

NW Arkansas Championship

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Rogers, Arkansas, USA

Pinnacle Country Club

Jasmine Suwannapura

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, here with defending champion Jasmine Suwannapura ahead of the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship Presented by P&G.

Just walk us through the emotions of being a defending champion. How does it feel to be back?

JASMINE SUWANNAPURA: Definitely feel very easygoing to come back here, to see me host family that hosting me last year and getting to spend time with them and actually more like celebrating from last year. Because we all finish on Sunday and there is a lot going on, so we didn't really have time celebrate last year.

So, you know, everybody was welcome and happy to have my back this week.

Q. You mentioned some celebrations. Anything special they did for you?

JASMINE SUWANNAPURA: Saturday one of the members of the family pass away that I just found out yesterday and I was a little bit sad that she pass away. She turn 99 and I was hoping to see her again. Actually I went to spend my Thanksgiving with them because they also have a house in Florida.

So we did spend time with them in Florida too for Thanksgiving, and that was the last time I saw her. Coming back here and know she pass away not long ago, it was a little bit sad.

But we are here, and they say that it's good to have me back.

Q. Kind of talk about those connections that you make here. This is a community-driven event. You said you spent Thanksgiving with them. How nice is it to have those connections you built through this tournament?

JASMINE SUWANNAPURA: Yeah, so I mean, we play here many times, many years, and I know a lot of people in this community been helping all these girls and caddies to

stay nearby and help them with whatever they need.

Very open mind of stuff they need, food or anything that we actually need. They were very helpful and supportive. So I'm glad. I actually have probably two different housings here. I used to stay with Eugene that he worked for KPMG long time ago when my dad was here visiting.

And then decide to not stay for a while, and then I found this housing with Dr. Alice and her sister. So I mean, I know this whole community been helping with everyone that needs help and being very friendly. I know a lot of player out here stay in the same housing for a long time, maybe five or ten years, yeah.

Q. Briefly talk about your year this year and where do you feel like your game is heading into this week.

JASMINE SUWANNAPURA: To be honest it's a lot going on with my golf game, equipment, and family this year. Beginning of the year I change new club, like same model, and I found out that it was a little bit different than the last set that I use.

Because normally my ball flight is a little bit of like baby draw, and I found out because my husband was a caddie for me, keep asking the same question over again, why are you missing right when you hit a draw? And when that happened, you missing the opposite direction of what you want it to be then you end up in a hard spot; up and down from that situation will be tough.

So we did change it back to the same set that I used to win this week last year and I did see a lot of different and it's like almost night and day.

So now I'm hitting baby draw every single time. I can count on it. Probably five, four months ago so I tried different balls, and then the result wasn't good as before.

But like I said, it's a lot of thing with irons and balls and it's kind of like hard to figure it out what's going on. All I know is I play harder golf. The reason I hit a good shot and then it went wherever it wanted to go.

It's like more like I can't really control what's going on, but

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like this is what happened to me and then I have to come up with an up and down plan. I notice that I didn't hit as close that I used to. Like I would leave myself 30-foot putt for birdie and he was like, why you don't hit it that close, right?

So anyway, I change back the ball and the club last week, which I see a lot of positive from last week because I can see now that it's going back to normal me. I hit a little baby draw, makes a lot of the birdie last week. There is some mistake I make last week, which it happens, but overall the game being more positive from last week that I use the same set last year and the same ball that I use before.

Q. Take us back to last year's final round. So you had 10-under 61. Probably one of your best rounds of the year last year, along with the eagle to win. Talk about that day. Just the consistency of the round that day and also playing in a playoff, in a tournament like this where the community just comes out and supports you guys just in droves like they did last year.

JASMINE SUWANNAPURA: I mean, to be honest, just because I shot 1-over on the second round and we didn't think much that I'm going to have a chance to win because now I'm probably two, three stroke behind because I shot 1-over the second round.

And because we play here many times, I know that the score here will be pretty low, and I think to myself, I have to find a birdie. I have to have a chance to make the birdie every single hole if I can.

So whatever you do, try to have a chance for birdie putt. Which I did. I putted from, I don't know, 30 feet to 20 foot and 10 foot, pretty much make most of it. To be honest I can't count my score or know what's going on. All I know is I have to make birdie, keep making birdies.

So when to come to hole No. 16 when I drop 40-foot putt for birdie and I notice I hit it too hard I'm like, I better hit that cup or it's going to be five, six foot coming back. It did hit the cup and went in.

So I said, okay, I'm going to keep have that mental to keep making birdie. 17 and 18 I'm literally play my game and try to beat the golf course and make birdies.

So 18 coming in I saw Lucy putting from it the right side of the green to the pin. I saw her probably sink 40-, 45-foot putt.

Because short par-5 and I don't think that's a birdie putt. Yeah, so I didn't think that was her birdie putt. I'm for sure that's her eagle putt.

Okay I'm in a weird situation right next the cart path. I have three choice: One is I hook this in the water; second I hit it on the green; or I hit way right off the green on the right side.

So I just like, okay, you know what? I'm just hit whatever it is, just hit the best I can from that situation. It went straight at the pin.

You know, I'm already happy of the result of getting on the green and have that chance to putt. I didn't even think about anything. I think because I also have experience of being winner out here before and I don't think too much do or die. Just play my game, make the putt. I know exactly how it's going to break on that lie; very confident putting.

Didn't take much time, right in the heart, make eagle putt. You know, I see a lot of people, like all the community come out and actually have fun watching us play. Even though I have to wait for a while for the last group to finish and have a playoff.

We coming in here, have a little bit of snack, a little bit of food, and then go warm up again. Maybe almost an hour after.

So everybody is still here. As a community they're still waiting on 18 hole and come out on the fairway and by the green to watch us, so...

Q. Since you did finish as one of the early groups and had to wait, what were those nerves like for that hour waiting to see what the final results were going to be?

JASMINE SUWANNAPURA: Nothing. I mean, it's pretty chill. We actually like eating and just waiting for the last group to come in. Even though if anyone can make birdie and eagle to coming in, I mean, it's possible. It's golf.

I mean, I did with everything I can to -- every single hole to try to make birdie as much as I can and that's what I did. There is nothing I can do other than that.

Q. Looking ahead to this year, since you are a three-time winner, you've played here lots, you're very familiar with the course, do you channel last year's win or is it a, that was last year, I've been working on my game, working on new things and this is kind of a new level set refresh? Or do you channel things from particular shots this happened last year into this coming week?

JASMINE SUWANNAPURA: I would say coming back here, you know, see couple holes and I can actually



imagine and see a picture of myself hitting couple shots, all the good shots like to the hole. I mean, there is a lot of good shots out there, a lot of good vibe.

As far as for the result of this weeks going to be, I would say even though I see all the good shots and good memories and come here as defending, I don't put pressure on myself to do exact same shot or result as last year.

I'm more focused on how -- like I said, how to make birdies out here. I know there is a lot of good golfer this year. The young generation playing really good golf. I'm getting old. I'm going to be 33.

Q. You're not old.

JASMINE SUWANNAPURA: I've been here on the LPGA Tour since 17-ish, 18. Went to Q-School, play Epson for one year, and I'm here since then. Broke my back in 2016 and I'm still here walking, play golf. It's been a while and I see a lot of things, a lot of good player.

You know, I feel like this year they come out very strong. You see there is 25 different winners this year, and they're all good golfer. You know, like all I can do is my best and hopefully it's good enough. (Smiling.)

Golf is hard and what I've been through all year has been tough, and I just trying to find a way to play golf and enjoy it as much as I can.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much.

JASMINE SUWANNAPURA: Thank you.

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