

LPGA MEDIHEAL Championship

Tuesday, October 4, 2022

Somis, California, USA

The Saticoy Club

Andrea Lee

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome inside the virtual interview room here at the LPGA MEDIHEAL Championship.

I am pleased to be joined by the one and only, Andrea Lee, who I can now call an LPGA Tour winner from California. Welcome back to Cali.

ANDREA LEE: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Welcome back to Cali, Andrea. What's it like to be back in your home state?

ANDREA LEE: It's so nice. I took the week off last week. Didn't play Dallas, and feel fully rested. I think I touched my clubs one time last week, so it was just nice to have that break and celebrate with the family. I haven't seen my mom since I won Portland, so it was just nice to be with her and celebrate together.

THE MODERATOR: I have not seen you for a couple weeks as well.

ANDREA LEE: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: When you're able to take that kind of time off and do some sort of celebration, how do you celebrate with your family?

ANDREA LEE: Just, well, the first night I got back, got back Sunday night and we had a nice dinner. My mom cooked for us and popped a bottle of champagne, so that was fun. Didn't go crazy. Just stopped at one. It was so nice.

Definitely needed the break after five weeks on the road. Saw a lot of family this past Saturday and just had Korean barbecue and it was just really nice.

I kind of like just relaxing celebrations like that, nothing too crazy. I really wanted to just take a lot of time for myself, too, so it was just nice to have that at home.

THE MODERATOR: What's it like to be able to put the clubs away for a little bit, especially when the swing of the season is in full swing?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, I definitely think we all need a break out here. I mean, it's been I think a seven-week stretch for some of the girls out here. I definitely needed at least a week off.

Got Asia coming up and then the last two in Florida, so I think prioritizing rest is super important. I know it's like kind of the final stretch and everyone is pushing to do well, but at the same time, it's really necessary to rest the body, rest the mind a little bit before going back out there.

So, yeah, I definitely feel kind of rejuvenated and rested after a week off, so it's nice.

THE MODERATOR: Before I open it up to questions, I do want to ask, what is it like returning to California, especially when we're in this bit of a stretch? What's your experience with Saticoy Club, if there is any?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, I played this golf course one time knowing that LPGA would have an event here. Like three months ago I was out here with a member. My first impressions of it were it's just really hilly and there is a lot of false fronts.

Definitely a good golf course, especially I think when the greens can get firm and fast out here it's definitely difficult. I don't think we're going to see like extremely low scores out here, but you never know.

But, it's so nice to be back in California. We haven't been here since earlier this year. I think Palos Verdes was the last one in California, so it's really nice to be back and have that home crowd, hometown vibe.

Even though I live like an hour and a half drive way, it still feels like home to me, and luckily we have really nice weather. It's just really nice to be back.

THE MODERATOR: Also for you, the last time we were in

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California, at the Palos Verdes Championship, it really jump started a lot of your season. I know we've talked about that throughout the season, what event was like for you. How much do you still think about the difference that event made for the rest of the season?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, it was huge for me because it kind of secured my full status for the rest of the season, and I got into Founders after that and the match play event, which I did really well at.

So that definitely secured my full card for this season, which I didn't expect at the beginning of the year. Yeah, I guess that's just the luck that I have in California. It brings all the good vibes, and definitely kick started 2022 for me.

Q. You're 154th in driving distance on tour. On paper, that sounds challenge to go compete, but you've won out here, been competitive consistently. What part of your game allows you to be competitive given your driving distance?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, I'm definitely not one of the longer hitters out here, that's for sure. My strengths are the approach shots into the green, and putting has definitely been a strength I think throughout the whole season. I think I averaged a little less than 30 putts or around 30 putts every tournament, which I haven't done in the past.

I think this is probably the best putting season that I've had so far. So that's definitely really helped. Just I guess my accuracy. I don't know. I think I'm like Top 5 in driving accuracy, so on tougher courses where you need to keep the ball in the fairway to have a good shot into the green, I think that's where I kind of thrive, I guess, and kind of have a little bit of an advantage over some the players out here.

I think just overall my game feels really solid, and even though I'm not the longest out here, I still manage to make it work and score.

Q. What adjustments did you make to your putting?

ANDREA LEE: Really simple things actually. I started working with Jim Gormley last year in November and we've just kept it really simple, starting with the setup and kind of making sure that I putt on an arc, because that's how I usually do, but sometimes you can get it to go a little too straight back and too straight through. Which I have a tendency to push it out.

Yeah, just really simple things. Honestly, it all starts with the setup for me. He's still corrects me on my setup even though I think I'm doing it right. Yeah, just keeping everything simple.

Q. You explained in your game how you're able to overcome driving distance, but why on a tourwide level might driving distance be less important than, as you mentioning, driving accuracy, hitting the green, and putting?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, well, I mean, driving is only one shot out of 14 holes, or like you only hit driver 14 holes out of the 18. Obviously every aspect of game needs to be sharp in order to contend out here. I think short game is probably 80% as compared to 20% driving and approach shots.

So, yeah, just being really creative and knowing how to get out of tough spots I think is also really important. And it's good that I don't really put myself in those places a lot of times, so it makes it a little bit easier for me.

But my mindset out there is just to hit fairways and greens, minimize the mistakes as much as possible. I think that's also been one of the keys for me. I haven't been making as many bogeys as I used to, so I think the last few weeks I've only made like three or four bogeys throughout the week. I think that's definitely also helped my scoring.

Q. The only question I have left is is it an advantage for you and how will you make it an advantage being a home course person? Like I mean, Southern California lady, like how will you maximize that? How does it help you in any way? There are like 20 some golfers from here. Do you think you have an edge on everyone else this week, and will you have an edge on everybody else just being from Southern California?

ANDREA LEE: I guess having that hometown feel and home crowd will help a little bit. Maybe have some friends and family come out and watch and have that support. I think we'll have a little bit of an edge on other players in that sense.

Regarding the golf course, I think it's honestly fair game, even if you're from Southern California. It's not the easiest golf course. I think whoever manages it well or the best this week will have the upper hand.

I've only seen it one time before actually coming out here this week, so I don't think I'll have a huge advantage over the field. I'm just going to go about my business and try it play it to the best of my ability and just be smart.

Q. Congratulations on your recent win. Talk about that. Has that altered your plan for the rest of the year?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, I mean, it was a super special week.



I couldn't believe it when I pulled it off and was able to win in Portland. Obviously an incredible feeling and a dream come true for me.

In regards to scheduling, we're in the last stretch of the season, so I decided to skip out on Japan. I was thinking about playing Korea, Japan, and the last two in Florida, but realized that might be a little too exhausting. I'm taking a break that week in Japan and playing the last two.

It's so nice to know that I'll be in any field in any tournament the rest of the season and probably next year, too, most likely. Knowing that I'm already in CME, it's definitely a huge weight off the back, and I can just focus on my game each week and play to the best of my ability.

Q. Could you talk about your equipment? What clubs did you really rely on and has this been consistent throughout your career?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, I would say my driver has been pretty accurate this year. My putter I would say is the club that has gotten me the furthest. You know, I was able to win in Portland because of the putter honestly.

But I think just all parts of my game have been really solid. I think even the approach shots. I think I'm like 70% on average into the greens.

Short game all around has been a lot better. I just think I've been sharpening the edges on most aspects of my game, and that's got me to where I am right now.

Q. And finally, could you talk about -- how can I put this? I just blanked out a little bit. Could you talk about coming to California and then leaving again and then going back on the tour, how much pressure is that on all the players on the tour?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, it's definitely a lot of travel. I think a decent amount of girls aren't even going to Asia at all because they don't want to have that toll on them, I guess, before the last two events in Florida.

For me it's exciting because I have never played in Asia before. My family are from Korea and I've been to Korea just to visit, but never actually played there. I'm just really excited to go. My grandfather is there on my dad's side and I will be able to see him.

I'm just really excited. Not really worrying about the fatigue, to be honest. Yeah I'm really looking forward to that, to eat good food in Korea, too, and come back and have the last two in Florida. I'm glad that I decided to take Japan off so I'll be able to have that week and a half at

home to rest up and get ready for the last two.

Everyone takes the end of the season I guess differently. Some girls play all of them or some take a break. I think it's just really up to them. I'm really excited to go to Asia.

Q. And finally, about the Saticoy course, how does that fit into your game? What are the challenges of the course that you see for yourself?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, like I said, it's pretty hilly and there are a lot of false fronts here, so I think for me it's kind of the same thing, just hitting the fairways. I'm really -- I'm kind of used to hilly courses. I play at Palos Verdes a lot, which is also really hilly, so I'm kind of used to the lies I'll be seeing out here this week. I think that's definitely a strength that I'll have.

Yeah, I mean, some greens are kind of hard to hit, they're pretty narrow, so just hitting the ball straight, which I guess is a strength of mine, or has been. So just keep on doing that and I think I'll be okay.

THE MODERATOR: On the other side the country is the Epson Tour Championship. You are an Epson Tour winner from this year. You've talked a lot about how a win like that really helped your confidence and the rest of the season, as well as that finish in PV. Just being Epson Tour alum yourself, how exciting to you think it is for the women down there competing this week and knowing that some tour cards are on the line for next year?

ANDREA LEE: Yeah, definitely. That's where I thought I -- or I would see myself at the beginning of the year, kind of fighting for that top 10 spot on the Epson Tour. Yeah, it's super exciting. I'm rooting for all of them down there. I know a few girls that are in the top 10 right now, and hopefully they can finish strong and pull through to secure their spot on the LPGA next year.

Yeah, I am kind of glad that I'm not in that position anymore, but for sure the Epson Tour is a great tour to start off before coming to the LPGA. I think those experiences that I had at the beginning of the year playing in four, five Epson Tour events helped me prepare for the rest of the season, which has just been a whirlwind for me.

Yeah, ready for all these girls to have a strong finish.

THE MODERATOR: All right, well, thank you for joining us and best of luck this week.

ANDREA LEE: Thank you.

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