

Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown

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San Francisco, California, USA
Harding Park

Jin Young Ko
Hyo Joo Kim
In Gee Chun
Hye Jin Choi

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We're here with our Korean team representing the Republic of Korea here at the Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown. Welcome to the media center, ladies.

I will kick this off with a question for In Gee. You're the only one here on the team with any Crown experience. I'm just curious to ask what are some of your favorite memories that you remember from past International Crowns?

IN GEE CHUN: So the 2018 International Crown was in Korea, so I remember we had a lot of pressure on our shoulders because we really wanted to win for our country. I think pretty much every moment was very big lead, and then I can think about it.

It was just the whole week was amazing. Every moment was great. Everyone when we wear the crown on our head, it was like a great memory.

Q. Any specific shots, putts, anything that you remember? I know it was quite a while ago.

IN GEE CHUN: I think it was No. 13 I almost made a hole-in-one. It was so close. I remember that shot very well, vividly.

Q. Hye-Jin, as the youngest player on the team and certainly the youngest on Tour, what sort of advice have you asked for or been given by your teammates here?

HYE-JIN CHOI: As the youngest on the team, I'm really excited for this week. My teammates are all older than me.



They've been really taking good care of me. In Gee is the oldest here, and she's been taking good care of me, as well, taking good care of me and Hyo Joo and Jin Young, as well. Just really excited to play this week with my teammates.

Q. Hyo Joo, you've been playing on Tour for a while. How long has playing in International Crown been a goal for you?

HYO JOO KIM: To be honest, it wasn't really a goal of mine to make it to the International Crown team. As a player, you just try to do your best in every competition, and by doing that, I was fortunately able to make the team this year.

Q. Jin Young, you were qualified for the team last time before it was canceled in 2020. How excited are you that the event is happening again on the Tour?

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, I had a chance to play International Crown in 2018, but I had a tournament to -- like sponsor a tournament, so I couldn't play International Crown in Incheon. I really wanted to play International Crown, but last year we canceled the tournament so we couldn't.

I have chance to play in '23, so I'm very excited. To be honest, we are -- like our team players are amazing. I don't want to make sorry to my partner for tomorrow, so I will do my best. We'll see what happens for me.

Q. Jin Young, I'm curious about your impressions of the golf course. What do you think of the course?

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, I feel this golf course is like pristine. It's pretty good, like shape is a little tough. Like fairways are narrow. From the tee we can see all the trees. Like maybe from the tee to the trees maybe 20 meters, but the trees go inside the fairway, so really hard to see the fairway.

I tried like cap down and I don't want to see the trees, and I really focus on the fairway, my goal to the target to play.

Well, greens are big, and around the greens lots of bunkers.



The course isn't really long, especially today rainy and windy; it's going to more than like over 80 degrees. Yeah, so keep warm and just hit the fairway and hit the greens and make a putt.

Q. You were mentioning that you weren't able to play in 2018 because of another tournament. The atmosphere and the crowds there were enormous in Korea. It was unlike anything I've ever seen before at an event. Watching from afar, maybe on TV or recaps that you saw, what was your impression of it, and how hard was it to miss that?

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, I watched every shot, Korea team shots, everything. On the final round I didn't play -- I couldn't play in 2018, but I felt I am Korean, so I felt I win.

I was really happy, and it was a great honor to see In Gee, So Yeon, Sung Hyun, and I.K. yeah, I missed to play. I couldn't. But I have a chance to play this year, so I will do my best.

Q. Talk about the pressure playing at home in 2018 in South Korea. And what does it feel being the defending champions of the event?

IN GEE CHUN: I think everyone really understands how much pressure on the Korean team because I had experience from 2016 in Chicago and we saw the USA made a win, and then after that I really wanted to make a win in our country.

Sometimes when you have more pressure you can make better focus on the course. At the same time, our team, Korea, has great teamwork. Everything worked really well during that week. It was pressure, but it was more fun.

Q. For this week, for In Gee and Jin Young, given how successful this tournament was in 2018 in South Korea, what do you think needs to happen this week for the tournament itself to be a successful event in your eyes?

JIN YOUNG KO: So of course when it happened in 2018 in Korea there were a lot of fans. I think there were about 25,000 people who came out on the final day. I believe that if the tournament is happening this year -- if the tournament was happening in Korea this year I believe there would be just as many fans this year as in 2018.

To be honest, in the States I'm not entirely sure. I haven't seen tens of thousands of people come out to the course, to our tournaments, unless it was in a major tournament. But with San Francisco being such a big city, playing in such a well known course as TPC Harding Park, hopefully

there will be a lot of fans who come out and watch us play.

IN GEE CHUN: I think already we have all the good players from every country. I think this tournament is kind of like golf past because different format, so I hopefully everyone come out and watch our play and enjoy our play.

I think from the player, as a player, just do our best to make most exciting play on the course.

I hope the weather is getting better, then more spectators come out this week.

Q. Jin Young, you mentioned the number of fans that went out in South Korea versus the United States. Is it strange to see relatively fewer fans in the United States come out to these tournaments than in South Korea?

JIN YOUNG KO: In Korea, women's golf popularity is enormous. To be frank, there is a bit of difference in Korea and the U.S. when it comes to the women's golf popularity. In the States I think the male players are a little bit more popular than female players, and kind of similar to the purse difference between the men and the women. In Korea it's the opposite. In Korea whenever there's an LPGA event, wherever it may be held within Korea, even though it may be far from where some of our fans live, they still come out and support us.

In the States, definitely there's been a major improvement, but I think there's still a gap. Hopefully a lot of fans, their interest in the LPGA and women's golf will continue to grow.

We have many, many great players, and holding big events like the International Crown and Solheim Cup in big cities and well-known courses will hopefully increase some of that popularity, as well.

I expect a lot of fans to come out and watch us play this year, but holding events like these in the future will hopefully garner even more fans to come out and hopefully that will help increase popularity of women's golf in the States.

Q. In Gee, you were the youngest player on that team in 2018, and were arguably the hero of that team. How do you feel different now coming back as being sort of the leader of the team this year?

IN GEE CHUN: 2018 when I was the youngest player in the team, I just tried to follow what other players did, tried to listen to what other -- like So Yeon and I.K. and Sung Hyun thought. I think to be honest, the position was better than this year, but still, we have a good relationship

everyone, so we are very close each other.

I know Hyo Joo and Jin Young long time, and this is a good chance to getting close with Hye-Jin. I just trying to what other players think and then just trying to make good teamwork.

I don't want to be -- we say gun-da (phonetic) in Korea --

THE INTERPRETER: Old geek. (Laughter.)

IN GEE CHUN: Just keep trying to what Hyo Joo and Jin Young and Hye-Jin say. They're already great players, so I really don't need to any other advice to them. If they need it, then for sure I'm ready to share my experience from 2018 and 2016 International Crown, but I trust them.

Q. Jin Young, could you tell me if you feel like you're the favorite or the underdog this week and why?

JIN YOUNG KO: I believe we can be win again. I feel like we can be win again.

Q. But do you feel like you're the favorite then?

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, I mean, team China and Team Australia, Team USA, they are strong, I think, because Hannah win last week and the youngest player, she finished second last week.

I think all the players has good condition right now, so just we'll do our best, then we can be chance to winning, yeah. We can chance to be win again.

Q. How do you decide who's playing together? Is it really obvious, or is there a lot of discussion?

JIN YOUNG KO: We talked a lot about this yesterday in our practice round. To be honest, the first match doesn't really matter who we play.

We tried to figure out what would give us a little bit more comfort, if possible, because I think that leads to good performance. Hyo Joo and I have known each other for a very long time. Our playing style is pretty similar, so we thought there would be a good synergy effect.

With In Gee and Hye-Jin, In Gee as the leader and Hye-Jin as the youngest, we thought In Gee could really lead Hye-Jin, and if that goes well, I think they would have a good round.

Q. I want to ask you guys about the numbers on the back of your jerseys and why each of you chose the number that you did.

IN GEE CHUN: I'm born in August and I won eight majors, so I picked No. 8. The reason why.

HYE-JIN CHOI: My jersey number is 23. My birthday is 23. I'm 23 years old. It's 2023. I like Michael Jordan who obviously wore 23, so I picked 23.

HYO JOO KIM: I was going to do 7 but Jin Young picked it first, so I was considered between 7, 10, and 30. I really like soccer. Messi wears No. 10. He of course won the World Cup last year, so I decided to go with No. 10.

JIN YOUNG KO: I picked No. 7 because my birthday is 7th July. That's why.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much, ladies.

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