

The Evian Championship

Wednesday July 24, 2019

Celine Boutier

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us here in the media center at the Evian Resort and Golf Course. We are here at the 2019 Evian Championship with Celine Boutier, who became a Rolex first-time winner after capturing victory earlier this year at the ISBS Handa Vic Open.

Making her fourth start at the Evian Championship this week, welcome back to Evian, Celine, and welcome home.

CELINE BOUTIER: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: How does it feel to be in France for you?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it feels pretty amazing. I feel like I don't really have the chance to go back as much as I would like, so every time I go back it's always special.

I'm pretty excited to come back. I feel like this week I'm not able to stay longer than the tournament week because of the British Open next week and then the tournament we had last week. So it's a little bit short for me, but I guess it's better than nothing.

Yeah, pretty excited about playing here and coming back.

THE MODERATOR: You plan to come home and spend some time after the Scottish or after you're done?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I wanted to, but at the same time, I'm playing in Portland the week after. It's literally on the other side of America. I feel like I wanted to see my coach as well before, so I'm just staying two days after the tournament end and heading back to Dallas.

THE MODERATOR: It's definitely a grind out here on the LPGA Tour. We're getting ready to tee it up the first week of back-to-back majors. What was your preparation like coming into the week?

CELINE BOUTIER: I feel like I haven't -- because I'm playing for four weeks I haven't really been that intense about it. I feel like my game overall has been feeling pretty good, and then the week off that I had before Dow I was able to see my coach. But nothing really

was standing out. Like I wasn't really hitting horrible or my putting wasn't that much off, so we didn't really work on anything major.

I just had to keep my game going and try to have some momentum.

THE MODERATOR: With the win at the start of this season, how did that help shape your perspective of the season going forward and for your confidence when you're teeing it up for the majors?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, I feel like it's definitely made me more confidence in my abilities. I feel like last year I played pretty okay all year-round but I struggled to kind of have some top 10 finishes; and especially in majors I really wasn't playing very well.

But getting that first win so early was definitely a relief, especially because sometimes the beginning of the season can be pretty stressful because you want to do well, start well, and get the year going. For me, that was definitely helpful on that side.

And then I felt like performing in majors was also another step for me, because I hadn't really had that good results before. So I feel like overall my game is kind of going upwards.

THE MODERATOR: That's great. What is your game strategy for the week, and does it help you that the event changed from September to July?

CELINE BOUTIER: I think it's a little bit more helpful for me because I'm not one of the longest players. The course is pretty long, so I feel like when the course is not as soft as I was playing the years before I can get more roll out of my drivers. It's just playing a little bit shorter. Definitely helpful for me.

Since they changed 18 to a par-5 it's even better.

THE MODERATOR: Great. Open up to questions.

Q. (Question in French.)

CELINE BOUTIER: (Answer in French.)

THE MODERATOR: Could you sum that up in English?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, pretty much what the Top 5 at the U.S. Open, kind of how it helped me like in majors. I feel like it has helped me in my way of seeing the tournament, because before in majors especially I would put too much pressure on myself. Kind of just make things more difficult because I would think that, Oh, because it's a major the course is going to be difficult so I'm going to struggle.

So I would be in more defensive mentality. I felt like being able to have a Top 5 at the U.S. Open on one of the toughest courses kind of really helped me gain more confidence, and trying to just focus on my game and not really just being in a major and having high scores or whatever it is.

Q. You're currently in sixth place in the Team Europe Solheim Cup world rankings. One spot out of making the team. How much is that on your mind coming into these three final events?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it's pretty close. I feel like I obviously want to be on the team pretty bad. I know that if I focus too much on the ranking and on how many points or whatever place I need to be I will not probably make it.

It's not the way I like to play golf. I try to focus more on just the present and trying to do the best I can every round. Hopefully that'll be enough to be in the team after the British.

Q. (Question in French.)

CELINE BOUTIER: (Answer in French.)

THE MODERATOR: In English?

CELINE BOUTIER: So, yeah, just the fact of having back-to-back majors I don't think is very -- obviously it's the first time they've been doing it. I don't think it's going to be too difficult for me because I felt like overall my game so far has been pretty steady I think because I had, you know, an off week and the Dow, a team event.

I don't feel like I've been really putting too much physical or mental pressure, so I feel like I'm pretty in shape and I can go two weeks in a row.

Q. (Question in French.)

CELINE BOUTIER: (Answer in French.)

Q. (Question in French.)

CELINE BOUTIER: (Answer in French.)

THE MODERATOR: A quick summary.

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, so -- I forgot what the first

question was. (Laughter.)

So, yeah, just I feel like the way I have evolved for the past five years, because the first time I played Evian was in 2014 and I was still amateur. I feel like I was playing pretty well at that time. When I got the invite to play here I was No. 1 in the amateur ranking, and then I went through a little bit of a slump after that, especially because I was kind of getting too far ahead of myself, putting too much pressure on my game.

I have been working on that ever since. Been three, four years of feeling like I'm in a much better place mentally especially. I feel like over the years I've grown in America, but also because I feel like I can be more aggressive and kind of go -- get more birdies and shoot lower rounds.

THE MODERATOR: Great.

Q. (Question in French.)

CELINE BOUTIER: (Answer in French.)

THE MODERATOR: Okay, before you forget.

CELINE BOUTIER: Yes, the positive points of living in the States. For me, especially in golf, I feel like I have hugely benefitted from the facilities that are available to us in America. The courses, and also the conditions, it's always amazing.

I also have my hosts in America, which I had trouble finding or putting together in France. Then obviously the tournaments have bigger purses, better courses, and I feel like just environment can only make you a better player.

Q. (Question in French.)

CELINE BOUTIER: (Answer in French.)

So what was my experience like going to university, college in America. So I went to Duke for four years, and I feel like there were some positives and negative sides of it.

I feel like four years was a long time, but it also allowed me to have more time to think about my future and if I really wanted to turn pro. I think it's a difficult life, and unless you're going to be 100% committed to it your success rate it going to be pretty low.

So I also needed to have some time to figure this out, getting obviously my degree in case I didn't want to do it. But I feel like overall it was very good experience, and it allowed me to grow and learn more about myself and how I like to do things.

I feel like that was something I had to learn, because

before I was kind of always told what to do and how things are supposed to be done. I feel like I had to learn by myself, how I like to get things done. I feel like ultimately that saved me some time when I turned pro.

THE MODERATOR: Since you've come out to the LPGA Tour, what did you learn in that huge learning curve?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, for me, the biggest transition was just like stopping -- because I was always -- it was very strange for me to be able to compete against the players I had always looked up to, so the first couple events I was just so in awe of everything and everyone that I was playing with. I was kind of more in spectator mode.

I had to learn that I could also belong up there, and I had to pretty much stop comparing myself to others. That was the main thing that I learned and that made a difference in my game.

THE MODERATOR: Great. Thank you for being your own translator. We briefly caught up yesterday and I asked how you were enjoying your time being in your home country and you said it was kind of weird, because for most of the events on the LPGA Tour we mostly speak English, and even abroad. How has that been? Have you been able to spend a lot of time with family and friends? How do you balance between wanting to be home and spending time with people you care about, but also getting ready for a major championship?

CELINE BOUTIER: Yeah, it's not always easy, and especially because I don't come back very often. Every time I come everyone wants to come to the tournament, which is very great because I want to see everyone and catch up; at the same time I'm here trying to get ready for the tournament, so you have to balance it out. But they also understand that I'm playing a tournament, so it's kind of going a little bit both ways I guess.

Q. (Question in French.)

CELINE BOUTIER: (Answer in French.)

I was being asked about my time off on the course, if I had any. I was saying that I had -- I was obviously 100% committed to my golfing career because I don't think -- it's tough to say -- but I don't really see myself playing golf for like 30 or 40 years, so I try to focus on the career that I have right now.

I'm pretty intense about it. Like I play a lot. I feel like I don't really take that much time off, and when I take a week off or whatever, I try to focus on recovery and getting ready for the next tournament. So I feel like the

only time off I have is during the off-season.

Yeah, it's a tough balance for me because I feel like mentally you need some time off sometimes, but I also -- when I take -- it's kind of weird. During the season if I take too much time off that I think it's too much I start to feel guilty about it. I also think it's a learning curve for me to try to balance both.

THE MODERATOR: Any last questions for Celine? Thank you so much for your time, and great luck this week.

CELINE BOUTIER: Thank you.