

Giulia Sergas makes big jump after valuable trip to valley

LARRY BOHANNAN • THE DESERT SUN • NOVEMBER 21, 2008

Giulia Sergas is getting ready to take a break from her American base in the Coachella Valley and head home to Italy for December and part of January. There will be a little snowboarding and some visits with her family.

“When I stop dreaming about golf, I'll know it's time to come back,” Sergas said.

If Sergas is mentally, emotionally and physically fatigued from a long LPGA schedule, it's the right kind of fatigue. A little more than a year after moving to the desert to concentrate on improving her LPGA results, Sergas can celebrate some big steps forward in her career.

“I'm very pleased. It's just a first step,” Sergas said this week after a workout at Steve Jacobson's golf fitness center at Woodhaven Country Club in Palm Desert. “Just to make an improvement for me was a sign I was heading in the right direction.”

With a new commitment to fitness through the Tour Golf Fitness program from Jacobson and a new American home, Sergas added a new coach during the season as well as some work with the Vision 54 program developed by famed European golf coach Pia Nilsson. The result was Sergas' best year on the LPGA. She is currently 69th in the world golf rankings, up from 122nd when 2008 started. She is 43rd on the LPGA money list with \$417,554, both personal bests in her seven years on the American tour.

Big season

The highlights of Sergas' season were a sixth-place finish in the U.S. Women's Open and a tie for 10th in the LPGA Championship. Those finishes, the second and third top-10 major finishes of her career, were part of a string of seven top-20 finishes in eight starts in the middle of the season.

Sergas said the big season was a combination of many things, but one of the biggest was her decision to come to the desert and surround herself with new people.

“The biggest change was really moving here to the desert and then establishing my coaching,” Sergas said. “So then I changed my coach, and that was a dramatic change, because I changed my swing in the middle of the season. I never had a chance to work on my swing. Making a change on your swing during the season is the toughest thing.”

Having established a new workout routine helped Sergas with her swing change, she said, because the workouts made her more aware of her body and its movements.

“Then I came here to the gym and worked on (the changes) in the mirror, and I worked on the machines,” Sergas said. “The combination of the two makes it even faster.”

But Sergas' new golf swing is on hold for the next few months. The long season started in March for Sergas and she played through the recent Asian swing of Korea, Japan and China.

For now, Sergas will only dream of playing. When the dreams stop, then Sergas will dust off the swing and get ready for what she hopes will be similar improvements in a bigger and better 2009.

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