

AIG Women's Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 19 August 2021

Lydia Ko

STUART MOFFATT: Lydia, talk about your start to the championship and what your initial thoughts are after the first round.

LYDIA KO: My ball striking was very far from steady, but obviously it was a bit of a grind out there. Other than that, considering where I hit it on some of these holes, I think to be able to make three good up-and-downs the last three holes to finish even, I think it's a solid way to start this championship.

I know it could have been better, but it was tough out there. The golf course isn't easy. Just with it being a little drizzly early in the day, it's a test, but you know what, it's fun to be on a golf course like this. I've said this is one of those golf courses where you can't really not focus on any moment when you're out there because you have to be strategic and you have to play smart, but at the same time, when it's green light, you're trying too go for it as well.

Q. It's nothing new at Carnoustie, but the last five holes seem to be creating more than a little bit of problems for the field. No one so far is under par for the last five. You're the best on even. What has been particularly difficult over the last five holes? I know you said you got up and down on three of them. Conditions seem to be reasonably calm. What's making them so difficult today?

LYDIA KO: Normally on the golf course, you can kind of miss one way or the other on a lot of holes, but here you can't really miss one or the other. If you dodge the bunkers, and obviously you've got rough, and when you're in the fescue, it's hit or miss with lies. I think for the most parts I got pretty lucky if I did hit it in the fescue.

You think 14 -- is that the par-4? No, par-5. That one, in practice rounds it was straight downwind, and from the normal back tee, I hit driver, 7-iron to the green on Tuesday, on the practice day. Today obviously my driver went left. Now I'm having to hit driver, chip out, and then hit a 9-iron onto the green.

16 is a very -- it's a beastly par-3 in all ways. I played 15 really well, hit a good drive, hit 7-iron, and completely



misread my putt. But 16, 17, and 18, you have to hit a lot of good shots and especially a lot of good tee shots. If not, you're grinding and trying to make par and up-and-downs. It gets tougher.

The golf course is tough itself, so I think if you're out of position, then, yeah, it can be a little bit more costly than some other golf courses that we play at.

Q. So it doesn't surprise you that the field is struggling over those five today?

LYDIA KO: It's not easy. I think, obviously, when it's breezy, this golf course plays a lot tougher, but even with a little bit of wind, it doesn't make the fescue or the bunkers not in play. I think, when it is windy, you have to work around it and hit different shots. I think the golf course itself is a test, and I think the scores are showing.

Obviously, there are some great rounds out there as well, but you have to have your A-game in all areas of your game because, if your ball striking is not as well, if you're putting good, you're able to make up for that and vice versa.

Yeah, it's a test, and it just shows what level of golf course Carnoustie is.

Q. Lydia, Nelly Korda is up there again, which might not be any surprise. You obviously chased her at Tokyo. When you've got a player like that in such form, is it imposing to see her up there?

LYDIA KO: I think at the end of the day, it's obviously no surprise that Nelly is playing really well. She's been playing consistently well. Her ball striking is, I think, one of the most consistent out there, and at the same time, she's got length. So I think she can cover a lot of these bunkers. Her short game also speaks for itself.

Yeah, I think it is no surprise that she is around the top of the leaderboard, but we've still got -- for me, there's still a lot of golf to be played. There's still three more rounds. Some of the field have not even teed off. At the end, I think as long as you're in the field and you feel like you know where your game's at, you can never count yourself out.



With golf, it's not about me trying to beat somebody else. I think you're just trying to play the best golf you can, and that's it. If you play good golf and somebody plays better, you can't do much about it. So for me, I just try to focus on me, but I do -- I'm not really sure about, oh, man, I'm intimidated by this player or not, but it is no surprise that Nelly is playing great because she has been playing so consistently well.

STUART MOFFATT: Thank you again. Well played today.

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