

U.S. Girls' Junior Championship

Saturday, July 20, 2024

Tarzana, California, USA

El Caballero Country Club

Rianne Malixi

Press Conference

Q. ...days ago when we chatted there was a lot of tears, a lot of heartbreak. The emotions now 36 our days later are a little different. Can you describe what the year was like to have that fester for a year and then come here and get redemption?

RIANNE MALIXI: Yeah, I know it was such a heartbreak last year because I was so close. After that U.S. trip I just got some practice, kept on training. I spent a lot of hours training in Manila. I sacrificed a lot of my social time, school time. Not only me, but my dad also sacrificed a lot of time for me just to accompany me, train.

And, yeah, my family had their share and I'm just really grateful for everything.

Q. What's your dad's name?

RIANNE MALIXI: Roy.

Q. R-o-y?

RIANNE MALIXI: Yes, sir.

Q. What's it like now you're a USGA champion? When I mention those words, what sinks in?

RIANNE MALIXI: It's huge I know. It's hard for me to comprehend right now because everything just came in so quickly. I know being USGA champion means a lot, it means huge here.

Being able to do that is a huge honor for me and I'm very grateful.

Q. You're the third Filipino, because Yuka won one U.S. Women's Open as a Filipino and one representing Japan. So you're second to win a Girls' Junior behind Princess. How big does this play out back home?

RIANNE MALIXI: It's going to be huge for sure. I know there will be a lot of the media talks. I don't know what to



do later. Be expecting a lot of people reaching out to me in a few hours.

Q. Yeah. 14 birdies today. That's a lot.

RIANNE MALIXI: It is a lot.

Q. Where would you put this round of golf in all the golf you've played over your junior career?

RIANNE MALIXI: It's like my best game so far. I know I played well in a lot of the pro events but this is the best one so far.

Q. What clicked this week? You said you sacrificed a lot. What kind of clicked in for you that made you play so well this week?

RIANNE MALIXI: Honestly, because I know I put a lot of hard work in, that gave me a lot of confidence going into this week.

And then just having my dad pep talk me and my mom as well.

Q. They're both here?

RIANNE MALIXI: Just my mom. My dad is back in Manila. Yeah, it's been really helpful, especially with the Filipino community here. It's huge. It's nice to see.

Q. Yeah.

RIANNE MALIXI: Yeah.

Q. Is you get some nice exemption on this. You already you were in the Women's Open, but now next year you're going to play in the U.S. Women's Open at Erin Hills with some pretty impressive people. Who is the first person you would like to play a practice round with next year at Erin Hills?

RIANNE MALIXI: Anyone. I'm just honored to be there.

Q. Anybody that you idolized?

RIANNE MALIXI: I would love to play with Nelly and Yuka. That would be a nice group.



Q. I'm sure Yuka would probably -- do you know her at all? You ever met her?

RIANNE MALIXI: I played with her six years ago.

Q. Wow. When she was a junior?

RIANNE MALIXI: She was 17 or barely 18. We played golf together in a tournament. It was fun.

Q. Back in the Philippines?

RIANNE MALIXI: Yes.

Q. Yeah. She played well. She got to the semifinals.

RIANNE MALIXI: Uh-huh.

Q. Obviously you're going to get to come back here, too. You got an exemption to the LPGA event here. This place a probably pretty special now.

RIANNE MALIXI: Yeah, super special. Yeah.

Q. On the first tee today, you have this affinity for that first hole. Birdied it eight out of ten times you played it. Seems like that's been a catalyst to get you going in these rounds.

RIANNE MALIXI: Honestly I was just thinking about numbers on that hole and it really helped. Yeah, simple as it gets, yep.

Q. How about at the lunch break when you're up that big? How do you keep yourself from thinking too far ahead and say oh, my God? People are probably coming up to you.

RIANNE MALIXI: Yeah, as I was walking with the last hole, I know I had like a big lead. I know it's not over until it's over, and then I know there is like a big break in between.

And I just had to meditate and really take my time saving a lot of energy. So meditating, and then back to warming up.

Q. So you meditated; did you hit some balls?

RIANNE MALIXI: I did. Just a few balls.

Q. Just to warm up, got loose?

RIANNE MALIXI: Yeah.

Q. You could order something special for lunch today. Did you have anything...

RIANNE MALIXI: I just had tuna Poke bowl.

Q. That's been the secret?

RIANNE MALIXI: Yeah.

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