



Augusta National Women's Amateur

Saturday, April 5, 2025

Carla Bernat Escuder

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. It's a privilege to welcome our 2025 Augusta National Women's Amateur champion, Carla Bernat Escuder.

Carla, congratulations on your victory. Your poise and skill were on display all afternoon. We were certainly there when that approach shot at No. 9 we thought was going in and the incredible up-and-down on No. 10.

Can you describe your emotions once that final putt dropped on the last hole and you became our newest Augusta National Women's Amateur champion?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: It's hard to describe with words, but I was just so happy and relieved that I made the putt because I saw on a scoreboard there was one girl that was just one shot behind me. So I was like, you need to make this. So yeah, happy.

Q. Carla, can you take us through a couple shots? The 15th hole, you hit a long drive and made birdie, and the 17th hole, what you were facing there with the trees on your second shot.

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: No. 15, I had 145 meters to the pin, which is like 160 yards, I think. I hit a 7-iron over the green, and then chipped it to about six feet and made it.

On No. 17, my driver was a little right, and then I kind of needed to turn it over to the right to completely take the bunker on the left out. But the wind was into, and I needed one more club, and I just went into the bunker, got it out and two-putted.

Q. I'm wondering about your friendship with Sergio and José Maria Olazábal and what that means to you and some of the advice they might have given you for this particular championship.

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: I know Sergio more than José María. José María, it's just a good symbol for Spain of what golf means and how to act on the golf course. Sergio, I played with him once when I was back in Spain. We don't have a really close relationship, but his dad is my coach. I can now feel that I know him.

Q. Speaking of Spaniards, you're really close with José Ballester. Did you take some chipping lessons with him at the end of last year, and was one of those shots that he helped you with the one you hit on 10 that was a crucial up-and-down?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Yeah, I actually thought about it on that shot. I was like, if there was one shot that you're going to need the hands back to hit it higher, as he tells me, it's this one.

So yeah, I appreciate that tip.

Q. There's a close person who wasn't able to be here this week, David Cox. Can you talk about your relationship with him, and were you thinking about him at all today?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Yeah. He was my host two years ago for a tournament, and he was the kind of guy -- well, he died last December. He was the kind of guy that would just support to know that -- sorry. He would support to be there.

He had nothing to win by sending me messages and helping me become a better player mentally, and I was thinking a lot about him today with my coach. We almost kind of cried on one of the holes. But yeah, we got it together.

I told her, his wife that was here, this is for him.

Q. After your approach shot on 13, it seemed like you and your caddie -- you put your arm around her and you had a pretty long talk. Could you let us in on that what that conversation was?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: I think we were going over the banana that we just ate.

Q. What about it?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: She was like, yeah, the power of the banana, for the par-5. (Laughter).

I think it was something like that. Oh, yeah, we were talking about -- so my caddie yesterday was a pretty intense caddie. He wanted me to know everything about the golf course and he helped me a lot.

But he made me putt that putt like three times in a row, and I'd be like, okay, and he's like, again, just one more time. That was it.

Q. Coming off the birdie on 15, how much were you looking at the leaderboard? What were your nerves like over the last couple holes and especially over that putt?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Well, I was looking to the scoreboard a lot. My caddie, my coach was like, just focus on yourself and we'll be fine.

But yeah, I was looking all the time. I like to know where I am. I don't know if I need to hit it a little harder into the hole or not.

But yeah, the last putt I was like -- I looked at the scoreboard and I was like, you need to knock this in because she's right behind you. Yeah, and I did it.

Q. You were one of six Spaniards in the field this week and you played with Andrea today. Did you draw any strength from the presence of all of you in the field and the backing of Spanish golf tradition?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: It was really nice playing with her. It made it feel like we were not in Augusta, either. It was like we were playing when we were 15 back in the day.

I think we're becoming better and better, Spaniards. We have a really good group of swing coaches that help us push each other, too.

Q. Was there a particular mindset that you had coming into the round today? It was a pretty packed leader board and it looked like people had been scoring very well all week; that maybe you needed to be aggressive. I'm curious what the mindset was about how you wanted to play today?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Yeah, so one of my friends that is here, he told me the tournament is going to win with my under 12. Today I just tried to play a pretty good nine holes, and I knew the tournament started on No. 10, so when I hit

the second shot on No. 10, I was like, damn.

Q. You took a pretty aggressive line on the 18th tee. Was that intentional?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Yeah, I hit draw, so I was like, I need to just hit it as close as I can to the tree on the right. But it's one of those that you are on the tee box and you know you're going to hit it in the fairway.

Q. Even though you started the final round just one shot back, I'm curious if you felt like you were an underdog coming into today.

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: I felt like an underdog, yeah, from the very beginning of the tournament. But I wasn't looking at the people that was behind me. I was looking at the winners, the ones on top of the leaderboard, because that's how it helps me play better.

Q. How did that change when you got the lead? Still looking ahead or behind?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Yeah, now when I get the lead, I normally just try to focus more on the shots instead of like get up there. It's more like focus on just making sure that I'm doing the less shots I can.

Q. You had a warm embrace there with José María before you went into scoring. What did that mean to you, and what did he say?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: He was just saying, congratulations and that he watched some of the golf that I played today. It means everything because he's such a symbol for Spain. I was really nervous because last year I saw him after playing and I called him the wrong last name.

I said Larrazabal instead of Olazábal. He's like, that's not me. And I'm like, I'm sorry.

Q. This field from top to bottom one of the most historic in the championship, a lot of players coming from American collegiate programs. Can you speak to the level of competition that you experienced throughout your season at Kansas state and how that has helped you improve to get to this point?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Yeah, Kansas State has taken me -- has made me get to my highest point of golf. We've been playing a pretty strong schedule, and I don't know, I think I've been competing so much that I feel like I'm at my highest point in golf right now.

Q. Your coach said that you're the hardest worker he's ever seen in his coaching career. How good does it feel to have all that hard work pay off in such a big way, on such a big stage?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: I mean, I cannot process that I won yet. I mean, it's really nice to see that after a cold winter that we had and hard days going to the golf course and showing up, it means everything to win this tournament. It's also such an honor.

Q. To be the only ANWA champion from Spain, what does that mean to you to represent your country?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: I mean, it's pretty cool. Hopefully it doesn't stay like that because I want more Spaniards to get here and keep pushing our country up and up. Yeah, hopefully I'm not the last one.

Q. You seemed to be very composed on the way around, a lot of smiling, as if you were not actually in the final of such an important event. Are you either very good at controlling your emotions, or are you indeed a very calm person?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: I feel that I am pretty calm in hard moments, in like under-stress moments. I also really tried to enjoy this round with my coach because it's going to be the last one. I'm turning pro this next summer. So I was really focused on smiling and just enjoying Augusta because it's the best golf course in the world.

Q. In the trophy ceremony, you mentioned that your caddie is the real reason you won. Can you expand on that?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Well, so I am really hard to deal with sometimes on the golf course with. I get nervous, and I'm -- like where is my ball, but as soon as I get to the golf ball, it's fine, but she's the one that walks with me to the golf ball. So she's the one that listens to me complaining, oh, that was a bad shot, what was that, you know.

Yeah, she does a really good job listening to me and kind of reassuring me all the time. Without that, I don't think I could have won.

Q. I'm curious if Victor gave you any advice on Augusta National or what the course or experience would be like.

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: He sent me a message yesterday because I can't remember what was it. Do you remember, Alberto? What did he say?

ALBERTO: Just keep on trying, give yourself chances to make birdies and they will drop.

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Yeah, just keep playing that way, keep trying to make birdies, like the last one yesterday in Champions.

Q. Can you take us through the clubs you hit in and the holes you made birdies on during your final round here?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: Yeah, No. 2, driver, hybrid, two-putt.

No. 5, driver, 8-iron, and I made it from the fringe.

No. 8, driver, hybrid, two putts.

No. 9, driver, 50-degree.

No. 13, driver, hybrid, two putts.

No. 15, driver, 7-iron, chip, putt.

Q. How do you plan to celebrate?

CARLA BERNAT ESCUDER: That's a good question. Just probably go to dinner with all the people that came to watch me. I kind of want to stay here to watch the Masters, but I don't know if I will be able. And maybe a tattoo. We'll see. (Laughter.) I was thinking maybe the flower of Augusta, but I need to decide on that. It's a big decision.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Carla, and congratulations on your victory.

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