

The Amundi Evian Championship

Wednesday, 20 July 2022

Evian-les-Bains, France

Evian Resort Golf Club

Celine Boutier

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much and welcome back to the media center here at the 2022 Amundi Evian Championship. Happy to be joined by our lead French player, Celine Boutier. Hello, Celine. Welcome back to Evian. You've now had three days to see the course here. How are you feeling?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I'm feeling good. Very happy to be here. Looking forward to getting the tournament started.

Q. How was the pro-am? I know you only had nine holes, but you've had couple days to see the course. How is it looking out there as we get ready for this week of competition?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it was nice to be able to get out today. We had a little bit of rain this morning, so it was a little bit of a softer feel around the greens, definitely around the fairways, not as much roll.

I think we'll have similar conditions tomorrow with the rain expected this afternoon, so it'll be very similar conditions.

And it was great to be able to go out there and have a fun group, so it was overall a pretty good day.

Q. I know you took a few weeks off now. When did you come to France and how was your preparation for this event?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I got here I guess to France last Wednesday or Thursday, so I had few days at home before heading here. It was just nice to be able to relax for a little bit before coming here.

Obviously I've come here for a few years now so I know the course, but it's nice to have a few days to adjust and just remind yourself where to hit the ball and where not to hit the ball.

Yeah, it's been good to adjust a little bit, and ready to go.

Q. This is your sixth time playing here, fourth time as a professional, twice as an amateur. Not too often I don't think necessarily you get to play at home in

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France anymore. What are some of your best memories of getting to play in your home country and do you get to play in front of your family this week?

CELINE BOUTIER: So, yes, my family is here. My parents and my sister are here. I don't really get to come back that much, but definitely my highlight would be my win at the French Open last year, which was definitely a special week for me.

Other than that, I think my first year playing here in 2014 when I was still an amateur was special because it was the first time I got to play Evian and the major, just seeing everybody, just like the professionals, the ones you look up to on TV. It was definitely a cool experience.

And I got to play the practice rounds with Suzann Pettersen, and she was the defending champ that year and it was my first time playing at Evian, so that was surreal.

Q. What was that like playing at that age with Suzann, who I am sure is someone as a European player you look up to, and who are some of those names you've looked up that you've been able to play with here?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I was definitely star struck for a few holes. I was actually making the turn, I was on No. 6 tee and I just had tee'd off and I saw her walking towards the tee. I wasn't sure if I should keep going or if I should just wait for her.

I just figured I would wait and she would probably not want to play with me, but she asked if she could join, so I was definitely star struck for a few holes.

But she was really nice, and that was definitely a highlight of my week. I think it was like a Monday or Tuesday, so I was like, if this happens so early, what else can happen here?

Yeah, it's just so great just to be able to -- I remember watching on TV and I was looking up to Michelle Wie a lot, and I remember also watching the year where Annika retired here. So it's definitely a lot of memories.

Q. And to think now, I mean, you're likely to be on

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the Solheim Cup team and Suzann will be your captain.

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it's unreal.

Q. When you were younger Celine thinking back being scared of her, and now she's...

CELINE BOUTIER: I'm still scared of her.

Q. But now she's a colleague.

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it's very hard to describe just because -- I mean, I think the first few times you're just star struck because you realize they're real people. But then she's really -- I mean, most of players are really nice, friendly and very open, so you just definitely learn to be more comfortable around them.

But, yeah.

Q. Every major adds pressure to your competition. How much added pressure do you feel playing a major in your home country, and how does it compare to an American playing in the U.S. Open or the U.K. players playing in the AIG Women's Open? What sort of pressure do you feel as a French player here?

CELINE BOUTIER: I definitely feel a little bit more added pressure, but also because I want to perform well and it means a lot more to me, and so obviously if it means more you're going to have a little bit more pressure I think.

Not necessarily think it's a bad thing, it's just something you have to learn, and especially I think the more you experience it the better you will be able to handle it.

So now it's been like six times, like you said. I hope I've learned and I can do better. It's definitely not a course I've really performed well in the past, so I'm hoping that I can change that.

But it's definitely a little bit more -- a little bit different than other weeks for sure.

Q. Not to put pressure on you, but no French woman has ever taken this title. Would that be pretty cool to be the first?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it definitely would. It's definitely on top of my list.

But honestly, I feel like the best way for me to perform is not to think about it too much; just really take it one day at a time and see.

It's so hard to win out here, so if I have at least chance it

would already be nice. If I can make it happen it would be obviously the ultimate dream. I'm trying not to get too much ahead of myself.

Q. Since we were here last year you've won on the LPGA Tour. You won in October at the ShopRite LPGA Classic. How do you feel your game is as you head into the major? Do you feel prepared to get the ball going tomorrow?

CELINE BOUTIER: I think so. I'm just coming off three weeks off so I've been able to rest a little bit, get my game ready. It's long season, so you definitely want to be careful with how you manage your schedule.

But I think that the few weeks have been helping me to just be ready physically, mentally, and, yeah, I'm excited to get the tournament started tomorrow.

Q. Anything specific you've been working on in your game lately, or just practicing?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I mean, I've been working on every part of my game. I think on this course you definitely need everything.

But I think I've also tried to practice a little bit more on uneven lies, because this course is kind of hilly and you don't really have a flat lie out here unless you're on the tee.

So I've definitely tried to experience it a little bit more and get more comfortable with hitting off uneven lies.

Q. Just kind of curious, you mentioned taking that time off. It's a very long season. How important is that conservation of energy within this stretch of major golf with kind of the four majors pretty much back to back to back?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it's really important. I think when you're setting up your schedule you don't realize how tired you're going to be and you want to play in everything because it looks so exciting. You feel like the more you play the more chances you'll have.

But I definitely felt like after maybe middle of May or beginning of June I really felt like I was tired every day. It's not something that's really fun. When you're trying to perform obviously try not to think about how tired you are, but it has an effect on your game.

I definitely feel like the past three weeks have been great because I got to relax a little bit and I feel like brand new person.

Q. I'm asking a fun question of everyone. What's your favorite thing to eat when you're over here. I guess I'll ask, you're based in the States now; you

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live in Texas. When you're able to come home, what's the first thing you want to have when you come over? To eat.

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I think the first thing obviously -- it's hard. There is so many options. If I have to pick one, I would probably say the bread.

Q. Yes.

CELINE BOUTIER: Because the pastries and stuff, it's really good. You can of find some in America; the bread that's the same is very difficult.

Q. Do you put butter on it or just bread?

CELINE BOUTIER: I do put butter or I eat with cheese.

THE MODERATOR: I knew I liked you for a reason.

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