

NW Arkansas Championship

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Rogers, Arkansas, USA

Pinnacle Country Club

Brooke Matthews

Press Conference



Walmart
NW ARKANSAS
CHAMPIONSHIP
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MATT JESUS: All right, very pleased to be joined by Rogers' own Brooke Matthews. Brooke, as this tournament enters its 20th year, just want to start obviously grew up in the area. We talked a little bit off camera. You think you've been here every single iteration. What's it been like to see this tournament as a fan and now as a player?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, it's crazy. 20 years. So the first one was seven or eight years old, so this tournament is kind of like just a big part of my life at this point. Been coming here more years than I haven't.

Yeah, it's been really cool to see how the tournament has grown and how it's become a fan favorite and a favorite Tour stop of the players, too. It's just one that everybody really looks forward to coming back to every year.

MATT JESUS: Probably had a pretty busy schedule the last couple days with couple appearances. What's it been like being the local celebrity this week?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, definitely busier than a normal tournament week, which is a good thing. It's been hectic. It's not something I'm typically used to on my week to week. Usually I'm a little bit more under the radar, which is fine with me.

But, yeah, I get a little bit different of a taste of it this week. Everybody is so supportive. I love this community. Any time someone asks me to do something for this event it means a lot to me. To be able to be a representative of it is really cool.

MATT JESUS: Speaking of support, obviously a lot of love for the Razorbacks in this area. Just what's that support like, especially on the 16th hole?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: It's great. The hog call on 17 is kind of -- yeah, it's kind of the one the cool traditions we have here. It's always funny when you're paired with somebody who doesn't know what the Razorbacks are and they're like, what is going on? Every once in a while you'll

get them to join it on it.

But we'll see what this week brings. Yeah, it's cool. We don't have a big professional sports presence in Arkansas, so everyone is all in on them and it's really cool to be able to support them.

MATT JESUS: And bringing it back to this course, obviously got to play this course probably quite a few times. What are some of the key intricacies of this course?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, I've played this course a lot. Honestly we been coming here 20 years. Everyone has played this course a lot at this point. I don't know if I have the home field advantage anymore.

But yeah, I mean, it's a course that there is a little bit of everything. Some holes you can bomb it on. A lot of placement holes. Some subtleties in the greens.

But it's kind of fairways and greens. I feel like I say that at every presser though. If you hit the fairways and greens, doesn't matter what course you're at, you're probably looking pretty good.

MATT JESUS: Coming off a T6 finish at FM Championship, how nice was it to get a result like that and how to you carry that momentum into this week?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, it was great. I kind of struggled this year just flat out I'll say it, so it was nice. Been working really hard and hadn't seen any results. To get a good finish at Boston felt really nice.

Definitely different golf course that week to this week. I'm hitting it better, yeah. Don't know what's going to happen this week, but I like the way my game is trending no matter how it goes.

So, yeah, we'll see. Hopefully I can bring some good stuff this week. I'm going to do my best, but regardless I'm going to enjoy the energy that's out there.

MATT JESUS: One more follow up. Anything in particular about your game you think is working really well?



BROOKE MATTHEWS: Finally hitting my irons a little better. I think that's where I was kind of struggling earlier in the year.

I've always have driven it pretty well. My putting was better this year than it was last year. So hitting a few more greens and making a few less bogeys and it'll take you a long way.

Q. Brooke, you had an awesome career at University of Arkansas. How important was that time playing for the Hogs that helped you become professional?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, it's been huge. I'm really lucky. I might be biased, but I think I had the best coaches in the world in Shauna and Mike. Simply put, I wouldn't be where I am today without them. They've helped me so much in my golf career and also in my life and growing up.

The facilities that they practice at, having the opportunity I got to play this event twice when I was in college, so kind of got a taste of professional life before I was kind of even on the scene.

And so, yeah, I have a lot it to thank them for everything they've done for me. Shauna texted me this week. She's like, what can I do for you this week? I'm like, you're really busy. What can I do for you, too?

They're such important people in my life and I can't thank them more.

Q. You know this course well. What's your thoughts on being part of the first group to go tomorrow?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: I know. Yeah, I was kind of surprised when I saw it. I guess we're not going to have to wait. We're going to be up and at 'em tomorrow. Fresh greens, no one in front of me. Could be worse. Yeah, let's do it.

Q. One question. You talked about it a little bit already, the community, very familiar with Northwest Arkansas. Everybody I talk to this week says this is one of their favorite stops on the Tour. What is it about northwest Arkansas that makes it a good stop on the Tour?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: It's cool. First of all, when some of the Tour hears we're going Arkansas they're like, where is Arkansas? They have no idea what to expect. I think they get here and they're blown away.

Yeah, it's really great. The community really embraces this event. We have so many people in the neighborhood and

out of the neighborhood hosting players so it becomes a big family vibe this week.

Also just the events around the tournament, The Bite and Fassi's Friends and Shauna's Choose Confidence For Kids. Even if you don't know about golf, there is something for everybody, which I think makes this event unique.

Q. This is a follow along what you just said particularly with Shauna and the Kids Confidence program. As an alum, you're almost like an ambassador to the next generation. Shauna's Kids Confidence Program bringing kids in and for you guys calling the Hogs, what does it mean to you guys as alum of Arkansas to introduce the game of golf to potentially the next generation here in Northwest Arkansas.

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, it's huge. We want to grow the game as much as we can. It's going to be the first year of my junior event in Bella Vista in a couple weeks. I'm really excited about that.

I think it's so important to keep growing the game. It's a lot more than just making it to the Tour or making it to college. Like it's a lifelong game. It teaches you so many life skills.

My favorite thing about golf is it's given me the people I'm closest to. All my best friends I've met through golf. It's so much more than being the best and making it to No. 1 in the world. There is just something for everybody when it comes to golf.

Q. In terms of this tournament as the 20th year, Rogers native, this tournament along with the city has grown with each other. You probably hear from your fellow players when they come here, this restaurant is new, this building is new. Talk about when you were volunteering when you were younger what the tournament was and kind of now what the tournament is now.

BROOKE MATTHEWS: I mean, it's just kind of exploded, right? I feel that way when I go on the road for four weeks and I come back and the airport looks different, there is a new restaurant, there is a new like giant building that I've never seen before.

It's really cool to see the area growing, and with that the tournament grows, too. There is a lot more support and a lot more volunteers and people that want to get involved with the event and make it something big for everybody.

And so, yeah, it's really cool. Everybody when they come back they're like, that wasn't there. There is a roundabout



here. I'm like, yeah, I know. I even feel like that week to week. I can't imagine coming back here once a year.

MATT JESUS: One more. Obviously the Rogers community really rallies and their brands and properties here. You have two on your chest, Stephens and Tyson. How important is that to have the majors Arkansas establishments?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, it's been really big, I mean, in my career. It's really great to be able to represent companies, one, from Arkansas, and, two, that align with my values really well.

It's important. Hopefully they align with my -- hopefully I'm a good representation of them too is I guess what I'm trying to say. Everyone that I work with from these companies, they've been just awesome.

I get to play with the Tyson people today in the pro-am so I am looking forward to that. And just building the relationships is great. I'm so grateful for them. They make this dream possible for me.

MATT JESUS: I lied. I have one more. Just obviously home game for you. What kind of support are you looking at this week? Mom, dad, grandparents, family and friends?

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Yeah, definitely a lot of family and I think a lot of friends and probably a lot of my mom's friends. (Laughter.)

Yeah, it's definitely different. It does make me a little more nervous if I'm being completely honest. It's also cool. It's a unique opportunity. Not very many people on Tour get to have a home game. A lot comes with it but at the same time I to embrace it and make it an opportunity for me to grow.

MATT JESUS: Thank you so much, Brooke. Best of luck this week.

BROOKE MATTHEWS: Thank you.

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