

# LIV Golf Virginia

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Potomac Falls, Virginia, USA

Trump National DC

**Fireballs GC**

**Josele Ballester**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome to the Media Center Josele Ballester, Fireballs GC. Incredible round today, 12-under 60. You entered today just 1-under par. When you woke up, did you envision a round like today being possible?

JOSELE BALLESTER: Definitely not. Just kept playing golf. I was fortunate enough to start with four birdies in a row on the first five holes. That definitely kind of kept me a little loose. Hitting the ball great. Made some big putts.

Yeah, it's been the first time in a while or first time this year that I kind of entered the flow zone. It seemed like everything was going easy or somewhat easy. I executed really well in all areas of the game.

Towards the end when I felt the adrenaline and the pressure a little more, I still executed and made some good shots and some good putts. So pretty happy with how I dealt with the entire round and with the final holes.

**Q. You're coming off a third place finish in Mexico City just a couple weeks ago, set yourself up for another potential podium finish. Since you've turned pro and joined LIV, is this as good as your game has felt? How would you assess your confidence right now?**

JOSELE BALLESTER: It's interesting actually because I just shot 60. It's been a while since I felt this good on a golf course. I would say since December of last year. I haven't really felt this way this season so far. So it's nice to kind of hopefully find the form for the last few events or the last half of the season.

Yeah, it's really cool. Hopefully this is -- you know, it's a situation that just gives me the confidence to keep playing better, and I'm really happy with where I am.

**Q. Josele, 12-under 60 is the course record. Do you have any other course records that you know of?**

JOSELE BALLESTER: I do not. Actually, I have a funny

anecdote. Yesterday while warming up on my way to the driving range, I was signing some autographs to some kids. One of them asked me what was my best score, and I told them 62. It's actually been a while since I made it. Hopefully sooner or later I'll shoot a low one.

One day after, I shoot 60, best round I've ever played. So it's pretty crazy how this game and life works sometimes. No, that's my lowest. Is it actually 60 is the course record here? Did I tie? Did I get it?

**Q. You got it. Actually a course record.**

JOSELE BALLESTER: I love it.

**Q. Third place in Mexico, third place in Singapore, now what you just did today. You started halfway through the season on LIV and now you're another halfway through. Do you feel like you're starting to come into your own and show the world what type of player you can be?**

JOSELE BALLESTER: Yeah, a hundred percent. I was thinking as soon as I finished today where I was last year. I made my debut here in Virginia. Although we played a little later last year than this year. It's almost been a year.

I struggled when I joined. The first few events were pretty bad. I look where I was one year ago, and I'm pretty happy with all the progress and how much better I've gotten.

As I said before, I still don't feel like this season I've felt comfortable with all the areas of my game in the same round, and today has been the first day in which everything just seemed to go easy, smooth, and feel super comfortable.

I know that this round doesn't happen very often, but hopefully I can start feeling and entering the flow zone a little more often.

**Q. Given how far you've come this year, do you feel like that's evidence to how the LIV Golf model can help**

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## **develop young players such as yourself?**

JOSELE BALLESTER: Yeah, 100 percent. At the end of the day, the fact that made me come here was just being surrounded by better players than what I was at the moment. I learned from some of the best, and I knew that was going to bring my best golf quicker.

## **Q. Josele, was there a moment or a shot out there that you kind of knew, hey, this is going to be a special round?**

JOSELE BALLESTER: Yeah, probably a couple. As I said, I started off pretty hot, made five birdies first six, seven holes, I think, almost made birdie on 18 and made a nice birdie on 1.

Then on 2 I missed it on the right side, and I had this lie in the rough that I read beautifully. Kind of my caddie Javy was talking me into it. I'm like, I've got it. It's going to jump. Give me a 7-iron. The ball just reacted as I wanted, and I hit that 7-iron to seven feet and made the eagle putt. So I put myself 8-under through 10, and I'm like let's make sure we continue this way.

## **Q. You had the par-5 and the drivable 8th coming in. Were you thinking at that point I might could get it done?**

JOSELE BALLESTER: Not yet at that point because I feel like 3 and 4 were still some challenging holes that I had to deal with, and I played them great. I actually almost made birdie on 3 and played probably the best hole of the day on 4, making birdie. Yeah, I made another birdie on 5, another on 6, and was able to save a clutch par on 7.

Probably when I made the birdie on 5, that's when I started thinking about maybe a sub-60 course record. So the last four or five holes, I kind of had that pressure on, I guess, especially the last two. Pretty happy with how I was able to close it.

## **Q. Do you often watch a lot of Brad Faxon videos?**

JOSELE BALLESTER: It's funny, it just popped out in my feed yesterday. We all know that he's probably been one of the best, if not the best putter on the planet when he played. Yeah, just popped on my feed yesterday and kind of put in play what I saw. It was something on routine, how to get up to the ball.

I've been dealing with some issues putting the last few weeks. It hasn't been bad, but just haven't felt comfortable at all. Just to speed up the process a little bit on top of the ball really, really helped today.

## **Q. Speaking of Brad Faxon, putting is the key at this level of golf. I mean, you hit the ball miles, we all know that. That's an amazing thing to watch. But what were the things that you needed to focus on to get your confidence on the greens?**

JOSELE BALLESTER: It's a great question because, as I said, I came in this week worried about my putting last week. Back home was not good at all. Felt some strokes that I haven't felt in a while in a bad way.

Talking to my coach Eric this week, didn't really know what to do. We actually switched grips for a little, tried claw on the shorter putts for a little bit, messed around actually in competition the first two rounds, which almost kind of helped a little bit to reset my mind.

But yesterday the last final holes I putted the same way as I've always done, conventional, and I guess that maybe all these little tricks, all these little things that I can add to my routine in order to make it a little better were huge at the end of today's round.

As you said at the beginning, putting is so mental. If you believe that what you're doing is going to work, it will work.

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