

# Riviera Maya Open

Wednesday, 21 May 2025

Mayakoba, Quintana Roo, Mexico

El Camaleón Golf Course

## Lorena Ochoa

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome everyone. I am very, very honored and pleased to be joined here by Lorena Ochoa at the Mexico Riviera Maya Open at Mayakoba. Lorena, you're acting this week sort of as tournament host, but mostly inspiring all the players here this week.

How excited are you to see the LPGA return to Mexico this year?

LORENA OCHOA: Hello, everybody. I'm happy to be here. Yes, I'm not sure -- this is not only my responsibility as a hostess because we now have many Mexicans playing, which I'm really happy.

But I can tell you it's something special. I know everything that it takes to make a tournament, you know, starting with sponsors, this beautiful place. The golf course is beautiful. You know, the Mexican Golf Federation as well as the LPGA that I love and I feel part of the family forever.

It's nice to get the tournament back in our country. I think for the Mexicans that are playing it's something really big. It could change really the way they see the game. For them to dream and want to become an LPGA member, you know, in the future is something really, really special.

I think it's going to be tough for them. Always playing in your country is difficult. I'm sure they're going to enjoy it and learn a lot from the experience, and then go from there.

So I just want to say that I'm excited. I had a great time today. It was a fun day today. I can't wait to see the results and how the Mexicans do.

**Q. You spoke about the golfers in the field. There are eight this week, more than we have had in a single event before.**

LORENA OCHOA: Uh-huh.

**Q. Do you feel like you inspired that in the Mexican golfers? Do you feel like you're a part of that growth at all?**

LORENA OCHOA: Well, yes, more than anything, I think



we're friends. Hopefully they see me as a friend. They are always calling me and asking for advice and I always pay attention where they are, how are they feeling, do they have any trouble or if I can be any help.

It's nice to have them around because I think you need that. When I first turned professional and started playing on Tour it's just too much to take between traveling, getting to a new course, new place every week and the expenses that are also important.

I think now with the association that we have in Xuntas, that's going to help us a lot. It's just nice to kind of like go with them to give them some support. Hopefully they get better and better.

And we're also taking care of different aspects, not only about golf and technique, about the way you travel, handle the pressure, do your routine, how do you go to the gym and train, how do you rest.

Your parents are so important, but also they need to learn to go with you. So we're trying to help in different ways, no?

So for me, just gives me a lot of joy to see that they been working so hard and this experience for them is going to be unique.

**Q. So far since you've been on site, what has your experience been like this week just in your last couple days here?**

LORENA OCHOA: I think for sure better than I thought. I actually played golf better than I thought so that's always good. I hit the ball better than I thought. I've been practicing only for the last few weeks because I don't really get too much golf these days.

I'm starting to go to the golf course because Pedro, my son, is trying to pick up the game. But I do work and golf is my life but exhibitions or the little things I do for the foundations or traveling or my sponsors is just about going to the course and hitting two, three shots. It's more spending quality time with the guests.

But not really playing. So I did some professional shots today. I was like, wow, that was good. (Laughter.) Even I was impressed. My family was like, wow, you did good. And then other ones really bad, and that's the way it is.



Sometimes it makes me think if I will play in the Legends Tour, give myself a chance to play later maybe few events. I don't see that coming. I think my life is so different now. I'm busy in different ways.

We'll see.

**Q. I know that Xuntas and the LPGA Girls Golf program are working together to get more girls into the game; obviously had the clinic yesterday. Why that such an important mission to you?**

LORENA OCHOA: Well, Xuntas started when I was actually playing; before it had a different name. Couple of friends came up to me and said, Lorena, we want to help the new professional Mexicans that are trying to qualify. When they finish college then they turn professionals they're on their own and we want to help them.

I said yes. I'm there, too. I will help as much as I can. Please let me know what I can do. Since that moment I started helping a little bit. There were about six, seven professionals playing in the Futures Tour at the time and then the Symetra. Couple of them, maybe two or three, go on and off from the LPGA.

And then I was really excited about helping that small group. Then after a few years we realize we need to start helping the little ones, more 12, 13, 14 years old. Those different ages we can really make a difference on them, you know.

Because the ones that are 20, 22, 23, they already have their own way of doing things, if they did go to the gym or not, if they like nutrition, the way -- if they have a routine, they have some training in the mental side.

But then we realize we better start helping them a little bit little, no? So we start instead of having six or seven girls now we have 45. They are starting at 12 and 13 years old.

So we can see right away the big difference on how happy they are. They're like sponges. You tell them something and they go out there and change things and start moving and ask for help. They are not shy and want to learn from the best.

We have a great team. Rafael my coach is there, as well as Horatio, Gaby's coach. We have a good sports psychologist, couple of them actually; nutritionists.

It's something really nice. So now that we have this big number of girls we are trying to help them, give them also some support to play some international tournaments and to really pay attention in each of them.

Some of them are different, and I can tell you that we made the right decision. It's been really good helping them a little bit younger. We have good sponsors now. We're raising more money. We have now four different tournaments or activities around the year to raise money.

Also we spend more quality time with them. We go to the different parts of Mexico to get together maybe ten or twelve in each group. It's been great. I'm just happy. I'm trying to do as much as I can to help the next generation.

Yes, so that's what we do.

**Q. Looking back on your career, just the girls' game has grown so significantly over the past decade, two decades. Reflect on what it was like for you growing up and how special it is to see more girls playing now.**

LORENA OCHOA: Yes, I mean, I grew up only couple friends and I and we used to play with boys older. Now you get to a golf course and there are like 100 girls and the general manager is like, Lorena, we are in trouble. We don't though what to do with so many girls.

It's a good problem to have. I'm excited to see that changing. Still today it's very difficult because golf is not accessible. We don't have public places, public golf courses, public ranges and facilities. We actually have -- we own a golf academy, it's called Kudos, and it's beautiful to be able to work with the kids.

On Sundays we give from 12:00 to 3:00 free equipment, uniform, teachers, and they go there from privileged kids and they go and hit some balls and learn about the game. We only have that a small place. We need that all around the country so we have more players.

Needs to be more accessible.

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