

# LOTTE Championship presented by Hoakalei

Thursday, November 7, 2024

Ewa Beach, Oahu, Hawaii, USA

Hoakalei Country Club

## Sophia Popov

### Quick Quotes

**Q. All right, here with Sophia Popov. We were just talking about when I wanted you to come over here kind of this relief off your shoulders a bit about how in those winds you would've liked anything on the scorecard. A 5-under day, just what does a day like this mean for you?**

SOPHIA POPOV: It just means a lot because I've been working really hard and hasn't been paying off. The last three, four months have been really, really tough for me.

You know, like we golfers are, it's a lot of second guessing, a lot of am I -- like what am I doing? Should I be out here? Obviously traveling with my daughter.

It's been tough, but I've been playing good golf and just not scoring. To have a day where you finally are making the putts, especially on the back nine today, has been such a relief honestly.

**Q. Walk me through the back nine. What was most impressive in your mind?**

SOPHIA POPOV: I think it was a combination of putting and my ball striking. My ball striking was great all day today. On the front nine I couldn't buy a putt. I think to my credit, I just stayed super patient. I said, okay, you know, maybe you hit a couple closer, make a couple birdies, and then we can from there.

That's what I did.

I hit one really close on 13.

I made a long putt on 14.

I made a long putt on 15.

Finally I kind of got the ball rolling literally and was able to just gain the momentum and everything felt a lot easier from then on in.



**LOTTE**  
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**Q. These past three months, obviously coming back, traveling, it's a whole different ballgame when you're out here as an LPGA mom that I feel like a lot of people don't understand with athletes on the LPGA. Is it more a mental thing?**

SOPHIA POPOV: Absolutely. I think it's a little bit of both, but obviously physically you're trying to come back. I think you question a lot of things that you do. Even though your ball striking is pretty much where it was before, you take the whole thing apart.

You go, is it the conditioning? Is it this? Is it that? I think the mental part is probably the toughest. As much as things -- I keep things in perspective because of my daughter, sometimes I feel like I'm playing for her.

It's been just really disappointing because I want her to see me playing well even though she probably has no idea what I'm doing. But I think sometimes I put pressure on myself just to show her like what mom can really do.

**Q. And where is Maya currently?**

SOPHIA POPOV: She's at the beach playing with her friend that she just met a couple days ago and she's in heaven. Maybe that's why my mind is somewhere else and I'm very freed up because I know she's having probably the best week of her life right now.

**Q. I know obviously the competitiveness is obviously still there. You're out here; you're doing this. When there is a lot on the line a little bit with points up for grabs and still wanting to make every event that you can, how much does Maya put that kind of in perspective for you, too?**

SOPHIA POPOV: I think that's where she puts everything into perspective. You know, obviously I'm not having a really good year. I had a couple good events but it's major been a struggle for me. But I don't -- you know, the weight of it is not that heavy anymore just because I know I come home, I come to her. She's this little smiling sunshine and truly doesn't care.

I think it's been amazing for me off the golf course. As

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soon as I come back off a round everything is forgotten and the bad performances are forgotten. I just think that that's where I'm not -- I don't put that pressure on myself towards the end of the season anymore.

I have more the attitude of whatever happens happens. I know I'm good enough, but in the end, being a good mom is more important.

**Q. And currently, you are slated for a different job at the CME Group Tour Championship. What does it mean to kind of put up the mic for the first time?**

SOPHIA POPOV: I'm super excited. Honestly, it's kind of a dream of mine. I've always wanted to get into the broadcast world and I did a little bit of commentating here and there in-booth on the European side. I haven't done on-course yet and I'm super, super excited.

I feel like I'll really enjoy it. Yeah, it's just a new challenge but one I'm really looking forward to.

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