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Symetra Tour Championship presented by Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
LPGA International, Jones Course
Daytona Beach, Florida
October 12, 2015
Storylines



DAYTONA BEACH, Fla., October 12, 2015 - The Symetra Tour, Road to the LPGA, comes to Daytona Beach for the final event of this historic 2015 season. The Symetra Tour Championship presented by Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University starts on Thursday, October 15. With nine months of competition and 22 events in the books, ten players will earn coveted LPGA Tour cards after the final round of play on Sunday.

The top 108 up-and-coming professionals from the United States and 17 countries around the globe will compete one final time for a \$150,000 total tournament purse. The winner will earn \$22,500 and could jump into the top 10 depending on their current standing on the money list.

First-round play begins on Thursday, October 15 and the four round event concludes on Sunday, October 18. There will be a cut made to the top 70 and ties following second round play on Friday. This is the fifth 72-hole event of the season, which is up from just two a year ago. Play will begin at 8:00 a.m. all four days. A split tee start will be used on Thursday-Saturday and a single-tee start will be used on Sunday.

The Jones course is a par-72 and will play 6,443 yards for the championship.

The top 23 players are still eligible to earn a Tour card. Number 23 on the money list, Dottie Ardina, has earned \$30,129 this year. The first-place check of \$22,500 would increase her earnings to \$52,629, which is just in front of current No. 10 Rachel Rohanna's total of \$52,314. Nobody outside the top 23 can mathematically earn a card at this point.

The Volvik Race for the Card money list is tighter than it has ever been. The margin for error is so small this week that No. 11, Haruka Morita-WanyaoLu, could move into the top 10 with a 47th place finish. Further, No. 3 Lee Lopez is just \$9,401 in front of Morita-WanyaoLu. For comparison, the gap between No. 3 and No. 11 heading into the Symetra Tour Championship last year was \$18,694.

The incredibly interesting race to watch is between No. 11 Morita-WanyaoLu (\$51,594), No. 12 Brianna Do (\$51,037) and No. 13 Lindy Duncan (\$50,315). All three have had stellar years and are more than capable of squeezing into the top 10. Morita-WanyaoLu won the Symetra Classic and has five top 10's, Do just finished solo second at the IOA Golf Classic on Sunday to post a sixth top 10 and Duncan has seven top 10's.

Nine of the top 10 on the money list are in the field. The only player not in the field is No. 1 Giulia Molinaro, who has already locked up a Tour card. Molinaro has a prior commitment, but is expected to be at the card ceremony on Sunday. The field also includes 21 LPGA Tour members.

There always seems to be drama on Sunday of the Symetra Tour Championship. Every year since 2007, a player outside the top 10 has jumped into the top 10 with a strong finish at the season finale. It is also

interesting to note that only one player each of the last seven years has gone from outside the top 10 to inside at the finale. The 2006 season was the last time nobody from outside the top 10 earned a card at the final tournament. The last year that multiple players moved into the top 10 after the last event was 2004 when Kris Tamulis and Malinda Johnson went from 16th to ninth and 11th to fifth respectively.

Since 1999, six players that won the final event went on to earn a card - Candy Hannemann ('03), Malinda Johnson ('04), Vicky Hurst ('08), Cindy LaCrosse ('10), Sydnee Michaels ('11) and Daniela Iacobelli ('12).

This is the fifth event in the state of Florida and there are ten players from the Sunshine State.

WHO'S GUARANTEED TO RECEIVE AN LPGA CARD: The 2015 season has been like non-other and the Symetra Tour Championship will be as wide open as the Tour has experienced. No. 1 Giulia Molinaro and No. 2 Annie Park are the only two players mathematically guaranteed to earn a Tour card come Sunday. Therefore, there are 21 players (excluding Molinaro and Park) vying for eight spots.

Although No. 3 Lee Lopez (Whittier, Calif.) is not mathematically guaranteed a spot, a wild scenario would have to unfold. A clearer picture will present itself after the cut on Friday.

In 2014, the top six players were safe heading into the Symetra Tour Championship. However, in 2013 only two players were safe heading into the Tour championship.

PROJECTIONS FOR 11-23 ON TRYING TO EARN A CARD: Here is a look at what players 11-23 must do in order to have a chance to earn a card. The minimum finishes assume that the players in the top 10 don't earn additional money. The projections also assume payouts for solo finishes. Keep in mind that No. 10 on the money list has currently earned \$52,314.

| Player | Current Earnings | Minimum Finish | Toal with Min. Finish |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 11. Haruka Morita-WanyaoLu | \$51,594 | 47th | \$52,327 |
| 12. Brianna Do | \$51,037 | 31th | \$52,321 |
| 13. Lindy Duncan | \$50,315 | 18th | \$52,340 |
| 14. Jimin Kang | \$46,612 | 5th | \$53,047 |
| 15. Maude-Aimee Leblanc | \$44,809 | 4th | \$52,772 |
| 16. Caroline Westrup | \$44,243 | 3rd | \$54,498 |
| 17. Madeleine Sheils | \$43,418 | 3rd | \$53,673 |
| 18. Chie Arimura | \$43,410 | 3rd | \$53,665 |
| 19. Samantha Richdale | \$40,701 | 2nd | \$54,789 |
| 20. Brittany Benvenuto | \$39,577 | 2nd | \$53,665 |
| 21. Brittany Altomare | \$33,518 | Win | \$56,018 |
| 22. Katie Kempter | \$33,094 | Win | \$55,594 |
| 23. Dottie Ardina | \$30,129 | Win | \$52,629 |

HISTORIC EARNINGS YEAR FOR TOUR: The total purse for the 2015 season is at an all-time high, \$2.8 million. Just two years ago, the total purse for the year was \$1.62 million. The resulting impact on the money has been that for the first time in Tour history, five players have already exceeded \$60,000 in earnings. In addition, for the first time in Tour history, the top 13 players have earned over \$50,000. In 2014, only seven players crossed the \$50,000 marker at the end of the season. For even more perspective, no player earned \$50,000 in 2013 when the Tour played a 15-event schedule.

Part of the reason for the historic year in earnings has been the balance on Tour. Only two members have won multiple times - Annie Park (3) and Vicky Hurst (2). Jackie Stoelting won the last two events as a non-member. In 22 events, there have been 17 different winners including two sponsor exemptions, Hannah

O' Sullivan and Brooke Henderson.

Also, the only player to win a tournament while she was inside the top 10 this year is Park.

There are seven 2015 tournament winners currently outside the top 10.

SYMETRA TOUR PLAYER OF THE YEAR STILL WIDE OPEN: The Symetra Tour Player of the Year goes to the player that earns the most money at seasons end. Since No. 1 Molinaro is not in the field, the door is open for anyone in the top 14 to overtake her with a win. No. 2 Annie Park needs to finish 18th to pass Molinaro. No. 3 Lee Lopez needs a third place finish or better to potentially pass Molinaro.

GAELE TRUET ROOKIE OF THE YEAR RACE: Annie Park is in the driver's seat for the Gaelle Truet Rookie of the Year award. Park won her fourth career professional start at the Toyota Danielle Downey Classic and never looked back. She won the PHC Classic in Milwaukee two weeks later and earned the hat trick by winning the Prairie Band Casino & Resort Charity Classic in mid-September.

The closest rookie to Park is Augusta James, who is ninth on the money list. She would need at least a solo second place finish to pass her.

The last player to win Symetra Player of the Year and Gaelle Truet Rookie of the Year in the same season was Mina Harigae in 2009. Harigae finished 81st on the LPGA Tour money list this season. She has six career top 10 finishes on the LPGA. In 2008, Vicky Hurst was the player of the year and the rookie of the year. Others to win both in the same year include: Song-Hee Kim (2006) and Lorena Ochoa (2002).

DEFENDING CHAMP IN THE FIELD: Marita Engzelius (Oslo, Norway) ranked 54th on the Volvik Race for the Card money list heading into last year's Symetra Tour Championship. She surprised the field with three consecutive under-par rounds and a great 7-wood approach into 18 on the first playoff hole to secure her first win. She'll make her first trip back to Daytona Beach this week.

Engzelius is coming off her best finish of the season on Sunday at the IOA Golf Classic when she placed T8. Engzelius has made 13 starts this year and ranks 84th on the money list.

"Winning in Daytona is absolutely the most memorable experience I have had as a golfer," said Engzelius after her round in Longwood. "It was extremely special and of course it did help me with my confidence."

Engzelius moved all the way up to 15th on the money list and was able to bypass stage II of LPGA Qualifying tournament. Unfortunately, shortly after her win she suffered an injury that has lingered into this season. She missed the cut in three straight events in the middle of the season, but has made four straight cuts including her strong finish this past week.

"Sunday was a great day at the course," said Engzelius, who made the turn at 6-under. "I am constantly trying to improve my game and things are starting to come together. I'm excited for this week."

LEE LOPEZ IN BETTER POSITION THIS YEAR: Last year as a rookie, Lee Lopez entered the Symetra Tour Championship as No. 12 on the money list. Lopez made the cut, but finished 76th and finished the year 14th. This year, Lopez is in a much more comfortable spot at No. 3 on the money list with nine top 10 finishes.

"I've played really well this year and I'm going to really enjoy next week," said Lopez, after a T8 finish at the IOA Golf Classic. "I'm definitely in a much better position this year."

The only thing Lopez has not done in her two seasons on the Symetra Tour is win. She has 13 top 10

finishes. She would love to cap her Symetra Tour career with a victory.

Lopez, who has played in every event plus the U.S. Women's Open and the IGPM Classic in Mexico, says it's hard to believe that the season ends this week.

"I was trying to take the season a week at a time so I didn't wear myself out," said Lopez. "It's hard to believe that the season is just about over."

HISTORY OF CROWNING A CHAMPION IN DAYTONA: Following the 2011 season, the Tour moved the final event of the year to the home of its headquarters, Daytona Beach. Since moving to Daytona, Daniela Iacobelli (2012), Megan McChrystal (2013) and Marita Engzelius (2014) have won. Only Iacobelli jumped inside the top 10 to earn a card. She skyrocketed from 22nd to fifth with her win 2012.

The Symetra Tour has been playing at LPGA International since 2008. The event used to be played early in April.

\$130,000 FOR BOYS & GIRLS CLUB: The main beneficiary of the Symetra Tour Championship is the Boys & Girls Club of Volusia and Flagler counties. The Tour hopes to raise \$130,000 this year. On the Monday following the event, the Tour will host the Michelob Ultra "A Swing for Success" Charity Tournament to raise money for the Boys & Girls Club of Volusia and Flagler counties.

OF NOTE: Several players who are in the running for a Tour card had strong finishes at the Symetra Tour Championship last year. Casey Grice, who ranks eighth, finished in a tie for fourth. Maude-Aimee Leblanc, who ranks 15th, also finished in a tie for fourth. Lindy Duncan, who ranks 13th, finished T7 while Katie Kempter, who ranks 22nd, also finished T7.