

Kingsmill Championship

Presented by JTBC

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Cristie Kerr

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Well good morning everyone. Welcome back to the Kingsmill Championship. We're here with world No. 13, Cristie Kerr, winner of the 2017 Lotte Championship, and a t-h-r-e-e time winner here at Kingsmill in 2005, 2009, 2013.

Start off by saying, How are you doing today, Cristie?

CRISTIE KERR: Very good. Bright and early.

THE MODERATOR: Very early. Get it done for the day. Just so you seem to know River Course here quite well. How is it looking out there so far?

CRISTIE KERR: The golf course is pure. It was even very firm on Monday and yesterday, so hopefully they'll keep that in check with the 95 degree heat the next couple days.

But it's as good as I've ever seen it. There is not a ton of rough this year, but you can get unlucky with a bad lie, so you've got to keep it in the fairway.

THE MODERATOR: What is about the River Course and Kingsmill that seems to suit you so well?

CRISTIE KERR: I don't know. I just love the feel of the place. It's a big golf course. It's classic golf course with very good greens.

I just love the layout.

THE MODERATOR: Any particular spot, hole or spot on the course in this layout that seems to be your favorite?

CRISTIE KERR: Every hole is good. Honestly, there is not a bad hole on the golf course. Obviously the 17 hole, par-3 right next to the river, is pretty special.

THE MODERATOR: One last thing from me. Belated happy Mother's Day. How did you not enjoy your week off and your time at home?

CRISTIE KERR: Well, I went to do the Media day for the Meijer event, and then got home and hung out for a week getting ready to come to the east course for a couple months.

We traveled here on Mother's Day and had a nice dinner at the house and just kind of got our bearings.

THE MODERATOR: Got to be good to have a little bit of time before, as you said, going into that stretch. How do you prepare for that and all the walking that comes with the job here?

CRISTIE KERR: Yeah, I felt like I was packing all last week, because having one home now instead of two, it is easier, but now it's like, Wow, I really want to take this, this, this. So I kind of shipped a bunch of stuff.

You can always ship stuff home, so I would rather be overprepared.

THE MODERATOR: Good tip for all of us.

Questions.

Q. You come off, what, four consecutive Top 10s -- five. That is your longest stretch I think since 2014. Are you playing as well as you have in, say, three, four years?

CRISTIE KERR: Oh, absolutely. Having knee surgery in the off-season, I really believe that training with a trainer and getting in the gym and being on a program again has really helped my game and my mentality. Like, yeah, I can still do this.

So I feel like I'm playing great.

Q. You just said you sensed that you know you can still do this. Was there ever any doubt that you still could?

CRISTIE KERR: No in a sense that I knew I could be competitive. But getting back in the winner's circle and being consistently up there every week, something had to give. I wasn't working hard enough the last couple years on my fitness. Now I got to work on my diet and my wine consumption.

But I'm training as hard as I ever did. I really enjoy it now. Those nagging little injuries that I've had are starting to go away. I wasn't working as hard the last couple years.

Becoming a mom is amazing, but in this lifestyle also

difficult. So there was an adjustment period there, and we're doing okay.

Q. What's the biggest challenge of going up against such a young field every week?

CRISTIE KERR: Honestly, the golf ball doesn't know your age. Juli Inkster is still out here. Honestly it's who can score the best. It has nothing to do with age. I mean, maybe they might have a little bit more stamina because of their age, but you only have to play 18 holes a day.

This has been a very unusual year where we have a match play where we have had to go 38 or 37 holes in a day, or Thailand where we went 53 holes in tow days, or even the ANA when we had a wind cancellation.

So it's an unusual year, but that's why I'm training. If I can even the playing field a little bit that way, then it's going to be a big advantage for me.

Q. You talked about doing well here. When you come up the driveway here, do you have like certain comfort level that rises to the occasion?

CRISTIE KERR: Yeah, definitely feels like I'm home. I have very good friends that I stay with here. Just kind of feels like home.

Q. Obviously the majors are always important to you, but with your running into good form now and the majors coming up and getting closer to the Hall of Fame, does it become more and more important to take advantage of those opportunities?

CRISTIE KERR: I mean, it does. But at the same time, to achieve that I can't put too much pressure on myself.

Got to keep plugging away and get myself in position every week to win a golf tournament. You know what? Most of the time you're not going to win. I managed to win one this year, and if I keep putting myself in position as I have -- lie I said, you're not going to win every one. When you do win five, six events, you're Player of the Year.

All I can really control is try to get myself in the hunt every week, and then come the back nine on Sunday hopefully some really good things will happen.

Q. It's been a long time since there has been ten events and no multiple winners. Last year at this point I think there were three. Does that surprise you it's been a different winner each week?

CRISTIE KERR: I honestly think every year is different. It's hard to say why there hasn't been a multiple winner this year. I certainly could have been. Every year is different. Every day on the golf course is different. It's hard to say why that is.

We have really talented players on this tour. When I first came out on tour there might have been 20 or 30 girls that could win. Now everybody can win on a given week.

Q. Hefty scar. How extensive was the surgery and how grueling was the rehab?

CRISTIE KERR: Oh, this is from 1994 actually. I had knee surgery in 1994 as well. The two little scars right here left and right of the big one. So I had a metastasectomy. They took out a good part of my meniscus.

After falling last year at the Evian and then kept playing on it not knowing it was really injured, look I had made it worse. I got a really big bucket-handle tear that got stuck in between my two bones.

Then from playing on it again the last couple events of the year - probably shouldn't have - I got another tear on this side. They had to clean a lot of it out.

Q. How did you fall?

CRISTIE KERR: It was just pouring rain and I stepped onto a -- off the cart path onto the wooden pylon thing thinking it is going to be drier than the grass, and it wasn't. Pretty bad fall. My caddies was like 100 yards ahead of me and he heard it and he turned around and was like, Are you okay. I think so.

I didn't know it was injured until couple weeks later. I knew it was swollen, but thought it was just twisted. I didn't think I really hurt it. I twisted my ankle, too.

So it wasn't until I went to Taiwan and it gave out on a tee shot and I was in an a lot of pain and I was like, There is a real problem here.

Tried to do everything with rehab and Cortisone shot to try to not have to have surgery. In Japan it happened again where it kind of gave out, and I was lucky to finish the week.

So CME, wanted to defend at CME, so I took Lorena's off and played on a lot of heavy drugs. Taped up therapy, knee brace, the whole thing. Played pretty well considering. You know, unless I can't physically walk I usually do okay.

Q. How many holes did you have left when you fell?

CRISTIE KERR: The first time I had eight holes and I was 3-under the last 8 and finished top 10, which was fantastic - in the 40-mile-an-hour winds.

In Japan it happened on the 8th hole, so I had like 12 holes left, which was tough. That was pretty painful. I

just remember hobbling to dinner and getting up the next morning and instead of going to Lorena's flying home going, I think I'm done. Like I couldn't even walk. It was bad.

Q. No wonder the wine consumption went up, right?

CRISTIE KERR: Yes, it probably did.

Q. There was some apprehension about the future of this event. What's your level of concern for that?

CRISTIE KERR: I mean, Escalante Resorts just came in and bought this place. They have a lot of properties.

I think they see, at least from what I am hearing from the residents in the community and some of the staff, is that this they really want to keep this going. At least that's what I've heard. Escalante Resorts, please keep this going.

They want make improvements to the golf course as well. So hopefully we can keep it going. I think everybody involved is a little less concerned than they were a year ago. Hopefully it works out.

Q. Just recently had a Solheim Cup outing with Juli. It's getting closer. Still a lot can happen in the standings. But what is your sense on the nature of maybe this team and the excitement that's beginning to grow as the summer comes?

CRISTIE KERR: Well it's definitely - in a Solheim year it's always exciting, and we get together and do dinners and different things like that.

So you would always love to take the same team back. Sometimes it's out of your control. Seems as of now, it may be a little bit of a different team. We had a blast at our last outing. I thought everybody bonded really well.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much. Good luck this week. See you out there on the golf course.