

## **MJ Hur wins the Safeway Classic - her first LPGA title - in a play-off**

*From correspondents in North Plains, Oregon, August 31, 2009*



**South Korea's MJ Hur birdied the second play-off hole to defeat Suzann Pettersen and Michele Redman and win the LPGA Safeway Classic.**

Redman was already out of the play-off when Hur and Norway's Pettersen arrived at the par-four 17th at Pumpkin Ridge.

Hur landed short of the green in the left rough, while Pettersen nearly drove into a creek.

Hur pitched to two metres and Pettersen launched her chip seven metres past the flag. When the Norwegian missed her birdie attempt coming back, tour rookie Hur stepped up and made her putt for her first LPGA Tour title.

"I'm working very hard," said Hur, who earned US\$255,000 (\$500,000). "Before this tournament, I went to Korea, but I practiced a lot. That's why I had a good score this tournament."

Hur, who had made the cut in six of her 13 prior starts this season, fired a seven-under 65. She finished at 13-under 203 and was matched by Pettersen and Redman, who closed with 67s in the 54-hole event.

All three found the fairway at the first play-off hole, 18. Redman's second shot was eight metres short, Hur missed the green and Pettersen fired into three metres.

Hur chipped to two metres, while Redman's putt didn't break, and Pettersen's putt to win trickled to a stop.

Hur made a tough two-metre shot, while Redman missed from within a metre to bow out of the play-off and Pettersen tapped in.

American starlet Michelle Wie (66), Japan's Ai Miyazato (70) and South Korea's Seon Hwa Lee (70) shared fourth place on 11-under 205.

Pettersen appeared headed for the victory in regulation.

She birdied four in a row from the 10th to build a three-stroke lead over Hur, who made her charge playing five holes from the eighth in six-under - a run that included four birdies and an eagle at the 10th. Hur picked up another stroke at the par-three 14th in a bogey-free round.

Pettersen ran into trouble at the par-five 15th, where she fired her third shot over the green and came up short on her fourth. Her chip rolled six feet past, and she missed coming back, surrendering the lead to Hur.

Hur landed a shot within three feet at 16, but couldn't make the putt.

Then Pettersen and Redman both birdied the par-four 17th en route to forcing the playoff.

Pettersen remains in search of her first title since 2007, when she won five LPGA events. She had a runner-up finish at the Corona Championship this year.

The tournament, which was played for 19 years at Portland's Columbia Edgewater Country Club, moved this year to the Ghost Creek course at Pumpkin Ridge, west of the city.

AAP

# Na Yeon Choi wins first LPGA event at Samsung

**By Associated Press**

Posted: September 20, 2009

SAN DIEGO – Na Yeon Choi kept making mistake after mistake, until her seven-shot lead was gone.

Then it was Ai Miyazato's turn to misfire, sending a shot on the 18th hole into the water. Choi hit her approach to within 5 feet, sank the birdie putt and went on to celebrate her first LPGA win.

Just how she planned it, right?

"I can't believe that I won," Choi said. "Throughout the second half I thought I was going to lose it again."

The South Korean's up-and-down round Sunday resulted in a 1-under 71 that was good enough to take the Samsung World Championship.

Miyazato, of Japan, finished with a 69 for a low round of the day that wasn't good enough to best Choi's 16-under 272.

Choi began the final round with a two-stroke lead, got birdies on two of her first four holes and made a 10-foot eagle putt on the sixth hole to extend her lead to seven strokes.

It looked then as if Choi, who has won four times on the Korean LPGA tour, would cruise to a win.

But Miyazato, playing in the group in front of Choi and Jiyai Shin of South Korea, made two quick birdies on Nos. 7 and 8 to cut Choi's lead to five.

"I played really good," Miyazato said. "I was very patient."

Choi missed a 2-foot putt on the ninth hole for a bogey, cutting the lead to four heading into the back nine.

She continued to struggle with two consecutive bogeys, and Miyazato tied Choi at 16 under with a 4-foot birdie putt on No. 16. Miyazato took the lead shortly after, when Choi three-putted for bogey on No. 14.

Choi has been working with a sports psychologist on her mental game and was repeating some of the lessons she has recently learned.

“Mentally, I felt I was very weak,” Choi said. “I kept telling myself to be positive. I wanted to be positive about everything.”

On the 18th hole, it was Miyazato’s turn to make a mistake. With 203 yards remaining for her second shot, Miyazato’s 5-wood approach hit the bank in front of the 18th green and rolled into the water. She dropped in front of the pond but could not get up and down for par.

Choi’s second shot on the 18th reached the front left of the green and her third shot came to rest 5 feet below the pin. Choi, who had missed several putts of equal or less distance, converted the birdie for the victory – no easy task.

“I felt like I had just turned professional today,” Choi said when facing the putt for victory. “I was so nervous.”