

The Amundi Evian Championship

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Evian-les-Bains, France

Evian Resort Golf Club

Lottie Woad

Natasha Andermahr

Franck Riboud

Jacques Bungert

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, very pleased to be joined to welcome to the stage chairman of the Amundi Evian Championship Franck Riboud, vice chairman of the Amundi Evian Championship Jacques Bungert.

JACQUES BUNGERT: Welcome.

THE MODERATOR: And low am from last year and now professional on our Tour, Lottie Woad.

Lottie, about a year now since you won KPMG, the Irish Open, and now earned your 20th LEAP point here at the Amundi Evian Championship. What did you think when you return to this course and area?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, it's great. It's nice to come back somewhere that I played before this year. This is a first for me this year. Every course I played so far has been new obviously, so nice to come back somewhere familiar.

Played this event for two years and really like the course and the area is amazing. The whole family is with me this week, sister concluded. Been really fun so far.

Q. You're about a year removed now from your amateur status, fully on our Tour. How do you feel like a different golfer compared to amateur Lottie?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I was talking with my coach actually. It feels like the longest year probably ever. I was just trying to look back on once I got my card here last year, I think I just matured, had more experiences, which obviously is helpful. Been in a lot more final groups and stuff like that.

So I think just experience playing in those situations and just kind of confidence in myself under pressure is



definitely improved.

Q. Few changes to the golf course this year, including two new bunkers on 18. What have you made of those changes?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, definitely makes that tee shot pretty tight. It was tight already. Yeah, that one off the tee is definitely in play. The layup one, I mean, you shouldn't be going in it, but you never know. Just got to keep off the left side off the tee.

Q. Is there an extra charge for you, maybe some excitement and happiness getting to spend the next couple weeks in Europe?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I'm really excited. I hadn't been home since January until last week. Went home for a week. So that was really nice. Yeah, European golf is what I've grown up playing, so these types of courses I'm used to playing with links golf too with the AIG.

Yeah, it's going to be really fun. And I'll have my family at those events too, which I don't often get in U.S., and some friends and people from my golf club as well.

Q. Just last one from me: Kiara Romero is 19 LEAP points. Need to make the cut in order to get her 20th. Could be the second obviously after you. Just what kind of advice di you have for her?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I think you've got to try and put it out of your mind as much as possible. I know it's definitely difficult. I was definitely thinking about it at times last week.

But, I mean, I am pretty sure she's going to get it at some point and that's what I told myself as well. You try not to put too much pressure on this week being the week.

Q. This is the place where you made the decision to turn pro. What do you remember about the decision and what things were a factor for you?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I remember it being pretty easy. I think as soon as I got my point I knew I was going to turn pro. Then yeah, announced the next day.

I kind of always envisioned as soon as I got my points I



would take it.

Q. There is Kiara, and then there is three players here this week that are pretty close to being able to make that same decision. What would be your advice to them?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I think it's great. I know them all pretty well. We played college golf together, amateur golf. They're all amazing players.

So I think it's, again, thinking in the long run they have plenty of time to pick up the points and not put pressure on this being the week to get one or two points.

I tried to -- the final weekend last year I was comfortably inside the top 25 and I was trying to think of finishing better than 25. Not thinking, oh, let's finish top 25. I was trying to win it in the end.

I think trying to think above what the minimum was to get those points. I think Kiara is probably not thinking about making the cut. She's probably thinking about doing a lot better than that.

Q. I know your sister doesn't get to come out much. How has Millie found the Amundi Evian Championship so far?

LOTTIE WOAD: She's found it very hot. She doesn't like the heat. She hasn't been here yet. The practice days were her days that she was allowed to not come, so she's been hanging out seeing all the sites. They went to Switzerland yesterday, so tomorrow she'll be here and she's not too pleased about my 7:30 tee time. But she'll be here.

Q. Speaking of the heat, I know you're tradition on course with your caddie is to chew on some gummi candy at times. Do you have to make adjustments for that with the heat?

LOTTIE WOAD: I don't know. They might be pretty melted, I think we have a -- he's got a packet that he went to the store to get yesterday. I mean, we plan on doing the same again. Hopefully get a few of them.

Q. How much of a relief is it to come to a property and not have to study every crevice and every nook to make sure you're in the right positions?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, it's great. Obviously there was a few changes, but nothing too drastic. It was just nice in the practice round. You can relax a little bit more than you usually can and not have to overdo stuff in the heat.

Played nine and nine and the pro-am today, so it's definitely a bit more relaxed.

Q. Huge tournament this week, but another huge tournament going on is, of course, the World Cup. I saw you in town rock I don't remember on England Harry Kane shirt. What do you make of their chances and will you be staying up on Saturday night to watch it?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I definitely got some bad looks by the French wearing that shirt. Yeah, depends on my tee time on the weekend, but yeah, I could see an England-France final, yeah.

Q. Could be.

FRANCK RIBOUD: I hope.

Q. Just on this place as a whole, Evian is stunning of course. Not just the golf course, but the town, the lake. What is your favorite thing about Evian?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah it's great. It's so nice. You can just walk everywhere. We're staying at an airbnb and we'll go back and you can walk out to dinner, go in the lake. Pretty sure we've been getting ice cream every night and seen most people doing that. So it's nice. Definitely feels more like home than what I'm playing in the U.S.

Q. Just as much time as you've had to digest your first year, coming up on another a potentially huge milestone, your first Solheim Cup coming up in a few weeks. Qualification ends after AIG. How excited and how much are you looking forward to that event?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, very excited. Obviously always wanted to play in the Solheim Cup. This one being in Europe I think definitely was extra motivation to have my debut here.

So, yeah, really looking forward to it. Yeah, my family will obviously come if I get in. Yeah, it will be really fun.

THE MODERATOR: Lottie, thank you for your time.

LOTTIE WOAD: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Now I'd like to welcome on stage Natasha Andermahr, head of communications for the Amundi. Franck, I'll start with you. This tournament has been around for more than 30 years. The development of women's golf, support of young talent, and a strong commitment to sustainability. As it enters the 32nd playing of this major championship and tournament, what are you looking forward to next the milestones?

FRANCK RIBOUD: First of all, I'm looking to the back and I'm pretty old. 32 years old at least. We still have the same vision for this tournament. It's to develop the

game of ladies golf. Could be through this tournament, could be through the amateurs, as we just see with Lottie.

That's exactly what we expect. And also with what we call in our -- the galaxy, the Kids Cup, Junior Cup, showcase, and so on and on. So we will continue to support all these program. We find and solve these program with the tournament, and it's our priority. So the next following years will be exactly the same.

Talking about the golf course, as we just hear, we have some little modification, but we have -- we ask the two architects to do a book for the next ten years. Not talking about money, talking about wow effect, talk about improving the game of golf, and, year after year we will decide if we can do that, if we do this, if we do that, depending the money we have obviously.

So it's a very -- it's not a vision, it's a clear strategy. We know exactly what we are doing and what we built in the past and we will continue like that.

And the best example, perhaps you don't know because it's a very European-French subject, but the French Open was quit in difficulty, say it this way, this year. And the French Federation and I think the LET, everybody, ask us to basically save the French Open.

We just transform the Jabra tournament within the Jabra Open. We increase the prize money. We negotiate with the LET and the LPGA for next year to have during the French Open three spot to allow the player to play the Amundi Evian Championship.

We still have one spot for the British. The French Federation will create an under-18 tournament, the famous one, which exist already, and we will offer three spot from this amateur under-18 European tournament to play the French Open and perhaps to play the Amundi.

This is always the same idea how to build ladies golf, because that's our plan how to help, how to help these ladies to make their money, do their job in a very nice ambience.

I'm very pleased to listen to Lottie speaking about the small village, speaking about dinners. It must stay as a very friendly family tournament. Even if we are one of the fifth bigger tournaments.

So we love the sports side, but we really want to bring a quality of life for the players.

Q. For Jacques, in your view what makes this truly unique among the major championships, and how do you continue year after year to bring together the players, partners, staff, volunteers, and especially the fans for a shared vision?

JACQUES BUNGERT: I think everything is in the word that Lottie used, which is home, feeling home. And what we try and the vision of Franck, his father with him when they started it, and I think we been following this path, these genetics which is how to make sure that everybody here, you the media, the sponsors, the players, everybody feels home, and feels at home.

And for instance yesterday evening remember we had a soccer match for the caddie which started in '98? Now we are getting old so we don't play soccer anymore. The '98 players from France are really also now not playing anymore, but what we did for instance yesterday was caddies only in a way, but some players, in the academy barbecue, and I think it's going to become another ritual. It's part of the game and the philosophy of this tournament.

To that extent, feeling as a family is important. Franck was mentioning the path that we been trying to build with the galaxy, what we call the galaxy. It's a very interesting example.

The fact that Lottie became pro in a way here being an amateur is very interesting. If you considering Pauline Roussin who really played the Kids Cup here and is playing the major; Haeran Ryu who won the KPMG and who won the College Cup which is the Junior Cup here in 2015.

It's exactly what embodies and symbolizes what we're trying to do.

So, yes. And yesterday -- to finish on that, Craig Kessler, who's the commissioner of the LPGA, was here for the first time and say it's astounding. And so this is what we are trying to build and keep as Franck said, the family spirit to make everybody feel at home.

Q. For Natasha, for the first time this year all six members of Team Amundi are playing and competing at this major championship. Does this represent a new milestone in Amundi's commitment to women's golf, and more broadly how does this partnership with the Amundi Evian Championship Amundi's support long strategy for women's sports?

NATASHA ANDERMAHR: Before answering to the question, so just few words of our long time partnership with Amundi Championship. Amundi became a title partner of this tournament in '20 or '21, and we are proud to say we are now committed through 2030. The Amundi is one of the most prestigious events in women's golf worldwide. For Amundi, it's a tremendous platform. It gives our brand a strong visibility among golf fans, particularly in Europe, in Asia, where we sell more than 200 millions clients with our (indiscernible) solutions.



And another point I would like also to raise is the prize money. Supporting the development of women's golf and helping to reduce the gap between the men's and women's sport is one of our commitments when we came on board in 2021. The prize money was \$4.5 million; five years later, it has more than doubled, reaching \$9.1 million. We are proud to have played a part in this progress.

Concerning the Amundi golf team as you mentioned, we are unveiling the third generation with six talented young players this year. So Alexandra Foersterling, Sara Kouskova, Nastasia Nadaud, Mimi Rhodes, Sayaka Takahashi, and Lauren Walsh.

All of them had a strong start to this season, so special mention goes to Sayaka, who has already claimed two wins in Japan this year. As you mentioned, we are thrilled to have all here.

So all will be competing in Amundi Evian Championship this week and of course five by qualification, Sayaka by invitation, and we are -- we will be cheering them on every step of the way. It's very satisfying for us. And of course we wish them every success. It's a symbolization to our commitment to help them to a better known and to have this kind of opportunity.

Q. Everybody is talking about the momentum in women's sports.

NATASHA ANDERMAHR: Yeah.

Q. Women's football, women's basketball, and women's golf. You've been investing in women's golf for a while. You've been supporting women's golf for 32 years, as we said. How do you see this momentum happening and do you think it was meant to happen?

NATASHA ANDERMAHR: Honestly, as I mentioned, the fact that the prize money has more than doubled is a first step. It's a concrete example of the good evolution to raise women's sports. And you take a part of the visibility also of the women's sport, and it's something you need to continue and we need also in our part to continue to support this, women's sport. That's why you have also decided to renew our partnership with Evian and the fact that we work very present team.

Q. With your 32 years of experience supporting women's golf, how do you see this momentum? You mentioned Craig Kessler. How do you feel about what they're doing right now?

JACQUES BUNGERT: We can mention also Tom is in the room. Tom joined as commissioner of the LET. It's great to have these people here for the first time.

FRANCK RIBOUD: The first thing is it's very fashionable to support ladies golf. I love it. We started 32 years ago in this small town called Evian, which is not a golf territory. France is not a golf territory. We are a soccer country. You will see. But we are not a golf country.

The French Federation tried to do it. When we decide 32 years ago to support ladies golf that was very simply because that was fitting with the image of the Evian brand and the positioning of the Evian brand.

Also because sometimes you take decision not because it's a strategic one. You take decision because you are impact by your people, by your team around you. At this time we have a golf manager who was a lady, very young called Valerie Pamard, belonging to the French team. She was I think just coming from UCLA and she was 24 years old.

She explained to us, no, no, we have to develop a ladies golf. On the other side there was a tournament at this time very well-known in Europe called the ABC Cup. Because of laws making the alcohol product not allowed to continue to support sport, they finish the tournament. Let's say we start the tournament at this time and we ask advice to them.

Now talking about the prize money, because I'm very happy to listen to Natasha, because one day we will have to renegotiate a new contract. I think we have to be careful. Perhaps that will surprise you, because normally you have to say okay, fine. We have somebody to help us and we will continue to increase the prize money.

I'm not thinking about this. I do my own job with Jacques. I sign our contract with Amundi. We sign a new ten years contract with Rolex. We have a new sponsor Hyosung. We make the P&L, and we can see, okay, fine, the next five, ten years we can assume a 9.1. I decide to put the .1, just to get the question.

We can stop at nine. We can do 9.2. Just to understand we are not in this competition. 9.1, okay. Means nothing. But we know Jacques and myself that we can support that by ourself. We are not a tournament which can look behind and say, could you help us, because your men tournament will help us to pay.

We don't have that. We are alone. We have Amundi, Rolex. But if I negotiate -- if I want to push prize money to achieve the target you fix, we have to be around 12 or 13. I'm not sure you will agree, because it's four million more. Four million more. We have four big sponsors; it's one each. Okay?

Honestly, the economics are not working and I said that to you many years ago. It's because of you or the television, the media. Until we don't have more media -- and the discussion I have with the LET and the LPGA, if

we find a way to have more media for ladies sport, not only golf, we can ask more because there is an economic demonstration, P&L demonstration.

That's why we push, we push, we push. With where we are with the prize money, thanks to the Evian and Danone and Hyosung and Rolex, okay, we're safe. We know we can control that. And by the way, we are starting a new tournament called the "we will see" Open de France, because we are looking for a sponsor title.

Because the French Open prize money was 330, something like this.

JACQUES BUNGERT: Yes.

FRANCK RIBOUD: This year we push it to 450 if I remember well. I think we can have a target around one million. Because the major are very big. The LPGA prize money are very big. But average prize money on the LET, if I cancel the Amundi, the British that are co-sanctioned, the average is 400, 400, 500.

So there is a big gap in term if egalite, as you said. So we want to work on that subject because we really want to help the LET and the European player, and we want to create this bridge between U.S. and Europe because I think it's a good opportunity for ladies golf.

Even if it is not my job, I will be involve because I love this. So I push.

JACQUES BUNGERT: Thank you.

FRANCK RIBOUD: I love your question.

Q. This is my favorite press conference of the year.

FRANCK RIBOUD: I think people are giving to me the nickname which is say it again.

Q. (In French.)

JACQUES BUNGERT: The question was about Nastasia, who is a French player from a local town here who was invited last year and who did a great season. The question was: Do you feel kind of responsible? Do you think it's thanks to you that she had this great season and great start actually?

The answer: Yes and no. And actually yes. Because first of all, it's our job to give an opportunity to young talented player at a moment in their career, and to this extent, it's more than sports opportunity. It's also the idea that they can then get out of the shadow, and we used the Evian and the Amundi Evian Championship and the galaxy gallon lax see as a window to find sponsors and make a living actually. It's an ecosystem so to speak.

So those opportunities we gave or give is also kind of a push, a help to this extent.

But talking about the wildcards, it's important to understand that we have some wildcards, three of them. But the rest is only criteria. The ANNIKA major awards winner, the Rolex Ranking amateur leader, junior, or the winner of the British or -- all the amateurs, great tournaments in the world.

And we finished by saying that for instance this was the case of Ms. Delon, another French player who won at the British Open Amateur who was not invited but who just by the criteria could play the tournament and decide to play or not to play.

So that's I guess the summary of this question.

Q. What is the situation about Valentine Delon? I thought she would be playing.

FRANCK RIBOUD: Yeah, I think we just answer. She was qualified because she won the British, so the question -- and she decide not because she's also in the French team to play the European Ladies Championship Amateur, and she choose to play the European amateur.

For me, to tell you everything, I have a phone call with Valentine. I love Valentine. She's an incredible young lady. Incredible story. She's playing incredibly well.

She was there to play the Jabra Ladies Open few weeks ago. After two rounds she was in I think if I remember in the top 10 or something like this.

So she played the Kids Cup, Junior Cup, so she's really part of our galaxy, what we call the galaxy. But it's an honor for her to play under the French flag and she was qualified and she decided to play the championship.

So for me the question is more a question that we'll have to ask very, very quickly to the European Golf Association, because I don't understand why in front of a major, a spot to play a major there is an amateur European ladies championship. That is the only question.

I have another question. Are they ready to put it in front of the Ladies British Open? I'm not sure. Okay. So I have nothing against Valentine.

She decide. I already explain to her she will invite to the French Open next year. I have a very tough decision. I said to her exactly what I am thinking to help her, and I will not tell you what I said.

But the question for me is, okay, if we don't move the dates, I will change the criteria, because last year that

was a Spanish one. This year it's a French one. Okay. We can decide to have as a spot the No. 1 and see the players. We'll see.

Because I am built like this. I am not going to continue to deal. If nobody listen to me, I change my mind, I change the criteria. That's it. And we are allowed to like this.

It's stupid.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much for joining us, looking forward to a great week.

JACQUES BUNGERT: Thank you very much.

NATASHA ANDERMAHR: As you know, we totally support Amundi Evian ecosystem system of talent, which is very important, but this year we are excited to launch also a brand new initiative the birdie for charity initiative, which is very important. For every birdie made during the tournament week, Amundi will make a donation for the Thailand Golf Foundation. This organization is dedicated to help underprivileged Thai children access golf from a primary school age. It's a pathway, a program.

And beyond sport, this program gives young people the chance to build confidence, learn values, and open up new opportunities for their future, and I am particularly pleased to share that our donation will be matched by the (indiscernible) Foundation, meaning that contribution will be doubled at the end.

Q. How many players?

NATASHA ANDERMAHR: I hope all players will support this.

JACQUES BUNGERT: Anyway, thank you again. I would like to say it again because it's every year very warmful for us to see you here, because I know it's not easy to travel. I know that the media system is not easy these days. So thank you for being here because you are key to us. You are amplifying a box that is definitely very, very important to us for reasons you know. So thank you.

NATASHA ANDERMAHR: Thank you.

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