It's kind of once you're in a good rhythm it's easier to keep building momentum rather than missing a cut and having to wait until the next Thursday to play or whatnot.

I think it's a combination of a lot of things, of just really working hard and staying patient. It's a lot more fun now, that's for sure.

Q. With the wind, obviously this course we keep hearing it's a major championship test on a regular event. With the wind, how much more difficult did it play this week?

MARIA FASSI: Yeah, I mean, I think we got fairly lucky the first two days, but today the weather was a little more challenging. Got a little bit colder and had a lot of crosswinds and stuff like that out there.

So definitely a different golf course, but I think still it's -- you got to hit your targets and trust that the wind is going to take them or whatnot.

So, again, just got to stay the course. Got to just trust my



process. Keep doing the same next 18 holes tomorrow.

Q. Kind of a two-part question. When you get on a string of birdies where you make two or three in a row, how do you keep from getting too excitable and out of the game plan? Then when things go a little sideways, like on 16 and 17, how do you put that aside and focus on the next hole?

MARIA FASSI: I mean, I think it's the same for either scenario. You just got to hit the next shot. I mean, actually on 16 I got myself in a tough spot and ended up making a decent bogey.

Then 17 was just kind of couple mistakes in a row that got me out of place. But, I mean, I'm trying to just have as great Ted Lasso says, goldfish memory. You forget about the good, you forget about the bad, and you just move on.

You cannot be thinking too much about the previous shot because this course will get you if you're not focused 100% on the next one.

So I think you just got to trust your process and keep doing what you're doing. I think we been very good at that this week. I'm very excited for another opportunity to go low tomorrow.

Q. Bravo for the only Ted Lasso quote of the week. We talked at Dow and you were listening very intently to some of the advice Stacy was giving you throughout that week. I saw earlier this week you pulled Nancy Lopez aside and she was giving you advice. How are you absorbing all that, and what stands out as some of the best stuff they've given you?

MARIA FASSI: I mean, I think -- well, to start, I'm very fortunate to have major champions, former No. 1 players in the world and whatnot, interested in helping me and trying to figure out maybe what was going a little bit sideways at the beginning of the year and how we could change things up.

So I'm extremely grateful for all their support and advice, but they kind of all say the same things in different ways maybe. But a lot of it is just getting a little bit smarter on the golf course, playing to my strengths. We know I hit it far, but I been working very hard on my wedges and stuff. That's always been a strength as of late.

So now if I get out of position I know if I layup to a good number I can still make up and down. So I think it's just getting a little bit smarter, staying patient, and the one thing that they all definitely say is just to have fun and enjoy.

We're so lucky to be doing what we love out here and to get to come to places like this. Doesn't get much better than that.

Q. Can you take us through the 16th hole and what went into the decision to go with putter from off the green there?

MARIA FASSI: I didn't like my lie for my second shot. I was kind of on a downhill lie and the ball was sitting on like a weird spot. It was sitting up nicely, but I didn't really know what the ground was going to do to my club.

I really just needed to hit a little bit harder the first time around. But I thought that with putter if I just got it rolling it had better chances of staying on the green and -- I mean, staying pretty close. I definitely learned the first time and did it pretty good the second time around.

But I thought it was just the higher percentage shot, and I knew that maybe I wasn't going to make par but it was definitely going to keep me from making a double, which I think at the end of the day that's where I want to be.

Q. What do you think you'll needed to tomorrow to try and catch Jin Young Ko?

MARIA FASSI: Again, it's a great golf course, and I like it a lot. I think it suits my eye, my game. I love the game plan that me and my caddie have put in place and I think we just have to go and hit good golf shots.

I mean, I can't control what she does or what anybody else does. I can only control what I'm doing and I think we just got to be very tidy on all 18 holes and give it our best and we'll see after 18 where I fall.

Definitely going to be an exciting round for sure.

Q. When you did have those two mistakes on 16 and 17, how di you try to reset your mind to go through on 18 and finish out with birdie?

MARIA FASSI: I know 18 was up a tee and that it was going to be reachable for me, so I had actually hit a very good drive on 15. I had a good feeling about my tee shot, so I was like, Hey, it's fine. Of course it's not the 16 or 17 hole that I would've liked, but I still have an opportunity at a birdie, maybe an eagle.

So, again, just trying to stay very present and patient out there. Just giving myself as many birdie chances as I can.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports