



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Breakfast With A Champion

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then, you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing, and perfect will. (Romans 12:2, NIV)

The women return to the Old Course for the AIG Women's British Open this summer. When people ask about my favorite moment at an event over the years, my mind usually drifts back to Five Pilmour Place, a lovely little bed and breakfast next door to the famed Dunvegan pub and about 75 yards from the 18th green at the Old Course.

World No. 1 Lorena Ochoa and her family were staying at Five Pilmour during the 2007 British Open, along with several other tour pros and yours truly.

There's a common area for breakfast at B&Bs, and on Sunday, I was at the long table with three tour pros when Ochoa walked into the room with an aunt and a friend. She sat down right beside me and carried on a casual conversation as if it were an ordinary day.

Katherine Kirk and I taught her the word "hospitable," which describes the B&B owners. (Ochoa hails from Mexico and learned to speak English at the University of Arizona.)

She asked me a few questions about deadlines and writing assignments. I don't recall us talking much about the fact that she led by six and was on the verge of winning her first major championship.

Ochoa could've easily walked by, choosing to hold off eating until the room cleared. But the woman we'd come to know over the years would've had breakfast with the grounds crew had they been at the table.

Six months prior to the first women's major ever held at the Old Course, Ochoa made a bet with her caddie, David Brooker, that if she won the British, he would have his two young daughters baptized in the Catholic faith.

After Ochoa went wire-to-wire to win by four strokes, she celebrated that night with an open party at the Dunvegan with family, friends, and strangers alike.

When I caught up with Brooker later in the pub, he laughed, "The nuns have already called my wife."

Fame and money never changed Ochoa.

That's my favorite story for a number of reasons, but mostly because it's a window into the person rather than the player. Faith was the center of everything for Ochoa, and people were drawn to the light in her eyes and the warmth of her smile. She retired from the tour in 2008 to start a family.

In Romans 12:2, Paul reminds us of how we are to stand out from the crowd. Sure, Ochoa stood out because of her remarkable talent, but she's missed because of how she made people feel.

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PRAYER: Father, we thank you for giving us the ability to have our minds and our hearts transformed by your Holy Spirit. May our light shine so bright that it causes others to ask why we are different.

Beth Ann Nichols

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