

# CME Group Tour Championship

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

## Lexi Thompson

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, very pleased to be joined by Lexi Thompson here to the CME Group Tour Championship. How does it feel to be back?

LEXI THOMPSON: Feels amazing to be back. A lot of the great memories from just this area and always one of my favorite events. I'm a Florida girl, so I get a lot of friends and family to come out here and support me.

I just enjoy and embrace the whole week.

**Q. I know one of your last appearances as Tiburón. What has this golf course meant to you and what you've done at this venue?**

LEXI THOMPSON: It's meant a lot to me. I played some good golf on this golf course. A lot of the great experiences. But the course is just a great layout in general; always in good shape for us.

We get treated like royalty here from the hospitality here at the golf course, so we can't ask for anything more.

A lot of amazing memories to be cherished from this event and this golf course.

**Q. Don't want to drop any emotion, but what are the emotions coming into this week? You're playing at Grant Thornton in a few weeks, but this is your last LPGA event for a little bit. Last as a full time member. What are some of the emotion you're feeling this week?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, probably be a little bit of Annie notion until week. Like I said before when I made the announcement it's just from full-time golf. I may tee it up a few times next year. A matter of when and what tournaments I don't know. I am just going to take time for myself and take it day by day.

I am just going to embrace the week. This is one of my favorite events. I get so many people out here that support



me and love me. I'm just going to enjoy it every step of the way.

Looks like we are going to get some great weather, so that's a plus.

Just going to enjoy the experience.

**Q. Do you have anything special planned for this week? Who all is coming out to watch?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I feel like everybody I know is coming out that can, which is great. I feel so much love coming into the week.

Nothing special planned. I have my usual gloves and shoes to be signed for all the fans. Hopefully we get some really big crowds out here to support all of us and see those little girls and boys out here that are involved in the game.

I'll be giving out some shoes. I don't have that many anymore. I've given out so many.

I'm just looking forward to the week seeing everybody come out and support women's golf.

**Q. What has it been like? Any favorite memories since you made the announcement that you have notes you've gotten or interactions with fans as you wind down the season?**

LEXI THOMPSON: That's tough. I don't know one in particular, but I guess every since the announcement, just the amount of love from the fans and everybody that has supported me throughout my career, whether it's messages through Instagram or notes or signs that people make or give to me at the end of my round, it puts me in tears because that's why I played the game. I wanted to make an impact on the sport.

I'm not going anywhere. I am still involved in the game, and I want to lead the impact and get kids involved at a younger age and see them enjoy it. Seeing the smiles on their faces, whatever it is that I was a role model, that's meant more than anything.

**Q. Brittany said that she will play Chevron next year. I**

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**know you said you don't know exactly what next year looks like. Is that one you have circled on your calendar?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, it would probably be one of the ones I have circled on my calendar. Even though it's a different venue and sponsor now, it's still a memory that I'll cherish for the rest of my life getting my first major win at that event.

It's very special to me. Will be one of the ones that I definitely think about playing for sure.

**Q. Lexi, what do you envision a year in your life will look like with some competitive golf, not as much as the last 15 years or whatever? What will you fill some of that time with?**

LEXI THOMPSON: It's look like more of a normal life I would imagine. I just launched my Lexi Fitness app a few months ago. That will keep me a little bit busier.

I want to travel, not for golf, but travel and get to explore some of the places that I've been interested in. Just take that time for myself. Get to spend it with my friends and family and just maybe pick up another hobby or two.

Honestly, just feeling like I don't have to go somewhere or be anywhere any just do nothing. That will be nice for a little bit. And just really cherish the moments that really matter with my family at home.

**Q. Do you see yourself going out there and playing more golf for fun, not having to be on a schedule and be competitive?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Uh-huh.

**Q. Just going where you want and playing for fun with fellow pros?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, of course. I can definitely see that in my future, going out there, playing with friends and having a good time. Of course when or if I do tee it up I'll be practicing and making sure my game is right for those events that I do tee it up. I'm still very competitive. That will never go away.

Yeah, a lot more fun rounds, whether it's sponsor outings I do getting to meet new people with my sponsors and building those friendships and relationships I've cherished along the way. I enjoy that aspect of the game.

Yeah, just going out and having a good time.

**Q. Lexi, you won and you've won big. What would a \$4 million win mean to you?**

LEXI THOMPSON: It would mean a lot, of course. You know, I think we all have that in the back of our minds. But no matter what the purse is, as athletes we go into every tournament wanting to win.

What Terry Duffy with CME has done for this event to show the appreciation he has for women's golf and for us just being here, we're so grateful for the partnership we have with him and CME.

Just to be able to tee it up for that amount of money, that's a huge deal. I think that just shows where the women's game is going and hopefully we'll move further and better in the future.

**Q. Last week slow play popped up again. My question is: Do you think slow play is an issue on the LPGA?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yes, I definitely think it's an issue. Rounds shouldn't be taking more than four and a half hours, especially in threesomes. Four and a half should be the max.

Look, you're going to hit a good shot or bad shot. Might as well not take that much time over it. It's just a game. Just do your routine, commit, and hit it.

It's definitely a problem out here right now. So I don't know what we'll do to try to get it resolved but hopefully just play quicker.

**Q. I guess that was my question. I don't know if you heard Charley's solution.**

LEXI THOMPSON: I did.

**Q. If you were commissioner for a day, how would you solve it?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, hers was a bit of an aggressive comment. I don't disagree with it. It has to be done. Something has to be done to quicken up the play out there, whether it's fines or whatever it is. Needs to be done because we need to play quicker. Fans aren't enjoying being out there for five and a half hours in the heat.

Hopefully be quicker this week.

**Q. This year I think it's safe to say that in women's golf and on the LPGA Tour, that this could have been like a turning point year with the increased interest in women's sports, the Caitlin Clark interest, with Nelly**

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**playing the way she has. Me question is: Do you think the LPGA captured that moment properly?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Of the Caitlin Clark or Nelly?

**Q. The increase in women's sports. Yeah, the Caitlin Clark movement, were they able to kind of ride that wave and go past that?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, well, first and foremost, I think women's sports in general are on such a high right now and moving in the right direction, whether it's growing in each sport or golf in general.

You know, I've always said in any interviews since I turned pro the game of golf our sponsors, tournaments, purses, they've all raised and our TV coverage has increased.

I think we could keep on improving. I think there is a lot more room for improvement. I think we're making as many stories as we can and focusing on all the good, but I think there is so many talents out here and so many stories that we can really focus on and really bring in a lot of fans and bring in a bigger fan base than what we have.

I think there is just more room for improvement. We're improving right now, but there is a lot more to go.

**Q. I guess bigger question, have you ever thought of a way that those stories could be told like that?**

LEXI THOMPSON: That's a great question as well. I think just showing the personalities of the players out here. Of course everybody sees the talent. I think more and more people need to realize how talented the women are out here and come out and support us. Because I don't think TV does it justice. I think you have to see it in person.

But, yeah, there is so many great personalities out here. It's just a matter the making those stories based on those people that are willing to open up and really show the world they're our more than just golf. There is way more to us than that.

**Q. My 16 year old nephew is trying to break 80 for the first time and shoots in the mid-80s right now. What's one quick tip you would you give him?**

LEXI THOMPSON: That I would give him to break 80? How long has he been playing?

**Q. Been playing about four years.**

LEXI THOMPSON: Oh, that's pretty good then. He's going in the right direction. I always say the biggest typical

that helped out the most was when I went out and practiced was always have a goal in mind. Always have something you want to improve on. It could be the smallest or biggest of things, the mental side. As we know, golf is such a mental sport. Could be working on the mental side and visualizing shots.

So going out there with a purpose. Don't just go out to the golf course and be like I'm just going to hit some balls today or play. Have a goal, something you want to improve on. That way you're not wasting any time and it's always productive practice.

Even if you struggle a little bit you had a goal, you committed, and you're striving to be better.

**Q. When did you start giving away your shoes and how many do you think you've given away?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Oh, a lot. Thank God Puma makes a lot. I would say I started giving them away at Kraft Nabisco, one of my first few Kraft Nabiscos I played in. I remember pictures with little girls there and they were holding my shoes and they were up on the desk in front of me.

That was probably when I was 15, 16.

**Q. Wow. And do you do it every week?**

LEXI THOMPSON: No, not every week. Unless the shoes are a little beat. Then I'm like you really want them? But, yeah, I love doing it. Just like I said earlier, to see the smile on fan's faces and the impact, that means more to me than anything.

**Q. Your peers often comment on how good you are with sponsors and thank you notes and pro-am parties. Where did that come from, those lessons? Why has this been such an important priority to you over the years?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I would say with me it's come from how I was raised from from my parents growing up. No matter what I accomplished, and what I did on the golf course, how talented I was, in my mind I wasn't any better than anybody else. I was the same person and I needed to treat everybody the same way.

To me with being -- with my sponsors and the sponsors of our tournaments, going to pro-am parties and in the pro-ams, that's what is important to the sponsors this give the money to help us be able to play week in and week out. To show my appreciation, that's the least I can do with how much we're doing for us.

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We're just out here golfing but we wouldn't be able to do it if it wasn't for the support the sponsors. It's the hospitality, the course staff. You know, food staff inside. There is so much that goes into the tournament that I think a lot of the people don't realize and I think we all just need to be grateful for every single person that's on site every single week.

**Q. One last slow play question. Do you think it's gotten worse?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I do, yeah.

**Q. Why?**

LEXI THOMPSON: That's a great question. I don't really know why. I mean, it's still a tournament, win or lose, there is only one of winner out there. I don't really know why it's gotten worse, but it has unfortunately.

There needs to be something done.

**Q. How would you describe what this final year on Tour has been like for you?**

LEXI THOMPSON: It's been great. I mean, yes, emotional, of course. After the announcement it was an emotional few weeks not really knowing what to expect with the reaction from everybody, but it's been incredible.

The amount of love and support that I've gotten from my fans, sponsors, and just the players, it means the world. I didn't really know what to expect when I made the announcement, but to feel that love and support, it means a tremendous amount to me.

I'm still playing quite a bit after I made the announcement, so happy I was able to play a few good events and hopefully finish strong at the Grant Thornton and really enjoy every step along the way. Like I said, probably tee it up few times next year.

Just going to take time for myself and make sure I'm happy when I do tee it up.

**Q. With all you learned all these years out here competing, what would you go back and say to little Lexi starting out?**

LEXI THOMPSON: To little Lexi starting out. Hmm. That's tough. I would say be easier on yourself. I've always been one to be very competitive and hard on myself.

But that's just how I was grown up to be with two older brothers. All right, I'm going to be better, do better. That's always the fight in me and I'll never lose that. Over the years just being easier on myself and enjoying every step along the way. Be grateful for every moment you have and ever person you meet and really cherish all the moments.

**Q. Is there anything you would've done differently during your time out here that maybe would've kept you out here longer?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I don't think I would've done anything differently. You know, this is my 14th year. It's not like I was just out here for five. I was out here for a long time and played a lot of golf. I wouldn't say my first few years because of my age I wasn't able to play a full time schedule. First few years I played a lot of the full time golf. In judge junior, amateur golf I played every single week.

I wouldn't have done anything differently. I'm still grateful for every moment I've had out here, the relationships I've built. I'm just going to enjoy it, enjoy it all this week.

**Q. With seemingly a lot of change in pro golf, men and women out there, what would be -- and a lot of ideas on the table -- what would be one big ticket out item you would want to see changed?**

LEXI THOMPSON: In women's golf?

**Q. Yeah.**

LEXI THOMPSON: One big thing that I would like to see change, I would like to see better TV coverage for us and keep on increasing the purses each and every week. I think we've moved in the right direction on a few of our events, but to keep on increasing on that, showing how talented we really are.

And the appreciation, of course we're grateful for all the partnerships we have. We are so grateful for what we have. So I think just keep improving on that, the TV coverage. I would like to have more live LPGA golf on the Golf Channel or on regular NBC or network.

**Q. What's something low-key that maybe only you would know? Anything specific to the tournaments, setups, whatever? Something that has just itched you a little bit and is like, man, I really wish we could solve it?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Other than the slow play, I think everybody knows that one. I don't think there is really much. Sometimes course setup is a bit of a challenge and not as thought through as sometimes maybe should be.

It's tough when you have all the different conditions going into each day.

**Q. I know the girls out here mean the world to you and inspiring the next generation. Does it feel like you have inspired the next generation, and what would you hope those girls take away from you?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I feel like I have inspired the next generation. That's all I wanted coming into the game. I know how important it is to have a role model to look up to. I always had my brothers to look up to of course. I went out with them every day and tried to beat them. Then I had my mom and Nancy Lopez was a huge role model of mine as well.

So I know how important it is to have somebody to look up to and to kind of follow in their footsteps or ask them for advice and just see what they been through.

So I hope that I made that impact to little girls, boys, younger, older, any age and had that impact. But to get them involved in the game and see the smile on their faces and just to go out there and enjoy the game and be with one another, that's what I wanted.

I wanted to leave the game in a better place and have that impact. This week is always great because so many kids come out to watch. I'm really hoping to see a ton over the weekend and give out some shoes and just see the smiles and the happiness that they have to just can be out here.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much, Lexi.

LEXI THOMPSON: You're welcome.

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