

Epson Tour

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Lauren Hartlage

Press Conference

EPSON TOUR

Q. So, yeah, just kind of tell me a little bit about your background, backstory. I know you're from Elizabethtown, Kentucky. How you got in the game, what made you love golf, all that kind of stuff.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah, so I kind of grew up playing golf. My mom played in college and I grew up on a golf course living on No. 14, so it's kind of something that's always been in my family. We enjoy going out and playing together as a family.

Played a lot of other sports growing up, but I kind of love the competitiveness of golf so I stuck with it through high school, college, and kind of a dream was always to be a professional golfer and play on the LPGA tour.

Q. And now that the dream is here, what does that mean to you? What does that mean to your community? We've seen Emma Talley do it and what it meant to Princeton. What does it mean it E-Town to have one of their own out here?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah, it's been pretty awesome. I feel like there aren't a ton of Kentucky golfers that are professional and able to root for, so definitely everyone in E-Town has been super supportive of me.

Have people reaching out all the time, especially at my golf course, wondering how I'm doing, what's next, kind of keeping up. So it's been really special to have something and be surrounded by the community that's just supporting me every day.

Q. What golf course did you grow up on?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Elizabethtown Country Club.

Q. On 14?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yes, right across the street on 14.

Q. Where did your mom play college?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: She played at Western Kentucky.

Q. Okay. What was that like? I feel like most women it's their dad.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah.

Q. For you it was your mom.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Uh-huh.

Q. What was the difference there, do you think?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah, it was kind of cool because, again, like you said, it's definitely mostly dads out there. My dad played, too. They both played together but he just played for fun.

My mom was definitely the competitive one. She's the one that has Golf Channel on every day at home. So it's kind of fun to have her. She kind of caddied for me when I was young playing the U.S. Kids, caddied for me in summer tournaments.

It's kind of special to be able to have a mother-daughter combo out there.

Q. Sure. Went to college at Louisville.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Uh-huh.

Q. What did it mean to you to be a Card?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah, it was awesome. I stayed close to home. School is only probably 45 minutes from my house. Grew up a huge Louisville fan. Wasn't set on going there my whole life, but it kind of worked out being pretty special.

We had season tickets for football and basketball growing up, so it's really special to be able to be a part of the Louisville athletic community because I grew up supporting them my whole life.

So it was really awesome. I had great time. Loved my team and coaches and feel like I really grew as a person and as a golfer there.

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Q. Was Whitney Wade there?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yes, she was my head coach my last two years, I think.

Q. For those that don't know, Whitney Wade was like the golfer out of Kentucky for a number of years.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yes.

Q. What was it like learning from her, somebody that's been out here, been in this experience quite a bit?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah, it was pretty awesome. Yeah, she was definitely one of the best players out of Kentucky for a while and she played against my mom in State Am, so it was kind of fun.

My mom knew her growing up, she then became my coach and she's like, man, Whitney beat me all the time when she was so small.

My mom is kind of hilarious. It was great to have a Kentucky girl come back and coach for us, and to be able to learn from her was pretty special.

Q. When did you realize -- because I remember you coming up when you were like 12 and 13, 14, really competing in high school tournaments.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Uh-huh.

Q. Like shooting low, low scores. When did you really go, you know what, this is something -- the LPGA tour is a feasible dream for me?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah, I definitely always believed. Like when I was younger I wanted to play on the LPGA, but that's kind of like everyone's dream. You're just like, okay, that would be cool.

But it wasn't until probably my senior year of high school where I was kind of like, I'm pretty good. I think I can do this. That's where I kind of really started to work at it and be like, this is what I want to do and kind of set my goals to do that.

Q. What was your experience like in the Dow playing with your teammate last year? Was that like something that was like, girl I got get out here?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yes. It was pretty awesome. We found this qualifier and not a lot of people knew about it, so we won the qualifier to get into the tournament, and kind of going out there with my teammate was pretty special.

To have someone playing with me as a team member and to be able to play with all the LPGA players and actually be there on site, because I had never actually even watched an LPGA tournament before because there wasn't any really close by.

I watched on TV, but wasn't able to get out to one, and actually being there in the ropes was pretty awesome. I was like, this is what I want to do. Again, another kind of point where I was like, all right, this is something I can do I think.

Q. Coming out here, I mean, granted you're one of very few I feel like that got through at Q-Series that didn't play in Epson Tour season for a full year.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Uh-huh.

Q. What's your comfort level being out here now? I know you know you have the game.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah.

Q. How are you feeling?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: It is kind of tough because I feel like I was just in college last year. I'm like, oh, my gosh I'm on the LPGA now. But I think it really helped playing in that one Dow tournament, and then I got a sponsor's invite last year to one Symetra event in North Carolina.

Being able to play a couple Epson events beginning of the year will help get ready for the LPGA tournaments. I've played with a lot of girls before. It's definitely a new experience, so I'll be learning a lot, that's for sure. I have a lot of good people that I have been reaching out to that have been helping me, so I'm just really excited.

Q. Tell me about yourself off the golf course. What do you liked to when you're not playing golf? You got pets? Give me the low down.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Okay, no pets. I never had any pets growing up, but I'm a huge sports fan. Like I said, grew up Louisville fans. So any time I'm at home we're going baseball games, football games, tailgating, basketball games, just anything to do in sports, being outdoors. I just kind of love being outside and that's pretty much what I do.

Q. Have you been picking the brain -- I know you talked about Whitney, but have you been picking the brain of any fellow Kentuckians that are going to be out here? Thinking of Emma.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah, I talked to her at the Dow tournament for a little bit, but I honestly I do, I need to reach out to her, because she's a really good one and she's so nice and will help anyone out.

Yeah, I need to reach out to her. Then again, Dori Carter was my old assistant coach at Louisville too and she played on the tour for ten years, so I been reaching out to her. Been nice to have people that will help out because everyone has been so nice.

Q. What are some of your goals for your first season on the LPGA?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: Yeah, definitely I've kind of come up with these words that I want to make sure that I keep in my mind the next coming up couple months.

Staying competitive and being accepting with everything. Because I think it's going to be a tough year, you know, being so new to myself. I want to be able to accept everything that comes my way and just stay competitive and give it my all the whole year.

Q. How much Epson do you think you'll play just to kind of get more your feet wet, get more comfortable?

LAUREN HARTLAGE: I'm playing the first two for sure, and then depending on the Carlsbad LPGA, if I get in on or not, I'll play another Epson because it's close by.

Just kind of depending -- hopefully I get in more LPGA events later on in the year, but if I have an off week or don't get into a tournament, I'll probably still want to play and keep fresh and play a couple of these events, too.

Q. Have you figured out a caddie yet? I know your friend Delaney, former teammate, has been caddieing for you through all this.

LAUREN HARTLAGE: I know. She was a good one, but she's not going to be able to caddie anymore. I'm still kind of looking for one. That's kind of my next step here.

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