

The Annika driven by Gainbridge at Pelican

Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Belleair, Florida, USA

Pelican Golf Club

Nelly Korda

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right welcome Nelly Korda here to the press conference here at the The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican.

We'll start with the obvious. You just played nine holes with the Caitlin Clark. Just tell us about the experience.

NELLY KORDA: It was so amazing. She's so sweet, so nice. It was nice it kind of get to spend some time with her. We've messaged a little on Instagram beforehand but to get to respond some time with her and to see the influence that she has on people, bringing people out here, and to see how amazing of an influence she is just for sports, was really cool to see firsthand today.

Q. Saw you two a hug and exchange golf balls. What was the coolest part about today and probably her too?

NELLY KORDA: Just chitchatting on the golf course, asking her questions, her asking me. We just felt like two friends hanging out.

Q. Is there anything you were picking each other's brains on? You've been doing professional sports a little bit longer than her. Are you guys trading knowledge at all?

NELLY KORDA: Not really. Just asked her how the transition was from college to the WNBA. She said she's enjoying some time off now because she hasn't really had an off-season. I didn't really know that season was so short, but she said she is enjoying some time off. I think it starts in maybe April again she said, like camp starts. Yeah.

Q. Obviously went ahead and clinched player of the year. Why wouldn't you? What does it mean to have that honor and get one of coveted Rolex Player of the Year trophies?



NELLY KORDA: Just reassure me that I'm doing the right thing and all the hard work is paying off and I have a great team behind me. I'm the player and hitting the shots, but at the end of the day there is so much more going on behind the scenes.

To have their support through the entire season of all the ups and a lot of downs, too. Yes, have I won Player of the Year. Yeah, there were so many great highs. Also some really lows. To have their support and to celebrate this kind of victory with them is really nice, too.

Q. This is obviously not her main sport.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. Maybe not fair to ask for your takeaways of her game. Putting herself out there the way she did, what was your impression of how she handled everything?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, it was a great to see how relaxed she was. Obviously with the media attention she has gotten probably in the past year and a half, two years, you can see how she's comfortable playing in front of a larger crowd.

And she was just really enjoying it. You can tell. Like she's definitely very talented. She was picking the ball really clean. She was losing a couple shots to the right, but I asked her how many times a week she plays and I think with the amount of obligations she has she probably gets to the golf course once a week.

So just play once a week she was playing really well.

Q. Did she ask you for any tips out there?

NELLY KORDA: No, she did not. Nine holes is kind of iffy. I'm still kind of trying to practice in a sense and putt on the greens, and then on top of it chitchatting with your other partners as well.

Q. Was that the first time you ever met her?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, first time.



Q. So then secondly, we haven't seen you in a little bit. What have you been up to?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, bit of an injury, neck injury before Asia, actually my last practice session before going to Asia. Super bummed to not go. I love playing in front of all the fans in Korea and Malaysia. Malaysia being one of my favorite stops as well as Korea.

But just a lot of rehab. I haven't really been playing too much golf. I think I've been playing for the past week and a half. I really, really wanted to play this week so in a sense maybe I rushed my rehab to get to these two events because they were important to me playing in front of a bit of a home crowd here and season championship in Naples. Definitely want to be ready for that.

Not a lot of hours that I've gotten to play, but going to take week by week and hopefully be ready for next week as all.

Q. Long season. You talk about the highs and lows. How do you feel you grew through both?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, the highs, I mean, gosh, January and like the win in Bradenton being feels like I lived nine lives since then. So much has gone on since that win.

And I would say definitely very learned to lean more on my team. Very grateful for my team through the hard times. You know, they're people you can never replace, and I hope they know how grateful I am to have them in my corner.

And also to enjoy life a little bit more. You know, it goes by in a blur. My job in a sense is kind of the love of my life. Like I love golf so much. I love being out here. I love inspiring the next generation.

I hope that with everything that has gone on this year I've taken some time to reflect that it is good to take a step away sometimes and take a little bit more time for yourself. Go on a trip, disconnect, also put your head down and grind because at the end of the day you're trying to perform.

But I would say leaning a little bit more on my team for support and just enjoying the ride. I mean, not being afraid to make mistakes. I think I'm human. As an individual and athlete you're put a little bit more under a microscope when you have bad days especially if you're maybe a top-ranked player.

So knowing that I'm going to have bad days and it's okay and not to really look at all the criticism. Just believe in

your talents and hard work.

Q. Do you feel any pain? Have you had to modify anything because of your neck?

NELLY KORDA: No thankfully, no more pain. I did feel a good bit that's why I couldn't hit for a while. But have done a lot of rehab. Kim and I have spent a lot of time together. I feel really bad for her. She needs a vacation away from me.

Very grateful for her and how much she worked with me on getting ready for this week.

Q. Were you just hitting a golf shot and it was a flukey thing?

NELLY KORDA: I think it was bothering me for a bit. I was really, really struggling with migraines the week of Solheim and the week after, Cincinnati. The only way it was not hurting was sleeping in a dark room. I think it just led to my injury.

Q. Finally, what is your hope of maybe a long-term relationship with Caitlin Clark and the LPGA? What do you hope comes from today?

NELLY KORDA: I think it's great for women's sports. I love that she has a love for the game of golf. Me, like I've never really tuned into watching basketball before her honestly. I think it's just growing the interest in all of women's sports. I hope that's what grows from this relationship.

Q. She got you tuning in? Will you watch?

NELLY KORDA: I will be, yeah.

Q. It's a long year. How do you break down a season at the end of a year? Do you dissect it? Leave it as it was?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I think what's happened has happened. You're always looking ahead. It's great to reminisce and look at the past, at your accomplishments, but that's not going to get you anywhere.

Take a little bit of time off. I have the Grant Thornton Invitational in December and then playing PNC with my dad, so I have a few more events after the season is done. Then I'll take some time off and reassess, pick the tournaments I'm going to play for next year and make a schedule.

Q. I do want to ask one last question about the

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tournament.

NELLY KORDA: Yes.

Q. I know you won here twice before. What's the goals for this week knowing you have already accomplished so much? Last time he were here, Bradenton, you won. What were some goals for a tournament that you've won before?

NELLY KORDA: It's so nice to play in front of family, in front of greens, so close to home. The goal this week obviously with having so much time off beforehand is just to come out and play golf, to tee it up, and see how it goes.

I'm going to try my hardest. Going to go out and obviously the number one goal in the back of my head is lifting the trophy on Sunday.

But I'm just happy to kind of be out here and see how it goes.

Q. Nonserious question. How is your jump shot?

NELLY KORDA: Probably needs work. Probably not that good. Maybe I'll ask Caitlin for some advice. Maybe next time we get together it'll be on a basketball court.

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