

Honda LPGA Thailand

Wednesday, 22 February 2023

Pattaya, Thailand

Siam Country Club Pattaya, Old Course

Atthaya Thitikul

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're here again in the media center with Atthaya Thitikul at the 2023 Honda LPGA Thailand. For obvious reasons this has to be a very special event for you. How happy are you to be home, playing in front of a home crowd and in front of your fellow country people?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah, it feel really like special week for me, and also for all the Thai players as well playing in front of all the fans in play Thailand. And especially the weather, that we get used to it.

And then also the course that we play. It's always memorable memories for me, so it's nice to be here.

Q. You played very well in this event in the past. I know just lost to Ariya in 2021. I guess how does this golf course really suit your game and why do you really play so well here?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: I don't know. Like I just did play good like two years ago, but I when I was an amateur I didn't play that good.

But I hope I going to have a good week this year again. But maybe like because when I was an amateur, I don't know, I'm not hit that far, so now I quite have more distance. So I think it's more easier; when I was an amateur it's a big key for me as well last few years. Definitely getting easier more than when I was an amateur.

Q. What did you change to start hitting the ball further? I know you and your coach worked on some things. What's different?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Especially for this year I just changed my driver to a new Paradym, so it's work well last month. I just had it in my bag last month, and hopefully it's good this year. But I have been working with my coach to get some more distance, so hopefully this like work like (indiscernible) my swings and my new driver.

Q. I know this is your 2023 season debut, but let's talk about 2022. That was a big year. Rookie year. Obviously coming off the year that you had on the

LET, got two wins. Got to world No. 1, the first time since Ariya had done it in 2019 for Thailand, the first time in your career. Really when you sat down after CME, did you get a chance to process all the success that you had?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: I mean, I think it's more than what we expected, because like I'm not really expect a lot. You know, like being the world No. 1 in my first year, and also got two wins is incredible like moments for us.

And then, yeah, just sit down and see what we come through, and then I think it's just the hard work pay off. So just said, oh, like it's not present already, it's just the past, so I'm looking forward and focus on what we have to do for, you know, the future, for this year and for the future that I'm -- I had a long way to go, so, yeah.

Q. And just knowing that, you're obviously very mature; always been very mature. What did you learn about yourself after last year? Did you sit down and go, oh, I changed in this way or I noticed this difference in my game or me as a person?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: I think being on the LPGA Tour it's not that easy. I mean, like we play the best player in the world, and also the schedule is pretty tight. And then, I mean, it's good for us that we had a lot of tournaments every year, but sometime I think all the performance, I think everyone can do it. It's depend on which day is your day.

But I think like sometime you not have to overdo it, like overthinking, overdo it. Like sometime you have to rest, because like quality, it's come first, and your health. Your health, it's really important, because you still have a long way to go.

So I maybe focus on my health as well and not overthinking or not overdoing things.

Q. So what did you get to do in the off-season? I know it's a longer one on the LPGA Tour, but doesn't always feel that long. Did you get some rest? Do you feel refreshed? I know you're pretty young, but how are you feeling heading into the new season?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah, I just had a really good off-season I would say, because like I didn't have quite



this long off-season before. When I finish on the LET I had to go to the Q-School and then started an January, so not really quite off-season.

But this time I have spend time with my family, taking off like without golf club, and then but also doing some work with my sponsor. Yeah, have very good off-season.

Also work with my coach like last month. We working (indiscernible) on the work, so hopefully it's pay off this year.

Q. Speaking of family, I know you have some family here this week. How special is that for you? Obviously we don't go to Thailand but once a year. How special is it to be able to have your grandfather here and your family and relatives and friends come and support?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah, it's mean a lot. I'm not playing in front of them much, as you said, because my grandfather usually travel with me when I was an amateur, but now he just wanted to watch me. I know he really want to watch me play, but I think this is last chance that he can do it because we don't play in Thailand that much. Just once in a year.

So I think it's so special for him and for my mom as well. My mom is not come out at all. Just Honda. So I think it's mean a lot for us, and I'm so happy to have them here with me.

Q. As we look ahead to 2023, what are looking for from your game this year? Again, you talked about it, you accomplished a lot last year. How do you temper your expectations? This is a clean slate. What are you thinking about as you look ahead?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Actually, if I talk about my game, I mean, I'm trying to improve from learning experience from all the top players as well. Like I said, I don't have that much experience as they had, so I trying to learn every single day that I can.

I am trying to improve my short game as well (laughter.) Still. Still trying to. (Laughter.)

Hopefully it's pay off. And then I just -- yeah, I just feel out here on the LPGA trying to do my best because they are so good out here. You know, like we have expectations on myself as well, but, yeah, we live and learn. (Laughter.)

Q. So just expectations for this week, I mean, obviously it's Wednesday. Don't want to talk about winning yet. Just looking at what Ariya did a couple years ago and maybe the first Thai woman to win in Thailand, what would it mean to join her and win your national open really?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah, I think all the Thai fans and Honda LPGA are waiting for first Thai who won the Honda LPGA and Ariya did it. I think it's been a lot for Thai fans and for all of us as well.

So I would love to see Thai players get the trophy as well. Like every year if we can. Like Thai, because we play in Thailand. But obviously whoever did it I be happy with them for sure.

But we also love to, you know, like see all the girls perform out there as well I guess for all the Thai fans.

Q. I know you're still learning, but International Crown, looking ahead to the schedule we have this year, are there events that you're really looking forward to? Crown hasn't been played in five years. So just what that event means to you and what other events you're looking forward to?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah, I do looking forward to the International Crown. I know it's (indiscernible) for like after COVID for a while, and I don't really have experience in International Crown before. (Laughter.)

So hopefully this -- hopefully I can play this year. You know, like it's such an honor if I can play the International Crown representing my country. Yeah, we all looking forward to the International Crown because I think like it's such a unique event, and also can play as a team.

We don't have much tournament that we can play as a team, especially representing like our country. It's more special.

So, yeah, should be fun.

Q. One more fun question. I asked the other international players what their favorite Thai dish is, but if there is somebody that comes to the country for the first time, what do you suggest they have first?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Suggest?

Q. Yeah, like, hey you got to try this food, this food. What would you suggest?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Oh, my God. (Laughter.)

Q. You have to have a favorite food. Come on.

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: I love them all. I love like -- I don't know, maybe boat noodles. So they had noodles here but it's not the boat needles.

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