

U.S. Girls' Junior Championship

Friday, July 21, 2023

Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA

USAF Academy Eisenhower Golf Club

Kiara Romero

Press Conference

Q. Could you talk about walking us through your match today. What are your thoughts? Obviously it was a grind.

KIARA ROMERO: Yeah, I knew going into today I would have to play good, especially against Gianna, she's a great player. So I can't really control what she's going to do. But I just focused on my game and tried to hit as many greens and fairways as I could and take it from there.

Q. When you went 1-up on 16 how calm did you feel that you were going to be able to carry that through the rest of the way?

KIARA ROMERO: Yeah, that putt on 15, the long one, that's what really got me in. It got me back to even. Then the next hole I just kept going with it and I got a lot of confidence coming into the last few holes.

Q. What would you say overall this afternoon, what was the key for you to pull off the win?

KIARA ROMERO: Just to try to focus on my own game and not worrying about the match and the score.

Q. You've had two straight days of two rounds each day. But you came on strong at the end of that match. Did you feel like -- how do you feel? You had to pace yourself or did you, that you can, you know, kind of grind it out even after two days of 36 holes?

KIARA ROMERO: Yeah, for sure. I knew it was going to have to be a grind. All these girls are really good. So with match play the last like four, five holes is where it's really at. So I tried to keep my energy level up coming down to the stretch and that's really important to me.

Q. What does it mean in general to go to the finals of this event with national TV and a national title on the line?

KIARA ROMERO: Yeah, I'm not really thinking about that



right now. I'm just trying to focus on my game and just try to play my best. That's all I can do.

Q. You're up early and then that lead falters and Gianna takes the lead. What's going through your head as far as keeping your composure, just kind of keeping out of that panic mode, I guess?

KIARA ROMERO: I have a lot of experience with match play and a lot of matches I come back at the last few holes. So I was pretty confident and I didn't worry about being down early. It didn't matter to me. I knew the last five holes were going to be the most important.

Q. Yeah, that's something I noticed too, like yesterday's match you were down I think on the 16th hole, come back and win that one. The match with Claire was also very close. Do you think that's mostly a testament to that match play experience you're talking about?

KIARA ROMERO: Yeah, for sure. When you're down with the last few holes you have like pretty much nothing to lose, so you have a lot of confidence and you just do the best you can.

Q. Another golfer said that you you've been feeling under the weather. Are you sick right now?

KIARA ROMERO: No. (Laughing.) I just, I had a nose bleed on 8. But it happens a lot when I travel outside of California. Just the dry weather kind of gets me. But I don't feel anything, it's just.

Q. Going back you mentioned your match play experience. Obviously a big win for you was beating Saki Baba. Would you say that that match gave you a lot of -- or you learned a lot from that, that you kind of carry over into matches like these?

KIARA ROMERO: For sure. I learned so much in that match. I was I think 4-down with like six to play and she medalled in the tournament, so I knew I was going to have to make something happen. But I guess you get a little more aggressive when you're down with the last five holes, so, yeah.

Q. Do you remember any thoughts specifically from

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

when you went down in that match 4-down at all?

KIARA ROMERO: I just tried to stay calm and just try to like hit the fairway and then from there I'm just trying to make birdie as best I can.

Q. After a week at this course does it set up well for you or is it just like any other course that you learn about or how do you feel about the course and setting and all that?

KIARA ROMERO: I think the overall course is like pretty average. But when you get to the green, that's when all the strokes come in play. Because the mountains play a big role in break and speed. So you really have to pay attention to that. I think I've learned a lot this past week on how to putt on these greens. So it's good.

Q. You still live in San Jose, correct?

KIARA ROMERO: Yes.

Q. Do you live in San Jose per se?

KIARA ROMERO: San Jose.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports