

Volunteers of America LPGA Texas Classic

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

The Colony, Texas, USA

Old American Golf Club

Kristen Gillman

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome back to the Volunteers of America Classic here with one of our many Texans in the field, Kristen Gillman. Gilly, I know we're not that close to home, but is it still kind of a home game for you?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: Yeah, I only live four hours from here, so it's nice. I was able to go home the last couple days. Drove up yesterday afternoon, so it was nice to be able to go home and knowing after the tournament I can go back home and sleep in my own bed.

Just kind of being in Texas, I have a lot of my friends from high school now live in this area, so it was nice to be able to see them. Just feels like home here.

THE MODERATOR: Absolutely. Now with our restrictions opening back up we're able to have fans, I think that's to be even more nice for you to be back. You can actually see people again.

KRISTEN GILLMAN: Yeah, it's a lot different than when we were playing here last year. First of all the weather is like 60 degrees different. Being able to have fans and have my friends and family come out and watch, it's nice to be able have that again.

THE MODERATOR: How are you feeling right now as we head into the week? It back here at home. You had a good finish last year. How is your game tracking as we head into this week's tournament?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: I feel very comfortable with everything. Just haven't been able to put the scores together, but I feel that each week each part of my game is improving. I'm hoping this week it'll all click and have a good tournament again.

THE MODERATOR: What have you been working on in your game, some of your focuses as you look to the second half of the season?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: Yeah, I changed shafts in my irons



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two months ago, so just trying to get used to those. I've noticed that they're a lot more consistent, so just kind of trusting that and trusting in the equipment.

I feel like I put a lot different new equipment in my bag the last couple months. New wedges, iron shafts, new driver shaft, everything.

So just trusting in that and knowing that I have the best equipment for me, and just being able to swing out there freely.

THE MODERATOR: What's the reason behind all the changes?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: I think it's just I like to focus on like one thing at a time. So during the off-season I can't just -- like I knew I was waiting to change my shafts because the previous shafts, they just drew too much so I wasn't able to have as much control.

It's been a one-step process. First work on the irons, and then we will try the new wedges that Ping just came out with and then new driver shaft for consistency. I feel like you can always improve on each part of your game. Just trying to make it as consistent as you can is what I been trying to do.

THE MODERATOR: Coming here this week, what are your thoughts on the course here? Like I said, you played well here last year. I know the course is coming off a really tough stretch of weather. Still a little bit of healing going on. How do you think your game sets up here with the course at Old American?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: I love this golf course. I feel like I've played a lot of tournaments here the last two years, and also played the Texas Women's Open here last summer.

I have a lot the tournament rounds on this golf course, so I feel like I know it really well. Just this is the type of grass I grew up playing, on so it's a comfort level out here just being able to be comfortable out on this golf course.

THE MODERATOR: We always hear about the Texas

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winds, and if they pick up how much of an advantage that is for the Texas players. What is the strategy - and especially here on the water when that wind picks up - what is the strategy of being able to attack a golf course like that?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: I think when the wind gets high you have to know that not everyone is gonna be hitting perfect shots. Sometimes out there you can't control it. I think just kind of sticking to your game plan and hitting knock-down shots so the wind doesn't take it as much and knowing that you can't fight the wind.

Just kind of hit the ball how you usually do and just let the wind take it and play that into account I think is the main thing playing in the wind.

THE MODERATOR: And Texas not only has wind, but a great heritage of women's golf. I know last night there was an event celebrating Kathy Whitworth. What was it like growing up here in Texas as an elite amateur golfer, couple USGA wins, and now to be able to represent your state on the national and international stage?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: Yeah, I think there has been so many great players that have come out of the state of, and so I'm just excited to be able to hopefully be considered one of those great players coming out of this state.

I think growing up I played in the Kathy Whitworth Invitational and always played against all these Texas players here, and so it was just always competitive with how great everyone is here, and just inspiring to see what all they've done.

THE MODERATOR: Who are some of the Texans that you look up to?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: I mean, it was always cool getting to meet Kathy Whitworth. I just feel like there has been so many great Texas players. Like even when I went to school at Alabama I think half of our team was from Texas, and so kind of just felt a little bit like home there.

And so just feel like each tournament I go to there is always other fellow Texan players with me.

Q. The Alabama/Texas connection brings us to Cheyenne, who we had in here yesterday, past champion. She didn't go Alabama, but Angela, we've got the last two winners of this tournament from Texas. There is a great sign out front, Where Texans Become Champions. What would it mean to you to join a group like that?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: Yeah, think obviously it would mean a lot. It would be my first win, and I think having it be at home in Texas -- I actually have my dad on the bag this week, so if it ended up being this week then that would be extra special to have him on the bag and playing at home in Texas. Just nice to be able to get any first win.

Q. How the father/daughter relationship going to last after this week?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: I think it'll be good. He's been wanting to caddie for me for a bit. He caddied for me in a couple professional events while I was as amateur, but he hasn't caddied for me yet in a professional event while I've been a pro. So he's been talking about it.

I was like, this is the perfect week. I'm in a seven-week stretch, so decided to let my caddie have a break this week and get ready for Europe and just have my dad on the bag.

Just going to be a fun, special family week.

THE MODERATOR: You said you were in a seven-week stretch. A lot of majors just past, majors still coming up, and maybe the crown jewel on the horizon on is the Solheim Cup. How much is Solheim Cup on your mind these last few weeks as you try and play your way onto the team?

KRISTEN GILLMAN: Yeah, I think obviously you always want to be playing in a Solheim Cup. I'm just trying to focus on each tournament one at a time, and just if I have the results that I want, then hopefully I'll be able to be considered as a pick for the team.

I think all I need to do is go out there and try to play as good as golf as I can, and hopefully that'll be good enough for it.

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