

# ANA Inspiration

Thursday, April 1, 2021

Rancho Mirage, California, USA

Mission Hills Country Club

## Lydia Ko

### Quick Quotes

LYDIA KO: This was probably the most calm like wind conditions I've played this golf course. It was I thought very gettable if you hit it in the right positions.

Overall I drove it pretty solid, so I felt like I had a lot of good looks to go for the pins. I made some clumsy mistakes with some iron shots, so hopefully clean that up over the next few days.

After being under par then over par, definitely nice to finish on a solid point and finishing 2-under for the day.

**Q. I know you talked a lot recently about being patient as you continue to put yourself in the mix. How will you maintain the patience over the next three days?**

LYDIA KO: I had a long talk and Sean about it. I think it's such a big key for me, and sometimes when you feel like things are going your way and you're close run out of patience quicker.

So I just have to focus on the aspects in my swing or in my game that I can control, and then kind of let the other things be and just make sure that I'm committed and hitting it with full commitment. What happens after that I really can't do much about it.

I feel like I'm still on this learning curve to be more patient out there. But it's a great week, so hopefully I've a lot of laughs and lots of patience when I'm playing.

**Q. Lydia, you see yourself on the first page of the leaderboard right there. You've had obviously a great history at this event when you can get off to a start like you did. How good does that feel?**

LYDIA KO: Yeah, overall I played -- I thought I played pretty solid. There was a stretch in the middle where I was struggling to make very good contact with my irons, but I tried to stay patient.

And I feel like every time I made a mistake I was able to kind of make a good bounce-back birdie, so it gives you



confidence when you're in that kind of momentum.

Yeah, definitely a solid start to this event.

**Q. What is it about this course that maybe draws your eye so well?**

LYDIA KO: I think you have to hit the ball fairly well here. We played here on bermudagrass last year and obviously back to the normal bent-ish grass. So it's nice to be back to what it's normally playing.

I'm guessing they're not going to cut the grass throughout the week so the rough is only going to get longer.

With the greens being firm I think it's super important to be on the short stuff and give yourself some chances to go at some pins. Hopefully be able to keep doing that well, which I feel like I was able to do that pretty good for most of my day today.

**Q. How did the greens maybe differ as the day progresses with the heat? How are they playing and what kind of strategy do you have to play into them?**

LYDIA KO: Yeah, especially when you're in between numbers definitely there is going to be a little less spin on the ball. So I think progressively as the day went on I was definitely playing for it to run out a bit more. Whether I hit it well and landed there was a different story.

But throughout the week, especially with the weather forecast to be pretty dry, I think the golf course is going to keep getting drier. That also means your drives are going to run out as well, so it's kind of a good and tough as well.

But every one is playing in the same conditions pretty much, so you have to play smart and strategically.

**Q. You're known for one of the most memorable shots on the 18th hole. Not only the wedge, but the decision to layup. With the tee moved up and with the grandstands gone now, how does your thinking change going into 18 this year?**

LYDIA KO: Yeah, it's definitely a different perspective going into that green. Normally even before we had that wall last year. We had that big grandstand a little further



back anyway, so even if you did hit it long most of the balls would hit it and you would be chipping from back behind.

But this year you have nothing to stop the ball if the ball is going over the green. I think Les and I just have to be smart and see what position I am in, and I think that's going to be a huge factor.

With a good drive I feel like most of the days if the tee is forward I'll be able to go for it. But the pin position is also a big thing. I had a practice round where I had a hybrid and 5-iron that was -- bounced on the green and ended up being long.

So I just have to see what kind of number I have. Even if you layup like Minjee showed today, three is still possible. So I think I just sometimes need to just take a step back and see what is the smartest option.

**Q. What did you do today?**

LYDIA KO: I hit a good driver. Good drive on the fairway and then hit a 9-iron and a pretty much a full lob wedge into the front pin. I think our whole group laid up with an iron or a wedge and then did that.

So, yeah, definitely makes you think. Even if you're going for it it requires a really good shot. If you pull it or miss it there is water everywhere.

Yeah, as you would say, it would need to be a very good golf shot to be on the green for that second one.

**Q. Did you have a number in mind where if I'm inside this number I'll consider it?**

LYDIA KO: I would say like a perfect 5-wood number. Like I was in 5-wood range today but the wind was slightly starting to pick up and if I miss it a little bit it's going straight in the water.

With the front pin I don't know how aggressive you can be because you don't have as much green to work with. I think it's all going to depend on the wind as well. If it's downwind and I'm having to hit a 5-iron into the green I don't know if I would go for it in that sense.

So it really is going to depend on the condition and how well I'm hitting it that day. It's still only a wedge shot out, and you're still able to set yourself up with a birdie opportunity, so I think I just have to be smart.

I have a tendency sometimes to be obviously aggressive and sometimes it works, but sometimes it may not. So I just kind of have to think everything and be patient and

discuss it with Les.

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