

FIR HILLS SERI PAK Championship

Friday, March 22, 2024

Palos Verdes Estates, California, USA

Palos Verdes Golf Club

Malia Nam

Quick Quotes

Q. All right, Malia, I want to start from the top. A nice little birdie to kick things off. What was working well for you from the jump?

MALIA NAM: Yeah, I think ball striking was pretty similar to yesterday, so felt really comfortable off the tee and just getting myself set up in the fairway pretty much mostly every hole.

Yeah, the front nine was good. A little rocky, but was able to get it back on the back nine.

Q. I was going to ask, we saw you climb with those two birdies and then the double bogey. What did you do today to kind of reset after that to do what you did on your remaining holes?

MALIA NAM: Yeah, I mean, with the first two birdies I made I was like, okay, this is a good pace that I'm setting for myself.

Then immediately the next hole I doubled. Got a really bad break. The ball was like up behind the lip so I had to chip backwards actually.

Yeah, you know, I knew that there was a lot of holes left, a lot of par-5s that were pretty birdieable, so I just kind of -- as much as I was frustrated, I kind of just was patient and was going to let some putts drop towards the end of the round.

Q. Three birdies on the back nine, which was the front nine. The one on No. 7, to take advantage of the par-5, how much did that kind of get the relief off your shoulders?

MALIA NAM: Yeah, I mean, that was one of my finishing holes, so I mean, I was just -- it was kind of an up-and-down day with putting, which seems to be the theme of this week.



Yeah, with that birdie on 7, made a good putt, so I felt like, okay, I'm back to where we were earlier in the round. Just kind of keep going.

Q. I know it's only 36 holes in, but were you looking at leaderboards maybe before today, during your round today, just noticing where people were that maybe some people you thought would've gone low in the morning maybe didn't?

MALIA NAM: You know, I try not to look at the leaderboards. I would be lying if I didn't camp a glance at it. I'm the kind of personality I like to know where I stand, so I would glance at it, but I wasn't really too worried.

I mean, again, like you said it's the second day.

Q. Yeah.

MALIA NAM: Doesn't really -- got two more days to play.

Q. Not only your second day, but only your second event.

MALIA NAM: Yeah.

Q. We talked yesterday about it kind of is still this overwhelming feeling a bit. When you're able to produce results that you see your name on the top of the leaderboard coming out of 36 holes, what are you drawing on to keep that composure?

MALIA NAM: You know, it's definitely a pretty surreal feeling seeing my name on the top of the leaderboard, especially with all the best players in the world.

I always knew that I can play out here, but I didn't expect it to be so quick to see my name up on the top of the leaderboard.

Q. We talked earlier about how it's just you traveling. You don't travel with your parents. Your mom is out here watching for the first time in a while. Do you find yourself more of an independent person, and when you're on the course do you kind of look inward more

to when those bad breaks happen?

MALIA NAM: Yeah, I would say I'm pretty independent. I'm pretty independent as a person and player. My mom, she was always gone when I was younger just due to her work, so I just found to be -- I like the way I do things when it's just myself.

But, yeah, as a player, I rely on my caddie, but ultimately, I'm the one who's pulling the clubs. I usually ask him for confirmation instead of like I have no idea what to do here.

Q. You talked yesterday about the experience that you have on this course. That you played it hundreds of times. Played the college event here being a USC grad. Are there certain moments, tournaments, or certain days that you played here that stick out when you're doing so well, or is there a hole or a shot that you said, I remember I've really messed it up here before, let's not do this again here? Do you ever think of that?

MALIA NAM: Yes.

Q. Or is it still just one shot at a time, focus on the pro game here?

MALIA NAM: It's both. I think it definitely helps knowing where not to miss it, where to miss it on every single hole, basically what clubs I'm going to have on the upcoming holes.

But, yeah, I've seen every single inch of this golf course, good and bad. It's funny, because in college I never really played well here. This is actually the first time that I think I shot consecutively under par, so I'm a bit surprised myself.

Q. What are you taking away from the first two days mentally and in your game as you approach the weekend in the space that you are?

MALIA NAM: Yeah, I'm so glad just to be playing my game and producing the shots that I hit at practice, but I'm not going to lie, I'm of course a little nervous for the weekend.

But I just -- I'm going to trust my game. There were moments where I would get a little nervous yesterday and today and I kind of was just like taking breaths, closing my eyes, just calming my heart rate.

I'm just going to keep that mentality for the weekend.

Q. Was it nerves because of your connection to the community or just nerves from second LPGA Tour event?

MALIA NAM: I mean, kind of both. It's my second tournament on the LPGA so I'm a little nervous. I think it's good to be nervous though. It means that you care and it means that you're so close to achieving a goal of yours.

I try to just embrace that nervousness and -- yeah.

Q. When did you feel those nerves? Was there a particular hole today or yesterday where you were proud of the way that you were able to kind of keep that composure, like I said?

MALIA NAM: Yeah, I think after the double that I made earlier in my round. It kind of rattled me a little bit. Just because it was a bad break. I kind of just got off the train tracks a little bit.

I think after I made the birdie on, what is that, 7, I guess that's my 16th hole, yeah, my heart rate started going back up. I was like, okay, we're back to where we started.

But it was a good nervous.

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