

ANNIE PARK WINS 3RD SYMETRA TOUR TITLE OF YEAR

MAYETTA: Annie Park won the Prairie Band Casino & Resort Charity Classic on Sunday for her third victory in nine Symetra Tour starts this season.

Park earned \$15,000 to jump from fourth to second on the money list with \$66,125, more than enough for a 2016 PGA Tour card as a top-10 finisher.

"It has been a lifelong dream of mine to play on the LPGA since I started golf when I was 8 years old," Park said. "I looked up to Annika Sorenstam and I knew I wanted to be like her when I grew up. I'm speechless and I can't wait to play on the LPGA next year."

The 20-year-old former Southern California player from Levittown, New York, closed with a 7-under 65 at Firekeeper for a three-stroke victory. She finished at 13-under 203.

"My goal coming into the round was just to make a lot of putts because I missed a few in the first two rounds," said Park, the 2013 NCAA individual champion. "I was hitting and putting well, so it was a great day."

Park is the 10th player in tour history to win at least three times in a season. She won in July in Rochester, New York, and last month in Milwaukee, and has 23 consecutive rounds of even par or better — breaking par in 21 of them.

"My first two wins were pretty unexpected and I'd say this one was, too," Park said. "I had a blast on the Symetra Tour with my friends Grace (Na), Jennifer (Yang) and Kimberly (Kim). All the players are so nice on tour and it didn't even feel like playing tournament golf sometimes."

Her mother, Ann, is working as her caddie on the tour.

"On and off the course, my mom keeps me happy and having fun," Park said. "I love traveling with her. Not only does she caddie, but she cooks and drives. She gets the super mom award. She has been my hero, too, growing up." Mexico's Margarita Ramos was second after a 69. Brittany Altomare shot a 71 to finish third at 8 under.—AP



DARLINGTON: Jimmie Johnson drives on the track during a NASCAR Sprint Cup auto racing practice session at Darlington Raceway. — AP

JOHNSON ENTERS CHASE WITH NEW CONTRACT, TITLE HOPES

CHARLOTTE: There's an anecdote told to illustrate how little fame and fortune have changed Jimmie Johnson in the 14 years since he went from middle-of-the-road driver to NASCAR superstar.

Apparently, demand for Johnson-signed memorabilia was so low back then, the driver took the time to dot the two I's in his name. Six championships and \$148 million in winnings later, they get ignored.

"That's really, truthfully the one thing that's changed about him," said Tom Lamb, chief marketing officer of Lowe's. "His demeanor, his humility, his relationship with sponsors and with fans, very little to nothing has changed over that timeframe. It tells me, 'This is a guy who knows who he is, knows what his values are and his values aren't for sale and won't compromise him.'"

The success, the humility, the dignity and grace are all part of the many reasons why Lowe's on Monday confirmed a two-year contract extension with Johnson and Hendrick Motorsports that runs through 2017. Lowe's has been Johnson's sponsor since his 2001 Cup debut.

Johnson chuckled with appreciation at Lamb's anecdote, one of the many feel-good yarns often used to describe the most dominant NASCAR driver of the last decade.

He recognizes what a break he got in 2001 when Jeff Gordon sold Rick Hendrick on the idea of building a new team around Johnson. It was a longshot: Johnson at that point was best known for sailing nose-first into a wall in a 2000 wreck at Watkins Glen, where he climbed on the roof

of his crumpled car and triumphantly raised his arms in the air. But Gordon was adamant in 2001 that Johnson could be something special, and so was Hendrick's late son, Ricky, who had developed a friendship with the former off-road racer from California who had migrated to North Carolina to take a shot at stock cars.

Nothing could happen, though, without sponsorship. Hendrick worked hard to sell Lowe's on coming aboard. The company had been in NASCAR at various levels for years, had never been to victory lane, and was unsure about this Johnson kid. But Hendrick was persistent and was certain he had closed the deal. "I am sitting at motorsports thinking the deal is done and in walks Bob Tillman, chairman of Lowe's. Scared the (crap) out of me," Hendrick recalled.

Johnson was initially not present but rushed to team headquarters when told the Lowe's executive team was waiting to meet him.

He had limited goals for his Cup career at the time: "I hoped to win a race, I knew that would keep me employed for a couple of years."

But within minutes of sitting down at the table with Tillman, Johnson recognized he needed to sell himself, and quickly. "He looked me in the eyes and said, 'We've been in racing a long time, we're tired of losing, my company needs a winning driver. Can you win?'" Johnson said. "I'm sitting there, I've only won two ASA races in my whole life, and I'm only in my fourth year ever in a stock car. I somehow am able to put it together and in a convincing manner, through

all my insecurities, say, 'Absolutely, I can win.'" Hendrick said Johnson never flinched in his delivery and sold it perfectly.

Fourteen years later, they all recognize that was a defining moment. "As time went on, we found out that moment and how I handled myself was a huge factor in Lowe's signing the contract," said Johnson. Never have the parties regretted their decision, and Johnson on Sunday begins his quest for a record-tying seventh championship when the Chase for the Sprint Cup opens at Chicagoland Speedway. Although he goes in tied with Kyle Busch and Matt Kenseth as the top seed, he's a bit of an afterthought because Hendrick's drivers struggled through the summer. Although Johnson has four wins this year, his victory was 13 races ago and Joe Gibbs Racing has taken off during that stretch.

Everyone at Hendrick Motorsports admits the organization is behind the competition right now, but the team owner dares anyone to dismiss their chances. Johnson, Gordon and Dale Earnhardt Jr. have three of the 16 slots in the Chase field.

Johnson proved in that meeting 14 years ago with Lowe's that he doesn't rattle. He knows how to race a 10-race shootout, and isn't buying into the JGR hype.

"Like it or not, whether we want to admit it or not, the summer months are always hard on us," Johnson said. "We feel like we are behind, we're not building the mouse trap the way we need to and we are aggressively working on it. But the format is more forgiving, we are getting back on our best tracks and I would never count us out." — AP

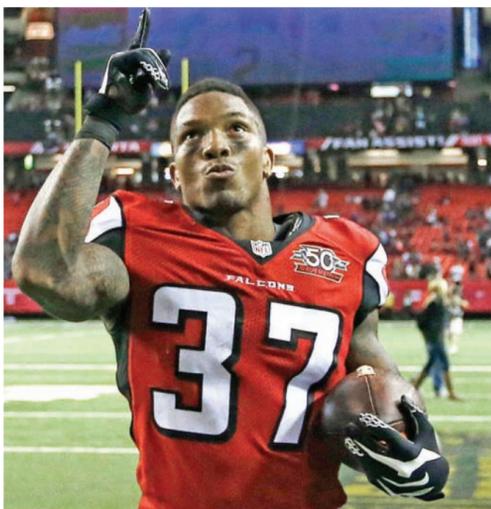


SANTA CLARA: San Francisco 49ers strong safety Antoine Bethea (41) sacks Minnesota Vikings quarterback Teddy Bridgewater (5) during the second half of an NFL football game. — AP

FALCONS DOWN EAGLES

ATLANTA: Julio Jones hauled in nine passes for 141 yards, including a pair of touchdowns, and the Atlanta Falcons came back after squandering a 17-point halftime lead to beat the Philadelphia Eagles 26-24 Monday night in the coaching debut of Dan Quinn. "You just trust the preparation, let it rip and have fun," Quinn said. "That's what we did."

He sure enjoyed watching Jones, who was rewarded for the best



ATLANTA: Atlanta Falcons cornerback Ricardo Allen (37) walks off the field with the game ball after the second half of an NFL football game against the Philadelphia Eagles. — AP

season of his career with a new \$71.25 million contract during the pre-season. Showing no signs of complacency, Jones dominated the Eagles' revamped secondary as the Falcons raced to a 20-3 halftime lead. In Monday's other game, the San Francisco 49ers beat the Minnesota Vikings 20-3 to win coach Jim Tomsula's debut. The Eagles rallied behind new quarterback Sam Bradford, taking the lead for the first time at 24-23 on Ryan Mathews' 1-yard run with 8:37 remaining.

Atlanta bounced back, driving into position for Matt Bryant's fourth field goal of the game, a 47-yarder with 6:27 to go that turned out to be the winner. Cody Parkey was wide right on a 44-yard field goal that could have restored Philadelphia's lead. The Eagles had one more chance, but cornerback-turned-safety Ricardo Allen intercepted a pass that went through the hands of Jordan Matthews, sealing the victory with 1:11 left. "They didn't want to throw it at my corners so they threw it in the middle of the field," Allen said. "They tipped the ball and it landed in my lap."

In Santa Clara, California, Carlos Hyde ran for a 10-yard score late in the first half by spinning away from a defender and diving into the end zone untouched on a rare nice play in a game full of ugly ones.

Hyde added another 17-yard TD run and Adrian Peterson carried 10 times for 31 yards in his first game in more than a year following paid leave and then a suspension last year in the fallout from a child-abuse case against him in Texas. Colin Kaepernick threw for 165 yards and second-year back Hyde ran 26 times to easily best his top rookie performance of 55 yards in his final game last year.

A sloppy first half featured a pair of botched field goals, Vikings quarterback Teddy Bridgewater running into his own teammate that led to a 10-yard sack, an 85-yard punt return touchdown called back on penalty, and a fumbled punt - by the former Australian rugby league star Jarryd Hayne on his first NFL touch. The 27-year-old rookie lost the fumble on a punt return in the first quarter when he misjudged the ball and had to dive forward to try to field it. He made a 1-yard run in the second quarter and caught a 7-yard pass. He was forced into running back duties as the only active backup after Reggie Bush was lost to a left calf injury with about 6 1/2 minutes left in the first quarter. — AP

MAYOR: TORONTO NOT BIDDING FOR 2024 OLYMPICS

TORONTO: Mayor John Tory said Toronto will be a great venue for the Olympics one day. Just not in 2024. Tory said Tuesday that Canada's largest city is going to stay out of the race for the 2024 Olympics because he felt it wasn't the best use of the city's time and money right now and said "nobody was rushing forward with their check-books."

Tory had until yesterday to write a letter to the International Olympic Committee to express interest. The declared bidders for 2024 include Los Angeles, Paris, Rome, Budapest, Hungary, and Hamburg, Germany. Toronto declining to bid is good news for Los Angeles as it becomes the only North American bidder. The winning city will be chosen in 2017.

The mayor of Canada's financial capital began researching the feasibility of a bid after Toronto hosted the Pan Am Games this past summer. Canada spent about \$2.5 billion Canadian (\$2 billion) to organize the Pan Am Games - the most expensive in history - and has several Olympic-style venues in place.

After an initial wave of enthusiasm for an Olympic bid, many expressed concerns about the cost. Tory cited a lack of corporate enthusiasm for a privately financed bid and no firm support from the province of Ontario which had been focused on the Pan Am Games. He had a long conference call with the IOC on Sunday and said he consulted widely.

"I think time was against us in the context of building that kind of support you have to have from the community, including business, to

make this work," Tory said. IOC spokesman Mark Adams also blamed timing. "We realize that time was too short for such a detailed project to get the necessary support in just a few weeks following the successful Pan Am Games. The International Olympic Committee highly appreciates what Toronto has done as it continues to work on a future candidacy," Adams told The Associated Press.

"We understand that the Canadian Olympic Committee is determined to have a Canadian candidature for the Olympic Games in the near future and they will continue to work on such a candidacy.

"The IOC appreciates this because we know about the great potential Canada has for the organization of Olympic Games." The Canadian Olympic Committee, which had been urging Toronto to enter the race, said it respected the mayor's decision but remains optimistic Toronto could and should host a future Olympics. "The Canadian Olympic Committee is determined to have the Olympics back in the country at the earliest opportunity," the statement said.

Quebec City is expected to bid for the 2026 Winter Games. Tory is forming an advisory group to examine the merits of bidding for a future Olympics or a soccer World Cup.

Toronto has failed twice with recent Olympic bids. It lost out to Atlanta for the 1996 Games, and to Beijing for 2008. Also etched in the country's memory are the 1976 Montreal Games, which ran up a \$1.5 billion debt that took the city 30 years to pay off. — AP



TORONTO: In this Dec. 2, 2014 file photo, Toronto's Mayor John Tory stands in the council chamber during an inauguration ceremony in Toronto. Toronto will not be bidding to host the 2024 Summer Olympics, an official with knowledge of the decision said Monday. — AP