

ShopRite LPGA Classic

Presented by Acer

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Galloway, New Jersey, USA

Seaview, A Dolce Hotel

Lexi Thompson

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the media center for the 2021 ShopRite LPGA Classic presented by Acer. We are joined this afternoon by current Rolex Rankings No. 13 and the 2019 champion here at Seaview, Lexi Thompson. Lexi, thanks for stopping by today.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, of course.

THE MODERATOR: You're a past champion of this tournament, of course, but feelings are evoked when you return to New Jersey, and in what ways does the Bay Course bring out the best in your game?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, a lot of good memories. Not only winning here, but I made my pro debut here as well in 2010. So a lot of great memories. This tournament is just run so well.

The hospitality here you feel like you're at home. I got to play the course yesterday. It's in great shape for us, so all a matter if the weather stays nice.

Definitely some good memories. I hit my putt on 18 a few times yesterday and I was like, All right, this brings back good memories. I am just really looking forward to the week.

THE MODERATOR: Speaking of 18, I would imagine it's a little nicer to see the grandstands surrounding it.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, it really is. I'm so happy that people are allowed to come out to see us this week. We get some really good crowds out here, so hopefully we get a bunch of people out here supporting us.

THE MODERATOR: This victory was your most recent win on the LPGA Tour. Since you started on tour in 2012, how has the competition changed?

LEXI THOMPSON: I would say the competition has just gotten tougher and tougher. A lot of great things have happened on the LPGA Tour in general. We have gained

a lot more events, a lot more sponsorships and partnerships with everybody, and a lot my more fans as well and TV coverage, too.

But just the competition out here you have to have your A-plus game every single week to be able to win out here, and that's how it should be. It's a global tour, so we get the best of the best from everywhere.

THE MODERATOR: I'm going to throw a curve ball at you and make you think. The ShopRite Classic has the title of the world's largest pro-am. Do you have any fun memories or stories from over the years -- that you can share on camera.

LEXI THOMPSON: From ShopRite?

THE MODERATOR: Yeah.

LEXI THOMPSON: Not one that stands out. I've had so many great here to the ShopRite LPGA Classic Pro-Am. Everybody is always so nice and very upbeat. Not one in particular. Trust me, I would tell you if one stood out.

I've just met so many amazing people along the way, especially here. I've probably had the most fun in these pro-ams at this event, so I am looking forward to tomorrow's.

Q. You won some 54-hole events, some 72-hole events. What's the difference in mindset?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, in three-day events, I was actually just talking about that with my caddie yesterday, it's just -- you can't really have just an okay day with a three-day event. You have to be guns blazing, go for the birdies, obviously depending on the golf course and weather conditions score-wise.

But yeah, you just have to play probably a little bit more aggressive when it's a three-day event because you know you have to make birdies because people are going to make moves right after the first day and into the second. There is not that time frame where you can make a big



step like a four-day event.

Like Saturday is moving day. But same mindset. I mean, for me I've worked extremely hard on my I game right now, so just staying patient out there, staying in the moment, and just really taking one shot at a time.

I know I've put in the work, so three or four days, just got to take it one shot at a time and not think ahead too much.

Q. You've also won on the longest courses we play, and this is the shortest course we play.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, that is very true.

Q. What's the difference in your mindset there?

LEXI THOMPSON: Drivers, 2-irons. Definitely a different mindset. This golf course and like last week's too, it's a lot more placement golf, so you think more into the tee shots, just getting it into the fairway, giving yourself a mid-iron to a wedge at the pins.

I don't hit too many drivers here, either. I hit a lot of 2-irons, a lot of 3-woods, and sometimes that actually works out because it does get pretty windy out here. So keeping it below the wind rather than just sailing a driver out there.

So it's all a matter of mindset. I love hitting my driver obviously and playing long challenging golf courses, but this is challenging too, especially if it gets windy. There is a lot of birdies that are made out there.

But you can play it aggressively, too. If the wind gets going you have to be careful on some holes.

Q. One of the last ones from me, first of two weeks in New Jersey. On Monday the USGA is inviting past champions up to the headquarters just up the road here to go to the Wall of Champions and through the museum. Do you plan to attend, and have you ever seen your name on the Wall of Champions?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, I didn't know that was happening, but I probably would've gone if I wasn't playing a sponsor outing Monday. So I'll be there, but that's amazing to hear. I wish I could have made it. Unfortunately I won't be able to.

Hopefully people will send me some pictures or something. That would've been an amazing experience.

Q. You mentioned the pro-am before. It's really the kind of the foundation of this event, especially -- I

mean, after years absent, how key is it for this event and the tour to have it back? It's probably why the tournament was pushed back from May to October is so the pro-am could happen basically.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, of course. First of all, I love pro-ams. I think it's a great foundation for any event. That's are our sponsors, what makes this event happen, and I'm so grateful for it.

As long as all the other players are as well, and we have so much fun with it. I enjoy getting to meet new people, so it's great to have the ShopRite LPGA Classic and so have so many pro-ams and have these people that are our partners and our sponsors by our side, and to be able to give them five, six hours of our time just really getting to know them and building friendships along the way.

I think that's the biggest thing, just to show them we're is grateful for what they do for us.

Q. The other thing you mentioned earlier was having fans back this weekend. Obviously there weren't fans last year. Just as a player, how does that -- do you feed off the energy? Some people like to get in their own world. How is it playing with fans as opposed to not playing with fans?

LEXI THOMPSON: It's so different with no fans. You know, it was very different coming right out of COVID and playing with no people out there. It was like, all right, I made a putt, I'm like patting myself on the back. I didn't really know what to do.

I love playing in front of people. I think the fans make the game. Hearing the chants and hearing people rooting you on gets you fired up. I can speak for myself it gives me a purpose to go out there and play well. I just love seeing the kids out there, the smiles on their faces, and signing all autographs, good or bad day.

I think they make the game and you have to show that support.

Q. How do you assess where you've been playing? Couple Top 5 finishes. Where do you think your game is coming into this basically?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, thanks. I've been working extremely hard on my game with Martin Hall when I go home on different parts of my game, little swing changes I been working on. I had a really good week last week. A matter of a few more putts dropping in for me.

The things I've been working on have slowly been



improving on my game, and that's really all I can do. I know that I've been putting on the work on and off the golf course, physically, mentally, and that's all I can do.

My game is in a good spot. I'm just going to continue to work on it and hopefully see it progress.

Q. And last one from me, we're usually here in late May, early June. Obviously late September, October. Any difference in the way the course plays five months basically?

LEXI THOMPSON: I just got to play it yesterday. First off, it's in great shape for us. Definitely better than it was last year. Last year they had quite a bit of rain and a you few spots were iffy out there.

Course is in great shape. Greens are rolling well. Like I said, it's all a matter of the how windy it gets. It was a bit cooler out today, which was really nice.

So we'll see. But matter of difference maybe not as firm. The greens are still a little bit bouncy, but maybe the fairways aren't as firm.

Q. Mike took my one question. I wanted to ask you about the Solheim Cup. What was the experience like for you and I understand you had family caddying for you.

LEXI THOMPSON: I did. Solheim Cup is such an amazing experience. It's my favorite event that we ever have, and any time I can represent my country it's the highest honor you can have. To be able to share that moment with my brother, Nick on the bag it was so amazing. He got along with everybody, as I knew going into the week.

But he made it that much more special to have a sibling by my side to be able to share that special moment. I know it wasn't the outcome that we wanted, but the Europeans played some amazing golf. We did what we could.

It was just an amazing experience, me pulling off a few shots under pressure, making a few of those putts. There is nothing like being able to represent your country and being able to pull those shots off.

Q. Seemed like that was a neat match with you and Anna in the singles. What was that like for you?

LEXI THOMPSON: It was. It was a lot of fun. Definitely wasn't surprised to see that after the previous Solheim Cup, or a few ago, to be able to be paired up with her. She's such an amazing player, so I knew I had to have my

A game and be making some birdies out there.

It was a great match. Of course we made it to 18, as we do, and all square. I'm like, I think next time we should just tee it up and be like, All right, you just want to halve it right now, because nobody wants to win it apparently.

It was a great match. I know quite a few people out there were supporting us and watching it, so we put up a good fight.

Q. One more from me. Do you have any memory of your first time stepping on the grounds here at the age of 12?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah. Well, at the age 12? Well, I remember just my first time as a professional coming out in the NASCAR, pulling up in the circle here and struggling to get out of the NASCAR window.

But that was by far my favorite memory. I didn't play well that year, but it was quite an experience to be able to make my professional debut here. Very special moment for me.

Q. Have you played Merion before?

LEXI THOMPSON: I never have, so I'm really looking forward to playing there one day.

Q. You'll like that.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, that's what I heard.

THE MODERATOR: I got a couple more before we let you go. I think fans have kind of seen you and your partnership with Rocket Mortgage take off this year with a lot more appearances media-wise, pro-am-wise. Fans have always enjoyed seeing you in the QBE Shootout, but I was interested to know, have you ever thought about a PGA event and maybe the Rocket Mortgage Classic down the line? Has that been on your radar outside of the normal LPGA schedule?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, it's definitely been on my mind, especially with both my brothers playing on the men's tour as well, and Curtis playing on the PGA Tour.

I think it would be a great opportunity. Of course I would have to think about what golf course I could manage. But growing up with two older brothers, playing against the guys, it's kind of natural for me.

But I would say the only way I would do is if like my brother was playing and they could make like this story out of it. I would just want to go and just experience it all and put my

game to a test I guess and just enjoy it.

THE MODERATOR: Absolutely. I think your relationship with Rocket Mortgage and Bryson obviously has given a glimpse into what some more joint LPGA and PGA opportunities could provide. One of those, the Aon Risk Reward Challenge. What has the impact of that challenge meant to yourself and other players, especially as you sit in fourth with five events to go with a chance to win the \$1 million prize?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, first off, I didn't know even what place I was, so thanks for telling me. I think it's great. Obviously the PGA Tour has it as well and I think it's great for the LPGA Tour to have it. Just to have separate challenge rather than our week-to-week tournaments and have a race to go along with it. I think it's great.

Hopefully we have more PGA and LPGA Tour events combined. I think it would be great for fans to see. I think fans would really support and absolutely love it, but I think having that challenge for both of us, it grows the game and it's great to see. We need more things like that to build both tours.

THE MODERATOR: Now that you know where you are, a little more emphasis going forward?

LEXI THOMPSON: No. I don't really even pay attention to what holes they are, because I play the way I do. Play aggressively and do what I can. So it wouldn't make much of a difference knowing what hole it is.

THE MODERATOR: Just birdie every one.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, just try to birdie every hole.

THE MODERATOR: Lexi, thanks for joining us, and best of luck this week.

LEXI THOMPSON: Thank you.

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