



Augusta National Women's Amateur

Thursday, April 4, 2024

Gianna Clemente

Quick Quotes

Q. Great playing. Can you talk a little bit about maybe the difference you encountered out there in the second round versus yesterday as conditions?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: Yeah, I mean, it was pretty windy yesterday, too. I think I caught kind of maybe a little bit of back half of to yesterday. I was really late tee time-wise yesterday.

The front nine today wasn't as bad. It was 8:00 in the morning so wasn't anywhere near as bad. And then the back got pretty tough, but I was playing the easier side. So, yeah, it was just really a grind out there, especially on the back.

Just taking it one shot at a time.

Q. Champions Retreat tends to have a handful of very elevated tee boxes, a lot of drop offs. That doesn't bode well with the wind swirling. How do you deal with situations like that when you're trying to flight the ball and starting off elevated?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: Yeah, it's really difficult. The wind -- this is probably some of the most like swirly wind I've ever played in. It's very, very difficult.

But it just takes a lot of the patience and I backed off a couple times today if I was uncomfortable. You just got to wait for the right moment to hit. Sometimes you don't, sometimes the wind will swirl right as you're hitting, and there is nothing you can do about it.

But, yeah, just backing off if you're uncomfortable.

Q. We know you're working through numbers in your book, comparing yesterday to today, without going into detail, what is your process there just to double and triple check everything to make sure you're 100% committed to your shot?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: I think it helps to have my dad on the bag. I trust him a lot. I'm going throughout numbers and he's going through them. We both kind of just find if there is a difference and maybe we disagree on something we just find a middle ground.

That's really important. He's really good at what he does, too, so I trust him a lot. Normally we have about the same number and we agree on almost every shot, so works out well.

Q. 16 years old. You see your name at the top of the leaderboard here. Playing with the world's best amateurs. What does that mean to you?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: It's super special. Playing this tournament last year I feel like I had a little bit of lower

expectations just because it was my first year; didn't really know what to expect.

But I said the expectations were just a little bit higher this year just because I've played Champions Retreat so much and I feel very comfortable on this golf course.

And can, yeah, I put two really good rounds together with some tough conditions, so, yeah, was really good couple days.

Q. Looking ahead to Saturday, obviously the final round at Augusta National. How do you prep for something like that?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: I don't think there is anything you can do to prep for that. There is definitely going to be some nerves on the first tee. That's inevitable.

I'm not thinking that far ahead yet. I still have a practice round to play, and that's a really important day. Just to soak up as much information as you can from the caddie and, yeah, it's a really important practice round tomorrow. I'm going to get that done first.

Q. Colorful card today. How do you stay even keeled with the ups and downs that today's round brought?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: It's very difficult. Again, I'll probably go back to the caddie. My dad knows me extremely well. He knows when I get a little bit frustrated and he keeps me even keeled. He's very even keeled himself.

You will rarely see him show emotions on the course. So that's very good at knowing when I need some space or when I need maybe a little pep talk. He really helped out today. There were a couple bogeys in the beginning that got a little bit off track, and we did a really good job coming back from that.

Q. What does a dad pep talk sound like?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: It sounds a little bit different every time. Maybe some words of wisdom or some support when I need it. Can be very easy to get down on myself when I don't start off the way I want to. I definitely did not start off the way I wanted to today.

So just, again, he's very even keeled, so I try to maybe be like him a little bit more and show a little bit less emotion.

Yeah, just a couple -- maybe just a pat on the back and just him telling me that I'm doing a good job and that we're moving onto the next hole.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

GIANNA CLEMENTE: A lot of tap-ins since I've been here last year. I think I'm a little bit more mature on the golf course. I would say I'm a little bit more powerful than last year.

I think this course felt a lot longer last year for me. I'm still by no means one of the long hitters, but I definitely feel like I have a little bit more control over this golf course than I did last year.

That's been really important. Even with the wind makes it difficult, but I feel like I definitely have more control.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

GIANNA CLEMENTE: Maybe a little bit.

Q. You are used to playing in golf's biggest stages. Augusta will be no different for you. Hypothetically if awesome were to happen and you get some exemptions into some LPGA major championships, having played with the world's best, what would that mean to play on the biggest stage especially with some majors coming up?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: Yeah, it would be on a honor. I would absolutely love to do that. Obviously I have a lot of work ahead of me still left to make that happen.

But, yeah, I would love that. It's such good experience. I've played in three LPGA events and none of them were majors, but it was such good experience.

I had a great time in all of them, and it was just so fun. I would love to be able to do that again.

Q. Do you remind yourself that you've done that and qualified when you look at the test that you have on Saturday? Do you draw some confidence from that past experience?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: For sure, yeah. It's very important. I mean, it can be a little bit intimidating. Obviously Augusta National is very intimidating.

Yeah, just reminding myself that I've been in these situations before and I felt these nerves before. Yeah, it's really important to draw some confidence off that.

Q. I remember last year you were grateful to play Augusta National. Coming into to this year, how did that drive you to say, okay, I can compete out here and I can make a statement?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: Yeah, I said from the very beginning last year that my goal was just to make the cut. I wanted to play Augusta National under competition so badly. It didn't really -- I'm not going to say it didn't matter where I was, but I just wanted to play it under competition.

I feel like coming into this week I wanted a little bit more than that. Obviously to make the cut and play it in competition again, but I think maybe just being in one of the leading groups and having the bigger crowds and the more pressure. I think I wanted a little bit more out of this week, yeah.

Q. You've seen a lot of cool places and done a lot of cool things. How do you continue to inspire yourself?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: I think just the competition inspires me. It really does. Being able to get out here and compete at the highest level, even if it's just in a smaller event, being able to compete is what keeps me going and what drives me to keep getting better.

Yeah, I mean, it in spires me every single week we get out here and I play against some. Same players every single week. So to be able to be in a bigger field this week and -- I would say this is definitely a lot of competition this week so, yeah, that's what keeps me going.

Q. This might seem super random, but is there a reason you have two ball markers on your hat?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: Yeah, a little superstition of mine. People used to call me G Money so I use this one for birdie putts and I use this one for par putts. I know that's very superstitious, but I've done it for years.

Q. The G Money one is the...

GIANNA CLEMENTE: Yeah.

Q. What's the other one?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: American flag and this is a money sign.

Q. You ever get them wrong on accident?

GIANNA CLEMENTE: No. This one is always on my right side and this one is always on my left. I would say I very rarely mess it up.

