

The Amundi Evian Championship

Wednesday, 10 July 2024

Evian-les-Bains, France

Evian Resort Golf Club

Celine Boutier

Franck Riboud

Jacques Bungert

Press Conference



Having the National Anthem, everybody cheering, it was definitely emotional and exceeded all my expectations.

Q. Now to be coming into this championship as yet another Olympian. You just at Golf National we know. What does it mean going into this major knowing that's on the horizon for you?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I think it's going to be a very similar week in terms of being able to play such a big tournament at home. I think very different courses. But I think I'm just trying to focus on the challenge that I have at hand, which is a big challenge this week.

So just trying to focus on that and then I'll be able to move on and focus on the Olympics.

Q. Jacques, you were the 18 green watching Celine come in in that grouping. To be able to have a French defending champion, what does that mean to you?

JACQUES BUNGERT: A lot emotion. Franck and I were sharing that emotion. We didn't think that way because we never thought about ourself as being a French tournament. We are in France, but we're an international tournament and always felt that way.

Every year the journalists were asking what about the French player winning here. We were always saying the same thing: Whatever player is a great champion.

But to have for once - and she's 30 as well as we are - and Celine winning here at home a major was really a great emotion.

But I think Franck can talk about it as well, because he was really moved. It's true that this ritual of the flag and the National Anthem really took a special part of our heart because we are French.

FRANCK RIBOUD: To answer your question, it's not only a French winner, it's Celine. French, okay, it's nice. But it's Celine. Why I'm saying that is perhaps you even don't know, but I knew Celine when she was a kid because my son who's younger than you as you know was in the same club when he was, I don't know, six or eight years old.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you everyone. Pleased to be joined by the defending champion, Celine Boutier. I would like to kick things off with Celine. You had a tremendous 2023 highlighted by a win here at the Amundi Evian Championship.

To return a year later as defending champion, what does it mean to you to reflect on what the year has been since you've been able to take home this trophy?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it's a little bit bittersweet. Obviously such an amazing memory for me, and coming back is always bringing those memories back, so it's always good feelings.

Also a little bit sad it's already been a year and I have to give the trophy back. So that's the sad part.

Very excited to be here. The course is looking very challenging this year. Maybe a little bit more than last year also. I think it's going to be a tough defense of title, but really excited to get started.

Q. In general when you think about last year's competition, what are some of the memories or highlights that stick out to you the most?

CELINE BOUTIER: From last year?

Q. Last year, yes.

CELINE BOUTIER: Obviously --

Q. At this event I mean.

CELINE BOUTIER: My favorite memory is probably the closing ceremony and the prize giving ceremony on 18, being able to hold the trophy. It was actually my first time actually holding it. It was a lot heavier than I expected but it was good.



So I saw you with your father when it was raining and this and the quality of the ground was not so good. She was always there. For me, Celine is just the result of an incredible strength and work session with the family.

And you said it even yourself, that you are very good player, but there are other players with more talent than you, which mean that when you work you succeed, which is not always true in golf.

Second thing is we invite Celine a lot of time to play in the tournament. We can say that was not really successful many time. Suddenly, she won.

That is the reason why for me that was very emotional moment. Really emotional moment.

Q. Celine, when you think back to that moment on the 18th green, how powerful was that just to walk up, hear your name shouted, have the flag drop down, and everybody singing the National Anthem? Speak to the power of that moment and what it meant to your career at that point?

CELINE BOUTIER: It definitely changed my career. I feel like at that point I had won maybe twice or three time on tour, nothing really big.

Obviously was wanting to win a major for quite sometime, but the fact that this happened here was just beyond anything I could have expected.

Just watching the tournament growing up obviously you imagine yourself winning it, you know how great it would be.

Honestly just exceeded any expectations I had. Like they described, it was just so powerful just having everybody just cheering for you and being so happy for you. Being able to share that with so many people was something I didn't expect.

When I look back to the video that they played on the 18th green yesterday, I just had to hold back my tears. Still so emotional.

Q. We have another special event happening in a few weeks you get to be a part of now. What has that meant to you to represent France not only globally on the LPGA Tour, but at the Olympics and how excited are you to do it at home?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it's hard to describe. Definitely always an honor to represent your country. I think I try to represent week in and week out on the tour, but it's something different when you have the flag on your shirt and hat.

Almost feels like a team event because you feel like all the athletes are part of a team together and you're representing the whole country.

So it's something very special. Something I cherished a lot as an amateur. So having that opportunity again as a professional is very rare and don't take for granted.

Very excited to also showcase the French golf course, French players, and just the city in general for the Olympics. Hope everybody will be a great time.

Q. Celine, you mentioned some of this. We were talking about how special and unique this event is being the only major outside of United States and Great Britain and Ireland, no? Growing up what are your memories of this event and of course how big it was for you to win last year?

CELINE BOUTIER: I remember watching it when it wasn't a major. When I was growing up it was the Evian Masters in July and I would always watch it on TV. We had French National Championships at the same time so I was never able to do in the summer because we had tournaments. But I would always watch it. I just loved it because of the pink mostly. (Smiling.)

And then just having the best players. Just used to idolize Paula Creamer and Michelle Wie, and Paula won here when I was still a teenager.

So just really made me dream. It was just my goal one day I just want to be there. I was lucky enough to have an invite in 2014 as an amateur. That was my first time actually sitting foot in Evian, and I was just taken aback by the beauty of the environment and the golf course, and also how hot it was.

Definitely took me a few years to actually feel comfortable on this golf course. It's hard to -- even TV doesn't do justice how tough this course is. It's very difficult from tee-to-green. So you have to be really accurate and very good to be able to score and perform.

THE MODERATOR: With that, there are plenty of questions in French. We can get started here.

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