

Samsung World Championship
BIGHORN Golf Club
Palm Desert, CA

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Final-round tournament quotes

AN INTERVIEW WITH LORENA OCHOA

PAUL ROVNAK: Lorena, great final round today, 7-under par. There are no bogeys, 65. You came back from a three shot deficit to No. 1 player in the world, and you won by two shots.

Congratulations on your 5th victory this year. You now have a commanding lead, Player-of-the-Year, Vare Trophy and Money List. Talk about today and we will take questions.

LORENA OCHOA: Hello. Thank you. I had a really good day today. It was amazing. I knew I needed to start good, like I said yesterday. And you know sometimes just things go your way. And I mean I really got going on No. 1. No. 2. No. 3 I made a long putt for eagle. It was one of those you see the hole bigger, and you picture the shots perfect, and you feel in a good rhythm, and everything was great.

I think making those long putts really changed my momentum and Annika's too, putting pressure and getting closer and getting that lead. It was probably my best round of golf in my professional career. I really enjoy it. I really learn from it. I think it was a great experience. Very important finally I won. It was very important, like you say for Player-of-the-Year, and I know those points and those important things, finishing. It just gave me more comfort. It's important to be ahead of many good players. This is really a special week.

Q. You say this is the best round in your professional career. You shot lower, is it just so much was riding on today's round; you shot 65?

LORENA OCHOA: I didn't understand the question, I'm sorry.

Q. You say this is the best round you shot in your professional career, but you shot rounds that were lower than this, is it just because there was so much riding on this round today in terms of Player-of-the-Year and maybe unseating Annika as No. 1 player?

LORENA OCHOA: Yes. And also, you know, I've been in the last group with Annika, being three shots back is not an easy thing, you know, just to overcome and win the tournament and put everything together and it's my fifth win in the season, and the Player of the Year points are very important and for sure my biggest 18 holes of golf.

Q. On No. 10, I wonder if you could talk about your thoughts as that ball was going and going and when it dropped?

LORENA OCHOA: No. 10, first Annika hit it in the bunker. I thought I would take advantage of this, go right at it and make a birdie so you can get something out of this. You know, when someone makes a mistake, and you are playing on the lead, and you are in the last group, you really need to take advantage of those mistakes because then you don't want to regret that you didn't do it. Then I miss my shot. I hit it to the left, just middle of the green, and I had a really long putt. I was upset to myself. I kind of was walking and pacing the ball, and I thought I can make this one. Just turn it around. I was over the ball and I was into the green. I knew it was a long putt. I'm going to be aggressive. I hit it hard. I was just hoping first to hit the hole and kind of finish close to the hole. But it was just a perfect line, hit the hole and jumped. That was a surprise. It was a really long putt and that probably was the biggest turn of the day. It kind of changed everything on my side. You know, lucky, it's important to have it, get a couple of good breaks, good bounces, and I did play. When you play against Annika you got to do all of those, make a long par, good driving, get lucky bounces, and I did that.

Q. About 60 feet?

LORENA OCHOA: Probably.

Q. Lorena, for all you've done this year, it seems like you can learn something more about yourself today, can you just talk about, you said this is the biggest round of your career, I'm curious what you learned about yourself today knowing what was at stake and what you were able to accomplish?

LORENA OCHOA: Not necessarily today. I want to say that I can just tell having had this experience, how different I felt today, or two years ago, how different I felt today as last week playing in my country. Last week was a really tough week for me. Just too much stress, too much thinking, too much worrying, the crowds, the noises, the pressure I had on me, but I wanted to win the tournament.

I think just living those experiences really help you on a day like today. I got here in the morning and everything was so much easier already. It was peaceful. I was feeling good. I was relaxed. I got to the first tee and I wasn't feeling, you know, the adrenalin going up and down.

I guess the more times you are in those situations, the better you control them when you get there the next time. Last week it really helped me. This week I could see how much level I am, and I could control my emotions. I was trying to be very level all day on the course, not trying to think too much and not get ahead of the thinking. I was very patient and level and it worked. So I'm going to keep doing that.

Q. Lorena, I don't know how the points are going to stack up, the rankings points, but do you have a timetable for becoming No. 1? When do you think you will be No. 1? Do you give yourself, one year, two years, six months?

LORENA OCHOA: I don't really think that much on that. My goal is to be the No. 1 player. I think you have to move your way up there. I think Annika is ahead. It's obvious. She has been playing for so many years. She has been playing so consistent. She won 69, 70 tournaments. I don't want to jump out there and be the No. 1 player in

the world. It's not fair. I can't imagine being it this week. I'm fine, I'm happy, I'm patient. I think it's to go going to happen. I believe it's going to happen. When it comes the right time, it will be the right time. She has four or five more years of points, more tournaments, more trophies. I'm just starting. I'm good where I am. I'm really excited. I know I can be up there. I think they know too. I go home and rest and get ready for the last two tournaments.

Q. What are your last two tournaments?

LORENA OCHOA: Mobile and ADT.

Q. Though we're not in Mexico this week, we're not far from Mexico, I'm curious how much support you felt out there. There was a guy on the 16th green holding a Mexican flag, did you see that?

LORENA OCHOA: Yes, I did.

Q. How much support did you feel from Mexican fans this week?

LORENA OCHOA: Very much. Not only Mexicans but also a lot of friends that I have from here from the desert that they came and watch me six or seven years ago when I play in the Dinah Shore. And I'm out there. They are out here every year. They support me good times, bad times. They suffer when I didn't win in March, the Nabisco. They do make me feel like home. I'm staying with some friends, the Mahonings this week. It's a relaxing week. I enjoy being here. This win is not only for me, the Spanish, Mexicans but also friends that have been supporting me through all of this time and years.

Q. I was curious who came on the green and wrapped the flag around you and soaked you with champagne?

LORENA OCHOA: They move me really quick for the interview. I don't even know. My boyfriend was there. I have a cousin and aunt that came. A couple of good friends. A girl from Tucson. Just close friends you can say.

Q. Apparently some new friends, were they people you recognized?

LORENA OCHOA: Yes, it is. Yes.

Q. Can I ask you how much you weigh?

LORENA OCHOA: 130 pounds. Maybe 128. I lost some weight last week, too much pressure.

Q. Could you tell us why you think you're hitting the ball longer than you were last year?

LORENA OCHOA: I did a lot of work in the off season. Everything, changed my swing. I had more control back swing. Not as long, just try it in a good position. I got stronger. I went to work about two and a half hours every day. I felt a good change in my upper body. And I changed my driver, so I think the three things together, it was about 4 yards each one. Everything, just the whole package.

Q. What driver?

LORENA OCHOA: G 5.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about No. 15 and when you walked on that hole, did you think that maybe you won the tournament?

LORENA OCHOA: No, I never thought that I won the tournament. You should

never do that, especially if you are playing against Annika. On 15, I mean, obviously, that was probably the most important hole. I didn't like that much my approach shot. I should have been a lot closer, but I told myself, you know, it's fine, you are in good position, just make sure you don't hit it too hard because it wasn't like a downhill putt. When I go there, I actually told Dave, my caddy, I bet you 100 pesos that I make this. So I make it. You owe me 100 pesos. I don't know, I guess golf is all about momentum. Annika made a mistake. Like I said, it's important to take advantage of that like I did on No. 10. I did it again on No. 15 and that changed everything.

Q. Lorena, in all seriousness, every time you win you get draped in the Mexican flag, and doused with champagne, is that the same flag that's used every time, or is that the 5th flag you have been wrapped in this year?

LORENA OCHOA: I don't know. Probably the 5th flag. I don't know. I do have a lucky one that is in my travel bag, golf bag, but it's always in the trunk when I win so this is from one of the fans. Probably the guy that was on the 16th on the top. So I will keep it for a good memory.

Q. Lorena, I wanted to really congratulate you, and also thank you for saying a few words to all of the Mexican people through Mexico (speaking Spanish.)

LORENA OCHOA: Thank you.

PAUL ROVNAK: Scorecard. Birdie on No. 1.

LORENA OCHOA: I made birdie on No. 1, I hit a 5-iron, 175 yards. I went a little bit long maybe 17, 18 feet and I made it.

I make eagle on No. 3, I hit the green on two with the 5-wood. I was 218, I was pin-high but it was a long putt maybe 30 feet, 25.

No. 5, I hit a wedge. I was 117 yards. Just about pin-high on the left side. And again about 16, 17 feet and I made it.

And I make a birdie --

Q. Where were you on the shot? It almost looked like you were toward the bunker?

LORENA OCHOA: I was in the rough just short of the bunker. And I hit a wedge. On No. 10, I hit an 8-iron, 138 yards just to the middle of the green and that was long putt. It was 60.

That's probably my longest putt in my career. So you have more story.

No. 11, that was probably the best shot of the day for me. 142 yards. I hit my 8-iron just about 3 yards short and ran about five feet by and I made it.

No. 15, I had 65 yards to the hole. I hit it pin-high, but just on the right side about 15 feet and I made it.

PAUL ROVNAK: What did you hit there, a wedge?

LORENA OCHOA: A sand wedge.

PAUL ROVNAK: Anymore questions for Lorena?

Q. You have answered this, I just keep thinking of perhaps winning Player-of-the-Year this year how meaningful to take the biggest step by doing what you did today. Not only beating Annika but beating her from three shots behind?

LORENA OCHOA: The meaning?

Q. Yes, does it add more significance to your season because of the fact that you beat Annika instead of someone else because you had to come from three shots behind; does that make it more worthwhile for you?

LORENA OCHOA: Well, this morning, don't ask me about the -- you know how many times I play with Annika for the last group or how many times I lost against Annika. I'm not sure of the number, only a few times, maybe one or two times. I lost in that playoff in Phoenix about three years ago, or two years ago. I played against her in Sweden and she beat me by one on that 18 hole. This is the only time like head-to-head with her being in the last group and winning. And I knew it was about time. And I knew that I could do it, but it was just win. We're breaking that barrier today and it's very important to me. No, it has an extra meaning for sure. So now I'm going to go home next week and enjoy it and celebrate.

Q. I'm going to go back a little bit but when you were deciding what college to go to, you wound up going to Arizona. I was just wondering did the fact that Annika went to Arizona as well, did that somehow influence on your decision to go there?

LORENA OCHOA: I didn't know much about Annika at that time. They were ranked No. 1. I wanted to go to the best school. The most important thing for me was Marisa Baena, her sister, was in the school playing at that time. She speaks Spanish. We had become good friends since Junior Golf. It was a No. 1 team. It was close to Mexico and I knew I had a friend over there, so just like everything went together and it was an easy decision.

Q. What was it like trying to learn English there? Because I think I read funny stories about you having to work extra hard to learn English. I wonder if you can speak to that.

LORENA OCHOA: Yes, it was really tough for me my first year in college, I really struggled, went to bed really late writing papers. It was kind of frustrating in a way that I could learn the classes, and it was kind of like easy. But when it comes to writing essays I didn't have very much vocabulary and my grammar wasn't very good. I got B and C's. It was frustrating. But I got a lot of help from the tutors.

The first semester, I spent a long time just reading and writing. It got easier over time. I signed in for golf classes. After my first semester I decided to go with really easy classes my second semester, so it would be easier. It worked out.

Now, there are still things in Spanish, but my vocabulary is better and I am feeling more comfortable.

Q. What did it do to your confidence when you lost to Annika in Phoenix the way that happened? And conversely, what does that do to your confidence today?

LORENA OCHOA: That day it was easier than probably everybody thought. I just didn't take it too hard on myself. It was my first chance. If you want to lose you want to lose against the No. 1 player in the world. I think it was my second year on Tour, or third, I'm confused.

PAUL ROVNAK: Second year.

LORENA OCHOA: And it just happens. When you play a tournament and you start with a double bogey, it's much better a double bogey on the first hole than the last one, you have so many more holes to get better. When you make those mistakes your first year or second year, you get them out of your way and then you make good things come. So I just play that way and I'm a positive person and I learn a lot and it's not going to happen again, those bad shots. I'm trying not to make it anymore.

Q. If that's the case, do you see a lot of Majors?

LORENA OCHOA: Yes. I'm ready. This has been a great year. I didn't win any Major but I think I'm ready for them. I have to wait.

Q. In terms of the influence that you have on young kids, are you doing anything or do you plan in the future to maybe have something for kids for little girls or little boys to follow up in your steps in the United States and in Mexico?

LORENA OCHOA: I do have a foundation and in November which is coming pretty soon. We are doing the opening for a golf academy. It's a golf academy that we are doing with Rafael, my coach, with me, and we are starting it in Guadalajara, we want to move on to the whole country. We are going to focus mainly in Mexico and South America, so we can help all of those people that are just learning the game and they want to do better and come good professionals. We are pretty busy. But that's the idea, just to help kids and give them the opportunity we can give them.

PAUL ROVNAK: Thank you.
