

Pelican Women's Championship

Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Belleair, Florida, USA

Pelican Golf Club

Minjee Lee

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good Wednesday afternoon everyone. Welcome to the virtual media center at the Pelican Women's Championship presented by DEX Imaging & Konica Minolta here in Belleair, Florida.

Without further ado, we are joined by current No. 8 in the Rolex Rankings, Minjee Lee. Thank you so much for joining us today.

MINJEE LEE: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Well, you get to Pelican Golf Club fresh off a win on the Ladies European Tour at the Dubai Moonlight Classic. Just take us through the week in Dubai. Unique experience playing under the lights, and then especially taking home the trophy.

MINJEE LEE: Yeah, we got to play two rounds pretty much at nighttime, so it was kind of special to be able to experience it day and night.

Yeah, I mean, it was really different playing at nighttime in comparison to the day in terms of what you can see and what you can't see.

So, no, it was just really nice and I won in a playoff, so it was good end to the week.

THE MODERATOR: Was there a lot of transitioning between playing under natural light with the sun versus under the artificial light?

MINJEE LEE: I think it's mostly like the depth perception. It's a little bit harder to adjust at nighttime.

But I got to play one practice round at night, so yeah, it was fun.

THE MODERATOR: Is that something you would like to see maybe come to the LPGA Tour, or do you think if we want that we'll go play on the LET for that?

MINJEE LEE: I think it would be fun; maybe a different format. Played like a Pro-Am style the first two days. Could happen, I guess.

THE MODERATOR: Absolutely. You have eight total wins as a professional between the LPGA and the LET, and the A LPG Tour. Is there any specific title that stands out looking back at them, and how eager are you to get back in the winner's circle?

MINJEE LEE: Probably Kingsmill was my first LPGA win, so that's probably a special one for me. But all my wins I think have been a really sort of -- it's sort of shaped my career as I've gone along.

So they've all been pretty -- they've been milestones in my career in terms of development.

THE MODERATOR: New event on the LPGA Tour scheduled this week, Pelican Women's Championship. What is your overall impression of the course or the first couple days?

MINJEE LEE: Well, I think the wind will play a really big factor in I guess the scoring. If it's not as much wind I think the course is pretty wide open. A little bit of the greens you got to map properly and definitely want to be on the right portion of the greens.

There is quite a lot of undulation, and I think they're trying to speed up the greens. So I think with the wind and the speed of the greens and just with everything I think it's going to be quite a tough, challenging golf course.

THE MODERATOR: Tee to green not too bad, but once you step foot on this is greens.

MINJEE LEE: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Just looking out at 18, you got quite a few bumps and humps out there.

MINJEE LEE: Definitely the 18th is playing quite long. I think it's straight -- when I played it was straight into the wind. Yeah. Just depends on wind, I think and I think a lot



the lag putts will be important this week.

THE MODERATOR: It's a par 70, so not as many par-5s for scoring as probably many players would've liked. Does that change anything with the game plan at all?

MINJEE LEE: I don't think so, but obviously want to make a birdie on the par-5s. None of them are reachable in the wind direction that I played it, so just be a three-shot hole for me when I play those.

Yeah, hopefully my wedge game is on pointe.

THE MODERATOR: How nice is it to have the support of not only Pelican Golf Club, but sponsors like DEX Imaging and Konica Minolta in what has been a crazy and tough year on companies, and to have this inaugural event?

MINJEE LEE: Yeah, definitely we're all really grateful for them to step up and be able to put on the event for us. I know it was -- it's been a tough year for everyone, and just with COVID and we weren't really sure which events were going to be played.

We are all happy to be here, and the weather is lovely. Yeah, really looking forward to the week.

THE MODERATOR: Wasn't a cloud in the sky.

MINJEE LEE: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Across 12 events you have not missed a cut and earned five Top 10s along the way. You sit at No. 5 I believe in the Race to the CME Globe. All those results include a third place in the AIG Women's Open and the T7 at the ANA Inspiration, so shining bright.

In what has been a crazy year, where do you feel your game is and have you found it difficult to find a rhythm?

MINJEE LEE: I think when I first came out to play those five events I got off to a pretty good start. I think that really helped me with like the momentum going through.

So the rest of the events that I played -- we had a couple breaks here and there so I could tweak my shots a little, work on the things that I needed to.

So I don't think it's really been that different for me. It's definitely better to have the crowd, but it's just been quite -- I think it's been quite relaxing in terms of just being out on the golf course and playing.

But other than that, I don't think my plan on the golf course or anything or my practices really changed.

THE MODERATOR: Haven't missed a cut, so...

Have you learned anything maybe for future seasons going forward? We've played some events and had a break here and there. Have you learned anything about -- take another week or two off here or there during the week, do you think it'll change at all for you?

MINJEE LEE: I think over the course of the six years I've been on tour I've been slowly playing less and less. I mean, obviously I've taken on a lot of events throughout the years, but now that I sort of know the courses and sort of know how many events are good for my body to be mentally and physically sharp, I can really plan on which events I can peak on.

In terms of that I think I've gotten better at scheduling than I was before in my rookie year where I wanted to play everything. Just matured in that way a little bit.

THE MODERATOR: When you're young you just want to come out here and just play everything. Have you spent a period of time in the Tampa Bay area?

MINJEE LEE: This is the first time I've been here. It's really nice. I want to go check out the beach this afternoon.

THE MODERATOR: Good idea.

MINJEE LEE: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: They have some good beaches around here. Speaking of Florida courses, I know they all have some similar tendencies and they all have kind of that bermuda I think that everybody notices. How does your game lineup with a Florida golf course, especially this one?

MINJEE LEE: I think around the greens if you're chipping or just off, there is quite a lot of grain, so I'd opt to maybe putting those just to get like the ball rolling through a little nicer.

If I have to chip then I will, but I think it's a little bit more difficult than like the bentgrass that we usually play on or the Kentucky Blue. Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Hello, Minjee. Congratulations on your great recent play. You gave some great advice for PGA Junior League Girls. Can you give three keys on your path to becoming a successful LPGA Tour player?



MINJEE LEE: Three?

THE MODERATOR: Keys.

Q. Keys on your path.

MINJEE LEE: To becoming an LPGA player? For the juniors?

THE MODERATOR: Yeah.

MINJEE LEE: Okay. I think, I mean, I know it sounds cliché, but always have fun, enjoy your time out there. I think it's really important to find some buddies that you always play with. They'll encourage you. They'll also be your challenge. I think it's healthy to have a really kind of good rivalry.

Also, practice. I think when I was younger I practiced the most. I think it's really important to always keep up with the basics and always come back to your foundation.

Q. And one last question: At this point in your career, do you rely on your old school type instinct, feel, timing, rhythm, balance, or what portion of it is new school with the numbers and equipment, or is there a balance in your game?

MINJEE LEE: I think I'm sort of a little bit more old school. I go by what I feel is right and I have -- but I do with my coach sometimes I go on TrackMan. But it's in moderation. I don't get caught up too much with the numbers. I just keep that to my coach. He understands that more than I do.

Q. Who is your healthy rivalry?

MINJEE LEE: I think everybody, but obviously probably the girls that are in to the top 10 in the Rolex Rankings. I mean, anybody can win out here, but it is very hard to win on the LPGA as of late because there are so much amazing talent.

Yeah, well, I guess the No. 1 ranked person is my healthy rivalry.

THE MODERATOR: Jin Young.

MINJEE LEE: I guess so.

THE MODERATOR: Would you say you guys are good friends?

MINJEE LEE: Yeah, I think so. I mean, I don't -- I haven't played with her in a very long time. Yeah, no, I think so. I

try to be my own rivalry, rival with other people as well. Does that make sense?

THE MODERATOR: That does make sense. Well, last couple questions I have before we let you go. You're a native of Australia.

MINJEE LEE: Yep.

THE MODERATOR: Next week is American Thanksgiving week. Have you ever had a chance to experience American thanksgiving?

MINJEE LEE: No, I haven't. I'm never really here for thanksgiving. No, this will be my first time.

THE MODERATOR: You're staying around?

MINJEE LEE: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Any plans?

MINJEE LEE: I think I'm going to have Thanksgiving with my housing in Texas. They're my really good -- they're like my I guess home away parents. Yeah, I think I'm going to spend it with them.

THE MODERATOR: What is a Thanksgiving equivalent in Australia?

MINJEE LEE: Oh, I don't think we have an equivalent. No.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. That's fine.

MINJEE LEE: Yeah, we don't have --

THE MODERATOR: That's okay.

MINJEE LEE: I guess like Australia Day you can give thanks to Australia.

THE MODERATOR: There you go. Last one I have for you. Enjoying lots of good food is a Thanksgiving tradition, of course, and just a general holiday tradition I would say as well. Is there any specific food dish or recipe that you've come across during the holiday time over the years that you tend to enjoy more than another?

MINJEE LEE: Just like in terms of holiday or any holiday?

THE MODERATOR: Yeah, we'll say any holiday.

MINJEE LEE: There is like a Korean Thanksgiving I guess, so all the foods that they make for that time of the year is like amazing. They have all sorts -- it's just like so

much and like I love it. I love food, so...

THE MODERATOR: You have one in particular?

MINJEE LEE: They make these like pancake things and they make all different flavors and you can put whatever meats you want in it.

Yeah, that's probably one of my favorites.

THE MODERATOR: What are they called?

MINJEE LEE: (In Korean.)

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Have you ever tried to make anything like that?

MINJEE LEE: It's not that hard to make actually. You need flour and stuff, but my grandma makes it a lot so I like it. All Korean is good when grandma makes it.

THE MODERATOR: Awesome. We do have one more. Bob?

Q. And finally, thank you for your time. Is there a significant moment early when you were a young girl that made you deep inside really believe that you could compete on the LPGA Tour that you could share with our junior girls?

MINJEE LEE: I think when I was 16 I won the U.S. girls, but that year I think was out for like six or seven months that I didn't play. So just finished school and stuff like that.

I came to the States and played my first U.S. Girls and I think that was sort of like my turning point that I really wanted to play on the LPGA. I think that really just gave me a little bit more confidence. Like I played with Alison Lee and Brooke Henderson was there and Ariya and Moriya and all the girls that I'm out here right now with. They were all there.

So I think that was sort of like my junior moment that I realized that I wanted to come out here.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, everyone, and thank you for stopping by. Best of luck.

MINJEE LEE: Thank you.

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