

Shriners Children's Open

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TPC Summerlin

Lexi Thompson

Press Conference



Shriners
Children's Open™ 

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome 11-time LPGA Tour winner, Lexi Thompson, into the interview room at the Shriners Children's Open. This week Lexi is competing on a sponsor's exemption and becomes the seventh woman to compete in a PGA TOUR event.

Just an opening comment from you on what it means to compete on the PGA TOUR this week.

LEXI THOMPSON: It means the world to me. Very honored that Shriners invited me to come out here. It's been something I grew up doing with my brothers and have wanted to do, but to also send a message out to the Shriners kids that no dream is too small and they can go after what they want and follow their dreams.

Q. Is there any part of you that when you got the invite wanted to say no or was it an automatic yes?

LEXI THOMPSON: It was basically an automatic yes. I did have plans this weekend, but they moved to next week now. It was such an exciting feeling. I got the news two Sundays ago right after I played at Walmart, so it was kind of surreal. I was letting that round soak in and have a good round under my belt and got that news. I'm like, right, this is all just exciting.

Like I said I'm just very honored that they want me here to compete this week, and hopefully send out an inspiring message.

Q. Have you talked to Brittany or Michelle or anyone that's done this before you for any advice?

LEXI THOMPSON: I haven't really. They all reached out and wished me the best of luck. I'm just here to play alongside the men, play within myself. I know my game and I've played well the last few weeks.

So just enjoy the whole experience and embrace it all and see the kids out there and, you know, just enjoy it.

Q. And then I know he's retracted it, but any reaction

to Peter Malnati saying this is just a gimmick?

LEXI THOMPSON: No reaction. I knew some comments were going to happen with anything. Like I said, I'm out here playing of course with the men, but I want to leave a message just to the kids that I'm following my dreams and to go after what you want with a positive mindset and don't let anybody's comments or reaction get in the way of that.

But it's all good. I mean, I expected it, so... (smiling.)

Q. People who don't follow women's golf closely probably don't realize the microscope you've been under since before you turned pro. You handled it especially well this year. Where does that resiliency come from and how do you think it might benefit you this week?

LEXI THOMPSON: I think it's just since I've been under the microscope I guess since I was 12 years old, just being used to it. Just believing in yourself and not listening to outside expectations or any people that judge you.

You know what you're capable of, and all you have to do is believe in the work that you put in and go out there and trust the process. That's all I've done throughout my whole career. Turning pro at a young age was a big step, doing this.

Really just have to go out and do what you love.

Q. What was that yardage on your 3-wood at 16?

LEXI THOMPSON: I had 230 pin. Hit my 3-wood. I think it landed about pin high or one bounce over, so...

Q. Yeah, you mentioned before the Solheim you found something in your swing. I think you used the word "tremendously" that changed your swing. What was it that you found and how has it helped you since then?

LEXI THOMPSON: I can't say. (Laughter.)

No, it was something very simple, but I feel like as golfers and athletes we kind of have our tendencies of always



... when all is said, we're done.®

going back to certain things. Even when we are struggling we always have tendencies of what our swing goes to.

Just really focusing in on this one thing, and it's gotten me a lot better on track with my swing plane. Just really dialed into that the week before Solheim and I probably hit hundreds of golf balls every day until I got it down.

Because I wanted to go to Solheim and play my best golf, because represent being your country, that's what I live for.

Q. How often do you feel restricted by the LPGA setups? Is this part of the appeal here, you get to let loose and rip it a little? I noticed 17, you're hitting driver off the deck and doing some things you probably don't get to do typically on the LPGA.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, it's nice to come here and hit a lot of drivers, of course. You know, the last few weeks I didn't hit too many drivers, but you still have to hit the golf shots on the LPGA Tour. It's just I don't get to take advantage of sometimes my length on a few of those holes.

Here it's driver on every hole, and I definitely like that. Fire away and swing, get the most distance I can on a few of those holes.

Q. You've done a ton of things. Where would making the cut rank in terms of your career accomplishments?

LEXI THOMPSON: Definitely at the top. Definitely at the top of my accomplishments. It's been an honor just to get this invite, but one step, one shot at a time.

That would be an amazing feeling.

Q. Saying that, what would you consider a successful week?

LEXI THOMPSON: You know, yes, good golf is a successful week. If I can leave here inspiring others, and especially the kids, the Shriners kids, that's what it's all about and what this tournament is. There is more than just playing golf.

If I can inspire one individual I would feel like I'm making progress. Of course, yes, I want to play good. That's a whole 'nother story. There is more to life than performing well. That's what I want to, inspire others.

And yeah, we'll see where the golf takes me. I know I've played well the last few weeks, and just take one shot at a time. Whatever happens, it's a blessing to be here.

Q. Did Shriners reach out to you to gauge your interest? How did this get started?

LEXI THOMPSON: They reached out to my management team. I found out two Sundays ago of Walmart that they wanted me to play here, so it was kind of last-minute, last-notice. I was like, yeah, all right, let's go.

I didn't know it was in the works, but I'm very happy it was. Wasn't exacting it at all. I'm happy it's this event because there is definitely more to golf.

Q. And finally from me, how much of an advantage for you do you feel having Nick on your bag who has played a number of PGA TOUR events?

LEXI THOMPSON: He's not on my bag. Sorry.

Q. All right. So how much of an advantage having brothers who have played on PGA TOUR events and what have they been able to tell you about being out here?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, they both have played this golf course and have given me a few tips. Even a few people that have been out on this course that gave me some tips in the golf course, whether it was distances, carries, and that I didn't have to worry about too many carry numbers out there. That I had plenty of distance to handle the golf course.

So of it definitely a relieving feeling because coming into a PGA TOUR event, you never know distance-wise if my distance a good enough. But, yeah, the course is in amazing shape. Great layout. Just happy I get to bomb driver everywhere.

Q. Out there on the back nine, it was so low key and I was wondering, playing with Michael and Ben if it took you back to your days when you might play with Nicholas and Curtis on a Sunday or weekend?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, it really did. Michael and Ben were great. They're so nice. We had a relaxing practice round. They helped me out on a few holes, giving me some tips on them. It was just a very chill practice round.

Growing up with two older brothers that play I always grew up playing with them and their friends, so I've been used to it. It was nice to be out there just having a relaxing practice round and just kind of joke around and get some feedback from the guys.

Q. Just one more. Lexi, I'm friends with the president of the National Organization of Women, the Nevada

chapter. They'll be out here this week supporting you. Does that add pressure to you or do you feel the support or do you feel like you're carrying the banner for women this week?

LEXI THOMPSON: I wouldn't say it adds pressure. Playing golf and being a woman golfer, top woman golfer I just want to inspire people in general. Male-dominated sport, I guess. Just to show that anything is possible and that I'm following my dreams.

I've done in since I was five years old, spotlight since I was 12. You just have to block out everything and believe in yourself and go after what you want. No added pressure. That's what I want. I want to have women support me and me support them. That's what it's all about.

Q. You talked so much about being able to hit more drivers here than on the LPGA Tour. Have you made any tweaks to your golf bag this year because of some longer holes into clubs?

LEXI THOMPSON: I would say the only thing -- because I play with five wedges, so sometimes I have to either take out a wedge or a -- usually my 5-iron when I play.

But the 5-iron will be in the bag this week and I'll take out one of my wedges. No added clubs or different clubs for that matter. I'll definitely take out a wedge.

Q. Your practice round today looked really good. How would you say this course suits your game besides being long?

LEXI THOMPSON: I would just say first off, it's in amazing shape, so pure. Yeah, I definitely get to hit a lot of drivers out there. I feel like it sets up for a good draw.

I feel very comfortable with just aiming up the right side of some of the fairways and playing my little baby draw with my driver.

Besides that, you still have to plan for the numbers coming into the greens, play for that little bit of bounce-up, because I'm sure it'll get firmer as the week goes on.

Just an amazing layout. This is my first time and didn't know what to expect, but definitely exceeded my expectations.

Q. It's often said that women have accuracy when the men have length. Do you feel that's the case, and how much of an advantage do you feel that you've been hitting really into the pin?

LEXI THOMPSON: It helps, my length, I guess, for sure coming into some of these greens, especially if it gets firmer on some of greens that go a little bit away.

Definitely a little bit of an advantage, but you still have to hit the fairways and give yourself the best opportunity to come into some of these greens with some shorter clubs. For me, maybe a little bit longer club. It's a great layout. So I'm just looking forward to it.

Q. What is the first thing that comes to your mind about the challenge ahead of you this week?

LEXI THOMPSON: The first thing that comes to my mind? I mean, I don't really see it as a challenge. Coming into a PGA TOUR event, being a woman, is a challenge. I just got to play within myself. I know my game. Don't try to push anything. Play within myself and that's all I can do.

Try my best on every single shot, 100% committed. Whatever happens, I can only control my emotions and my game.

Q. Last question: Who has given you the best advice about this week, and what would it be?

LEXI THOMPSON: I would say there was just a group of people here that have played the golf course plenty of times that have give me so many tips on the golf course and have walked the golf course for me and really checked some numbers out that made me feel very comfortable coming into the week, and even playing today, that I wasn't too worried about it.

THE MODERATOR: All right, thank you for your time and best of luck this week.

LEXI THOMPSON: Thank you.

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