

Kia Classic

Thursday, March 25, 2021

Carlsbad, California, USA

Park Hyatt Aviara Golf Club

Sophia Popov

Quick Quotes

Q. Seven birdies today to shoot 4-under par. Any of them stand out?

SOPHIA POPOV: It was -- I almost can't tell you because they were mixed in with some bogeys at the beginning. It was a total roller coaster ride.

The one that stands out is I made a longer putt on 11, the par-3 to go 4-under at that point, and I just kind of kept it rolling, because I made a good birdie on No. 10, reached it in two, and made a two-putt for birdie.

So I just kind of was in a pretty good flow right there, so I would say the one on 11.

Q. How did the round kind of flow for you? It started off a little rainy, periods of dryness, maybe a little not quite sun, but at least you could see the clouds more clearly.

SOPHIA POPOV: I haven't seen the sun in a while. It was kind of brutal. We had -- the back nine was pretty rainy and windy; the front nine was kind of a roller coaster back and forth, birdie, bogey, birdie, bogey.

So just tried to find my footing a little bit out there I think, and then starting on like 8 I kind of got in a little bit of a flow and started making some more birdies and going a little bit lower under par.

And so the back nine was very consistent. I made one or two mistakes that were kind of a little unnecessary, but other than that, it was just very solid and bringing home 4-under.

Q. Remind you of any particular win of your career out here?

SOPHIA POPOV: The one and only. (Laughter.) Definitely wasn't like this during the Cactus Tour. No, the British was like this, but I told Kim and who else did I play with? No, I'm kidding. I just told Hannah I think with four holes to go, it's weird because I think it was not as cold at

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the British. This might have been colder. You don't have that really heavy rain and kind of really cold dampness, the marine layer.

So at the British I could kind of dry off every now and then, but today it sat on you. It was definitely very cold. But I had my mittens. I was well-prepared. So I got through it pretty well.

Q. How are the greens in the afternoon?

SOPHIA POPOV: Not easy. I mean, it's poa. It's tough to begin with even if you have the first tee time out. They got fairly bumpy. I had a couple putts where I wasn't sure whether it was me or the green, and I try to ignore those.

You kind of have to give the putts a little bit of speed. The birdie putts I made all had a little bit of pace, but at the same time, you don't want to leave yourself three or four footers because the later in the day the tougher those get.

So I just -- you know, I kind of try to keep a positive mindset about them. I try to ignore the bumps that are in there and how fast they are and just kind of keep a good mental attitude.

Q. Absolutely. You played at USC. Did you ever play here during your time there?

SOPHIA POPOV: You know, I didn't. I came out here to watch girls while I was at USC. Lizette had already graduated so I came out to watch her and couple times and some of the other SC graduates that were out here. Belen was out here at that time.

So honestly, I would just watch the rounds, but I never played myself, no.

Q. Nice. What's it like just to be here and compete? I know your first full year really back as a member on the LPGA after your win last year.

SOPHIA POPOV: It's really nice. I mean, it's kind of nice to be back in Southern Cal. Two out of my five college wins came in San Diego and so I like it here. It's really nice. And I have a different kind of I think attitude I'm playing with, different type of pressure that I'm playing with, one that I like a lot more than the previous years I was



around here and trying to Monday Q in or playing on conditional status.

It's just really nice and I'm enjoying myself out there even if it's a day like this.

Q. Sunny San Diego, no way.

SOPHIA POPOV: I know, what? This doesn't happen here.

Q. Until today. The LPGA is in town.

SOPHIA POPOV: Until the LPGA is in town and it's our first round. Yeah, but it's okay.

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