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**IOA Championship presented by Morongo Casino Resort & Spa
Morongo Golf Club at Tukwet Canyon
Beaumont, California
February 21, 2016
Final Round News & Notes**



BEAUMONT, Calif., February 21, 2016 - Erynne Lee (Silverdale, Wash.) carded a 7-under 65 to come from four shots back at the start of the day to win the IOA Championship presented by Morongo Casino Resort & Spa by one shot. Lee finished with an eagle on 16 and two pars to close at 11-under 205 while Jessica Wallace (Langley, British Columbia) made a bogey on 18 to finish in second at 10-under 206. Lee becomes the first rookie to win the Symetra Tour season opener since 2005 when Jin Young Pak won the Lakeland FUTURES Classic.

First and second round leader Madelene Sagstrom (Enköping, Sweden) made double bogey on 16 and finished in a tie for third at 9-under 207 with rookie Jenny Coleman, who closed with a 68.

“I am still awe-struck right now, I can’t believe I am standing here looking at a camera and talking about how I played a great round and won the tournament,” said Lee, who celebrated her 23rd birthday on Feb. 13. “It has just been a really great week, I’ve been feeling good about my swing and my putting. When I tee’d off, I felt confident and didn’t have any nerves or butterflies that I had at the beginning of the week since it’s my first Symetra Tour event.”

Lee takes the top spot on the first Volvik Race for the Card money list with her first place check of \$15,000.

“Number one is great because I get an exemption into the next event in Florida and since my status is still a little iffy as I didn’t make it past Stage II (of Qualifying Tournament) that is important,” said Lee. “This is a huge confidence booster and I can just improve from here.”

Lee caught fire towards the end of the front nine with four consecutive birdies from the eighth through 11th holes. The turning point was an eagle on the par-5 16th hole. She trailed Sagstrom by two shots at that point.

Lee won the NWGA mini tour event two weeks ago at Morongo Golf Club at Tukwet Canyon on the Champions course, the same that the Symetra Tour played this week.

“I pretty much know the right spots to hit the ball and I know the greens, I am very familiar with the course,” said Lee. “The yardages were a little different, but being familiar helps a lot.”

Lee didn’t start playing golf until she was 10 years old. Her dad, who was on the bag all week, was a “weekend warrior” and got her and her sister, Kim, a manager on the UCLA golf team, started.

“I started getting serious when I was 15 and it was the highlight of my year when college coaches started to know me,” said Lee. “It has been an adventure. I turned professional when I graduated and here I am.”

Surprisingly, Lee finished T123 at Stage II of LPGA Qualifying Tournament and did not advance in August of 2015. Since, she has won on the Cactus Tour, NWGA and now the Symetra Tour. She attributes a lot of her improvement to hard work and a change of coaches.

“I think I was just nervous that week and thinking about making the cut when obviously your thoughts should be on just playing your game,” said Lee. “After that week, I changed coaches and changed my mindset and reflected a lot on my golf game. I worked really hard during the winter time and hard work is paying off.”

Lee is now working with James Oh in Lakewood, Calif. Oh also coaches PGA TOUR player Michael Kim and LPGA Tour players Brianna Do, who graduated from the Symetra Tour in 2014, and Jenny Shin. Oh also works with Ani Gulugian, a good friend of Lee’s.

Lee splits time between Los Angeles and her hometown in Washington.

She was an Honorable Mention All-American following her senior season and played on the 2014 U.S. Curtis Cup team.

The next Symetra Tour event is the Florida’s Natural Charity Classic April 8-10 in Lake Wales, Fla.

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