

THE PANAMA CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND 2 INTERVIEW

February 3, 2023



ABEL GALLEGOS (-5)

Started on 10 at 7:43 a.m. and had a bogey-free 5-under 65
Birdies on 12, 13, 15, 3 and 5

Q. You weren't happy about an even-par 70 that included a bogey at the last late on Thursday, on your birthday, but you came back strong today.

ABEL GALLEGOS: Yesterday left a bitter taste because I struck the ball well, but today I managed to stay patient and that was the most important thing about my round. I knew a round like this was coming, so that's why I felt disappointed yesterday.

Q. Solid start today, you made three birdies early to get things going.

ABEL GALLEGOS: A hundred percent. Getting under par early is always good, I went under quite quickly, and then I played on the right side and had a mistake-free round to finish at 5-under.

Q. Going bogey-free here is big because this is a tough course.

ABEL GALLEGOS: It's very tough, but I struck the ball really well, that was the secret. If you strike the ball well and hit good lines you will keep the bogeys away and that was the case today.

Q. Tell me about those three birdies you made between 12 and 15.

ABEL GALLEGOS: Striking well, always finding the right side of the hole and making a few good putts to get to 3-under quickly.

Q. Is there a shot that stands out, any long putt that you made?

ABEL GALLEGOS: Not really. I struck well all around and my putting was really solid. I think that was key today. I was able to sink a long one and that always helps.

Q. Which was your longest birdie putt?

ABEL GALLEGOS: On 15, a hole with the pin hidden on a platform. I was able to sink a long one, from about 30 feet and that one got me to 3 under for the day.

Q. Then you had two birdies on the front, your closing nine, which is probably the toughest nine out there?

ABEL GALLEGOS: I struck it even better on the back than I did on the front, but the ball just didn't go in at times. Very solid, very pleased, so we need to keep going like this on the weekend.

Q. Your family is here, your parents, your brothers, your girlfriend, the entire crew is here, right?

ABEL GALLEGOS: All of them came. They are always supporting me, and I always say that this wouldn't be possible without them. They are the "engine" behind this and I'm really happy to have them here this week.

Q. Tell me about them being here. The planning behind the trip to have them here on your birthday week.

ABEL GALLEGOS: It's something we had been planning. My girlfriend came as well and it's going to be her birthday on Sunday. All my family came, and we spent my birthday together yesterday. We had a good time.

Q. How special is it to have their support out there?

ABEL GALLEGOS: It means a lot. I love it and every time they come to see me I play well. It's an extra help to have around the people that loves and encourages you.

Q. Was there a birthday cake last night?

ABEL GALLEGOS: Well, yesterday was something rather quick at dinner time. We couldn't have a family get-together for dinner because I finished at 7 (p.m. last night) and made it back at 7:30 p.m. Today, I had to be up at 5:30 a.m., so tonight we are going to have a family dinner with a cake and all.

Q. (After the video interview) Can you give me details about your family. Who exactly is here, names?

ABEL GALLEGOS: My dad's name is Abel, like me. My mom's name is Guillermina. My (16-year old) sister Morena and my (18-year old) brother Miguel. My sister's boyfriend came as well. His name is Ramiro. My girlfriend (Ana Paula Valdés) is here also because of her upcoming birthday (on Sunday).

(His girlfriend is from Morelia, Mexico. She went to Clemson University and plays on the EPSON Tour. They both live in Orlando, where they train at the same academy, that's how their met last year).

Q. I was told your family was there when you won the 2020 Latin America Amateur Championship?

ABEL GALLEGOS: Yeah, they were there, my entire family was there, and it was something unbelievable.