

U.S Senior Women's Open Championship

Friday, August 2, 2024

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Fox Chapel Golf Club

Kaori Yamamoto

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We welcome Kaori Yamamoto to the flash interview area here at the U.S. Senior Women's Open Championship. You shot a 67 today, which set the championship record for a second round. How do you feel about setting that record?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: I can't believe that I made that score today. I'm so happy to be here.

Q. I heard you were very good with your irons today; what was so good about hitting all your approach shots?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: My iron shots were very good today, so that's why I made a lot of chances at making birdies. But I have a big regret that I couldn't make some birdies. I thought I would get more birdies today, but on the other hand, I had good par putts a lot. That's why I had a good score today.

Q. What was your best par putt that you thought you made?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: On the 17th hole I hit a bad tee shot, and that went down. The first putt didn't go well, but the par putt was more than eight meters, and I made it. That was the best par putt.

Q. Can you talk about your finish because you started on 9 and then you birdied 6, the par-3, and you birdied 8, the par-5 to finish.

KAORI YAMAMOTO: The last hole I thought I made the putt, and then I thought, yeah, I made under par again today. Yay.

My last hole was a par-5, and I hit it on in two, and then the eagle putt was more than 20 meters, and the last birdie putt was within two meters.

Q. You birdied 6, the par-3. What club did you hit in and how long was the putt?



KAORI YAMAMOTO: I hit 6-iron, and the shot was almost into the hole. That birdie putt was within one foot.

Q. You also set the 36-hole scoring record, which is 134 now, and you beat that by two strokes. Can you believe that you did that?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: I still can't believe I made it today. I now feel like -- yeah, I still cannot believe it now.

Q. Can you put yourself where you were caddying last year in this championship and now you're leading after 36 holes? Is that like you're dreaming?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: I was dreaming of attending this tournament, and then last year I was caddying for my best friend, and then I was thinking, I'm going to make it next year, and that was kind of my dream.

Q. Could you have dreamed that you would play this well?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: So far I can't believe my position, but yeah, I'm doing well. I'm proud of my golf today.

Q. Can you tell us who the person was that you caddied for last year and your relationship with her?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: We are still very good friends and very enhancing each other, and she's also playing well, too.

Q. She's here?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: Yeah, she's here. Eika Otake. We are not competitors with each other, so we enhance each other. We don't care if each other is playing well or not playing well; we always have a good relationship, so it doesn't matter how we are playing.

Q. Did Eika encourage you to try and qualify for this championship?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: Actually we caddied for each other during the qualifying tournament. I was playing in Texas and Eika was playing in California, Los Angeles, and we promised that we'd caddie for each other and then we will



play this week together.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about the JLPGA Senior Tour, how many events they play a year, and which championship might be the most important on that tour?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: I'm playing on the Senior Tour already four tournaments, and I'm also playing on the regular tour in Japan, so 10 tournaments already finished, and the most important tournament for me is this tournament.

Q. Have you ever played in the U.S. other than qualifiers? Have you ever played in a tournament in the United States before this one?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: No, never.

Q. So this is the first one?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: Yes.

Q. You're the leader, but we're only halfway through. What do you think you have to do to win this championship?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: I'm thinking a lot of very good players are here, so I am a bit afraid of what's behind me. So I'm thinking how to chase from them, escape from them.

Q. Have you ever watched any of these players who are chasing you play before either in person or on television like Annika Sorenstam or Juli Inkster?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: I'm a bit afraid of Annika Sorenstam and Juli Inkster, but I'm actually excited to escape from them.

Q. If you can, right?

KAORI YAMAMOTO: Yeah, if I can.

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