

NW Arkansas Championship

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Rogers, Arkansas, USA

Pinnacle Country Club

Maria Jose Marin

Press Conference



Walmart
NW ARKANSAS
CHAMPIONSHIP
PRESENTED BY **P&G**

THE MODERATOR: All right, here with Maria ahead of the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship Presented by P&G. First things first, talk about how excited you are to tee it up this week in Arkansas.

MARIA JOSE MARIN: I'm really, really excited. I got to play here last year and, I mean, ever since then I wanted to play it again.

It's great to play in front of kind of like a home crowd, for me my second home now. Yeah, really, really excited, and of course excited to have my dad also on the bag. He came all the way from Colombia to caddie for me. It's going to be a good week.

Q. How cool is it to experience that with your dad, all these Arkansas fans out here, this great community? How nice is it to share that moment with him?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: Yeah, it's pretty special to get to share these moments with my dad. He had the opportunity to caddie for me in some of the events that I made this year for the U.S. Open, Amundi, so all those experiences, it's amazing.

He knows me. I trust him. Yeah, we have some laughs on the course, too. But it's really good. To do it in front of the Razorback Nation is also amazing, to get to represent my university and team and of course my country.

Q. And you play in the pro-am today; had a practice round yesterday. Not sure if you played with anyone, any Razorbacks as well. Have you been able to reach out to any players and get some advice from them, what it's like to be on the LPGA Tour?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: I have contact with Gaby, Maria, with Brooke Matthews. They all tell me what it's like to be in the LPGA be to be in the bigger leagues. Of course they tell me that this opportunity, it's one-of-a-kind opportunity, so I just have to go at it, and, yeah, just be myself, play my game, and have fun.

It's definitely a fun week.

Q. And then what are you most looking forward to this week? All those things that you mentioned. Is there one that stands out?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: I think it was really, really fun and it kind of gave my goosebumps walking up 17 and getting to call the Hogs. I think that's one of the loudest in all the LPGA, so really looking forward to that and calling the Hogs and to play really good the hole.

Q. You said you saw spots today on the eighth green. Tell us about that a little bit.

MARIA JOSE MARIN: Oh, just the heat outside, it's pretty extreme I can say. Definitely last week it was a little bit cooler than it is this week. So I guess I failed a little on the hydration.

Yeah, I just know I have to keep hydrated on the course and eat something to not let that happen again.

Q. Maria, you're one of quite a few Razorbacks that are competing in the tournament this week. How does it feel to get to represent the school even though you're still in school yourself?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: It's a pretty big opportunity I get. I'm grateful of Walmart and P&G for giving me opportunity to play the tournament. To represent my university is always going to be an honor. I'm really looking forward to doing it the best way that I can. Yeah, just putting the red on top of the leaderboard if I can.

Q. So you played in it quite a few different LPGA tournaments now. Are you starting to feel like a pro now?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: I think that I still have to work on some things to be a pro. I still have, if I can say two years; I'm starting my junior year at to the university.

So I still have those two years to learn a lot from this week and from other opportunities that I wish I can have in the LPGA.



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I'm starting to feel a little bit more comfortable of course teeing it up in my I can say fourth, fifth event on the LPGA. It's not the same as teeing it up in the first one, so I'm getting used to the good nerves and I love it.

Q. I don't know what your relationship was like with Stacy Lewis, but she announced her retirement today. Did you not know that?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: I didn't know that.

Q. Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't want to be the first one to tell you. Initial reaction then?

MARIA JOSE MARIN: Shocked. I've seen Stacy since I was a little kid. At first I didn't know she went to Arkansas, like in all my recruiting process, but I always looked forward to her game. You always saw her on TV, winning in the big stages, being a really big name now on the LPGA.

So I mean, her retiring, it's really sad, but also I wish her nothing but the best. Of course, it's been a wild career.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

MARIA JOSE MARIN: Thank you.

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