

LPGA Drive On Championship

Wednesday, February 2, 2022

Fort Myers, Florida, USA

Crown Colony Golf & Country Club

Ally Ewing

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome inside the media center here at the Drive On Championship at Crown Colony. I am pleased to welcome Ally Ewing.

Ally, just want to get started. This is the fourth Drive On Championship, the fourth edition, and technically you are a past Drive On Champion.

What does it mean to you to see this type of tournament in its fourth edition?

ALLY EWING: It's great. The LPGA has obviously taken Drive On and ran with it, and it's been a great addition to our campaign and just overall just encouraging people to Drive On.

And the LPGA, just supporting that and adding some tournaments like this, our fourth edition as you're saying, it's fun, and we've got some unique stuff going on this week that's been a cool player experience.

Yeah, I'm excited.

Q. When you look back on your first win on the tour at Reynolds Lake Oconee, your career and life has kind of been speedballing through since that win. When you reflect on that win, what do you remember the most?

ALLY EWING: I remember it was my birthday. My parents were there, which was just great, especially considering COVID had shut them down from coming to really any event. It was pretty close to home.

So it's kind of crazy to reflect back on it. It certainly was a huge confidence boost for me in where I was now versus then.

Q. Since then, another win at the Match Play, and also a Solheim Cup appearance. Now starting the 2022 season, how are you feeling as you come into another season on the LPGA Tour?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, I'm excited. I think last year I got really tired at the end of the year. For me personally, it's just kind of being able to mentally take myself away from things when I'm home and really just appreciate home.

For this year I feel like my golf game is in a good spot and I feel like to just jump over some mental hurdles for me is to maybe be where I am. I miss home. I get homesick.

For me it's mentally staying on top of where I am, be excited where I am, and I've been excited to be back and competing these last two weeks in Florida, and then having one more before we take some time off coming up.

But it's been great and I'm really looking forward 2022.

Q. Did you approach this off-season any differently? I know you said that you get a little bit more homesick than maybe in the past years.

ALLY EWING: Yeah.

Q. Mentally you're trying to get over those hurdles. What do you to prepare for that as we embark on a season like this?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, I think just really appreciating my home time, whether that's spending time with my husband, his team, my parents, grandparents, which I'm still blessed and lucky to have all four of them.

Just taking in the time at home. And for me, that was getting a lot of rest, did some hunting with my husband, I'm sure I binged some TV shows. Made a nice indentation on my couch for a little while.

Yeah, it's just kind of being where I am, and I love being home. Also love competing on the LPGA, so it's just finding that happy balance for me.

Q. Coming back to that week, the Drive On Championship, you are entering this as a newly elected player director. This is a lot more than I feel like on-course activities for you. What has this experience been like as you've watched other players that have been in that role before and you've started gearing up for those board meetings and long days as well as preparing for a golf tournament?



ALLY EWING: Yeah, we started with some board meetings at the beginning of the week. For me it's just a place where I can hopefully provide an avenue for players to board and just be a spokesperson for our tour.

I've always tried to see the bigger picture of the golf avenue where I know it's more than just showing up to a golf tournament, teeing it up on Thursday, getting prep in. I know there are a ton of things that go on behind the scenes.

For me, it was trying to jump into a role where I could truly understand and appreciate that, and also just be a representative for our tour. I guess technically I'm like a month in now, but I'm enjoying it, enjoying learning, and hopefully I can just be a good asset to our board.

Q. Amy Olson said it's like wearing two hats this week.

ALLY EWING: Absolutely. You have to know when to take one off and put the other one on, so you kind have to know your role in both and kind of be able to separate the two.

Q. Since 2020 you've gone from someone who is trying to break into the winner's circle to now winning in two consecutive years. How does that change your goals and mindset?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, I think for me, it's just kind of settling into who I am. I think last year I talked about that in a press conference, just not really feeling like I have something to prove to people, even though technically we shouldn't feel like we have anything to prove, but we do as golfers and professionals.

We want to tee it up and showcase we're the best in the world, and the best way to do that is lift a trophy at the end of the week. Just feeling like I've done that. I feel like I don't have anything really to compete. It's more competing because I love it, and just trying to enjoy it, grow the game, and put my best foot forward, my best foot forward every week, and hope that I can contend.

My goals are set on major this year. I want to be in contention at majors, so I'm placing a lot of emphasis on trying to take it one week at a time and have my best stuff every week, if I can.

Q. You speak of majors. You were in the final group on the final day last year at the Chevron.

ALLY EWING: Uh-huh.

Q. How does that experience propel you for this year?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, it does. I feel like I'm confident in my game, that I'm equipped to play majors well. Golf courses are typically more difficult. They require you to strike the ball really well, and I am fully aware that when I play my best golf it's because my short game is better than my average of what short game is.

So I'm placing a lot of emphasis on short game this year and trying to be more confident in my putting and training. I've always trained really hard, but maybe just trying to have a shift in mindset to perform at a higher level at putting and chipping.

So for me, just approaching the majors, being confident, and learning from my experience playing in that final group at Chevron last year. Hoping that the more I put myself in that situation the more comfortable I get.

Q. Had a couple caddies out here say the vibe this week feels a lot like Lake Oconee. Do you get that same sense?

ALLY EWING: I can certainly -- you know, it's a good way to trick myself into feeling that vibe. But, yeah, I think the just the Drive On experience itself is kind of -- the atmosphere that it creates, it's kind of unique because it is kind of an LPGA-run tournament, which is maybe different than our sponsor-run tournaments.

So it has a great feel. Feels very -- everything is tight knit with it being streamed on Peacock, members only kind of fans. So it does kind of feel like a smaller atmosphere, which is unique. Sure, I can create some vibes of Reynolds Lake Oconee if I need to.

Q. Final one from me. Couple weeks ago we announced Epson is taking over the Symetra Tour and really putting a lot more emphasis in that tour and bringing a lot more exposure. You're a veteran, one of the faces that they like to point to. What does it mean to have a worldwide company like Epson involved in that tour?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, it's great. Mike Nichols, what he's done with the Epson Tour and just the developments that he's had as he's been in that position has been incredible. Having a company like Epson step up in more ways than just one to try to put ambassadors in place as they progress from Epson Tour to the LPGA.

They have that money set there for them. Trying to reduce the entry fees. Just what they've stepped up to do for players that are just getting their feet underneath them, I



think it's incredible, and just goes to show that you it's not just the LPGA being elevated, it's the women's game as well.

Q. Last week in Boca you finished T11 in some tough conditions. What did you learn about your game last week that you're bringing into this week at Crown Colony?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, Lake Nona we had some cold, adverse conditions on Saturday, Sunday and I didn't play as well as I wanted to. Part of that was just knocking the rust off which I was fully aware of.

I was super happy how I handled myself mentally, and obviously I had to produce good shots on Saturday with the wind and the cool that it was.

For me it was just kind of putting on the grind hat and knowing it's not going to be easy and overcoming mental and just knowing what shots to hit in the right situations.

So for me, you know, I wasn't -- I probably wasn't sure how I was going to perform when I came out just because I took a good amount of time off, which I need to do.

But I didn't really know what my game would look like. For me, seeing a T11 in the second week out, that's pretty exciting for me knowing my game, despite taking some time off, isn't too far from where it needs to be. It's exciting coming into this week. I hope I can put together some good golf like I did last week.

Q. That T11, like you said, was a really good sign. You talked earlier with Steve about being in contention in majors. Are those your big goals, to be in contention throughout the year?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, I think just overall the consistency. The more time and the more weeks I can be really consistent. I believe in my game enough to know that I can have solid weeks, but I think the true differentiator might be truly putting myself in contention as often as I can.

That's a physical and mental battle if you do that every single week. So that's the goal that we all set for ourselves, I'm sure. But, yeah, majors are probably an emphasis for me, just making sure that I'm trying to do everything I can to peak at the right times.

Obviously have my best at just regular season events, too, but having it all together for a full year and being competitive at every event is a huge goal.

Q. Now a little bit more on the lighter side, we debuted

LPGA All-Access where last night's episode we saw you and your pickleball skills with Amy Olson and Sophia Popov. What was being a part of that experience like, even just for that pickleball segment and what do you think something like that does for the LPGA?

ALLY EWING: First of all, I think we need to -- skills might not be the best word to use for my pickleball. Amy and Sophia, yes. It's just fun. I think when they decided to do this it was fun to get kind of a different perspective and what we do away from the golf course.

That is something that we've done for some weeks where we try to get out and do something different, play pickleball. So to highlight -- you see Gaby working out, us playing pickleball, different things on the golf course.

I think it's just good for our fans to engage and see what we're doing, what's going on. You know, it's great for us as players to step away and do stuff that's a little out of our element.

It's also good for people to see who we are as individuals, not just the golfers we are on the course.

Q. I know you talk about not the skills part of it, but how much will that experience help with the ping-pong tournament later?

ALLY EWING: I hope it helps. I played yesterday for maybe just 10 to 15 minutes with some people. Just hoping to try to maybe knock a little bit of rust off.

But I haven't played either very much recently, but hopefully just I can be competitive and maybe win a couple games. I know who is there waiting for me if I were to win, so, yeah, just see what happens.

Q. I've heard a lot of chatter. The ping-pong tournament, for those that don't know, is something that is off the course this week at the LPGA Drive On Championship. Is it cool knowing there is a little bit of fun off course where you get to kind of relieve the stress of competing?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, and I think us as competitors, if you put us on a ping-pong table, pickleball court, no matter what it is, we're all super competitive, so it's fun to have an avenue where we can step away and get in a quick game.

We see the bracket in our dining. Yeah, I think it's just a cool way for the LPGA to step in this week and say, Hey, we're gone do something a little different, have some fun, get some player engagement, caddie engagement.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

Yeah, we'll see how far I can progress on that bracket.

Q. Are you going to Singapore and Thailand?

ALLY EWING: No, sir, I am not. I am not.

Q. Is COVID or travel part of that reason or just not working in to what your schedule would be?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, for me personally, as I've talked about the homesick portion for me, I've gotten -- and the way I've played the last couple years has given me some stability in how I approach my schedule.

For me, it's viewing travel in a different way than when I was a rookie out here. The strenuous travel for me gets mentally and physically taxing. I will have to say it's maybe a part of it. I'm a Type I diabetic so when I travel things get difficult. Diet gets difficult, protocols.

I'm not sure what our bubble situation is going to look like, but it kind of just ties you down to what you can do. So for me, I thought for looking beyond the rest of the year, it was going to be better for me long-term to stay and not play those events.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you Ally. We wish you best of luck in the ping-pong tournament as well as this week.

ALLY EWING: Thank you. Thanks, Megan.

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