

Riviera Maya Open

Wednesday, 21 May 2025

Mayakoba, Quintana Roo, Mexico

El Camaleón Golf Course

Gaby Lopez

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome to the media center at the Mexico Riviera Maya Open at Mayakoba. I'm joined by Gaby Lopez. Obviously very excited for this week to start. Just talk about the month leading up to this and how excited you are for this to be happening now.

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, the first conversations back in November, got the idea of coming back to Mexico; super exciting. I can't believe it's this week already. I am super excited and I'm just really, really proud of how many Mexicans are around this event, you know, kind of pushing the dream to come true.

And letting the girls get inspired by an LPGA in Mexico, that's the truly difference when someone is getting into golf and trying to -- daring their self to dream big. Being right there knowing they want to be one of those players inside the ropes makes all the difference.

Q. There has been a lot of feedback from players, pictures posted on social media. Why this place? Why are you so excited to be here this week and playing at this golf course?

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, Mayakoba is one of the best resorts we have in the country and in the world if I can say it.

But yeah, the think the golf course is unbelievable. We can face such a great challenge off the tee with the wind, with firm greens, and tight fairways.

So I think honestly it's a great prep for even next week for U.S. Open.

So, yeah, I'm just really excited for people to come watch, enjoy, support the amount of Mexicans we have in the field.

Q. Lorena will be coming in after you. She was here yesterday; part of the inauguration ceremony. Can you just summarize if you could what she's meant to you and kind of how she's also been a part of this week happening?

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah. Well, what can I say? Lorena is



more than a mentor. She's a great friend of mine. She keeps being in touch with me, being in touch with all the girls around golf in Mexico.

So being able to have her as an inspiration and all the little kids that didn't get to see her, now they're watching us, and I think we all have the responsibility to give back of all the inspiration we got from her.

Just putting yourself with a great posture, figure, and representing your country with all the amount of pride and honor that we have.

Yeah, she's more than a mentor. She's a great friend. I'm super excited. She is still the same person since day one I met her, very humble. Yeah, just a true woman out here.

Q. And lastly from me, what's it just mean for you to be playing in your home country. We saw some fun pictures of you playing in Lorena's event when you were an amateur, but that was a bit ago. How far do you think you've grown and how excited are you to be playing here this week?

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, played the event, the first time playing an LPGA event it was in Mexico in Bosque Real, Morelia, back in 2010. Then we played the Lorena Ochoa Invitational at my home course in Mexico City.

So to me being able to see that little girl getting their dreams come true and now being a professional athlete, professional LPGA player, have won on Tour, kind of following somehow her steps.

But, yeah, I think playing in Mexico is the biggest blessing. It's a huge responsibility trying to give back to the community and the girls around.

But, yeah, I'm super excited to have the honor to kind of share this food, my country, my community with all the LPGA girls out here.

Q. (Indiscernible.) Obviously done so much to promote the game. Reflect on how special yesterday's clinic was.

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, Girls Golf is a huge program for the U.S. for Mexico with Xuntas as well. It was really fun to see all the little girls. Literally, people from that



program are going to come to the LPGA and play.

We really need to realize the importance of getting in touch with those players, because that's the future stars. Future LPGA players are going to be from that program.

And I'm really happy and really grateful that we have the platform to expand golf in Mexico and so many other countries with Girls Golf. They have impacted more than a million girls all over the world, and they're going for another million more.

Being able to be an ambassador is such an honor and I'm super grateful that I can give back in some little way, and hopefully we can just keep expanding golf in Mexico especially. It's not quite as big as in the U.S., so I would love to have not just one LPGA Tour event, but 20 LPGA Tour events.

I see the Thai girls, Koreans, and the Chinese and I'm so jealous. They all have their community inside the ropes. Okay, one day we're going to have ten plus girls playing at the same time.

Q. (Regarding Lorena.) Talk about how special it was last night and obviously so many of the girls look up to you as well.

GABY LOPEZ: Yeah, I remember perfectly well when I was seven, eight years old. I was running around the golf course in Mexico trying to chase Lorena.

When I was 13, she invited me to her home course and she was currently world No. 1. I spent (indiscernible) with her. At that time I was 13 years old. Just looking at her and just being right next to her, it made me think, I want to be just like you.

My husband says you were so lucky that since you were 13 you knew exactly what you wanted to do the rest of your life. I don't think that's easy for people to find that when you're that young.

So all the energy I put was towards that, and it just accelerates the process, right, when you have so much time and love and energy into the same project.

I think that's it. It's how close can be next to those girls to have the same impact and make them think they can be us one day. They can be in the position we are. Golf is growing so much and it's having so many -- way more opportunities than when I even started on Tour.

We are playing for almost triple the amount of money we used to play. One of the things I really want to state post my career is the important of a woman with her own money and being financially independent. That's the way we're going to take away some of the family violence that we experience in Latin America.

Girls and women need to keep providing for themselves in order to be in a place where they want to be and not because they have to be there. So to me, golf has changed my life and my perspective, and I think that's what I want to keep sharing to all these girls. Keep working for you, not extending the hand or waiting for life to happen.

How can you make something for yourself. Keep building it and keep working hard. Life is not going to be easy, but at least you can make a choice where you want to be and stay because you want not because you have to or you need.

So I think that's probably the biggest message that I want to keep expanding in Mexico. How much you can work for yourself. That keeps you safe.

Q. Thank you. Yesterday in the clinic you were teaching the girls about being brave, holding trophies up, and seeing themselves getting to where they want to go. Can you tell us looking back now at this event, is it the vision you would've expected or has it surpassed...

GABY LOPEZ: It's surpassed, for sure. When I tell all these little girls, hey, I want you to take five minutes of your day and visualize you holding a trophy and being on the golf course and being fearless, I'm giving a clinic to myself. I am also telling myself how to be brave and how to be fearless, because it's super easy out there when things are not going well, how you can get a little wobbly.

This tournament has taught me so much. It's touched my heart in so many different ways. I really hope that this is the first of many years to come and just I know that probably the date is not the best for the full field, but I truly believe that the girls are going to reflect on this decision and hopefully we can get more and more and more top players to come.

Because I'm pretty sure this will turn out one the best and favorite destinations of the Tour.

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