

AIG Women's Open

Press Conference

Wednesday, 3 August 2022

Jennifer Kupcho



STUART MOFFATT: We'll make a start then. Delighted to welcome the 2022 Chevron champion Jennifer Kupcho to the interview room. First of all, can you give us your first impressions of Muirfield and how you've been enjoying it so far?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, it's amazing. Edge my first couple days, it was a little less windy but today was crazy this morning. But I think it's a really good golf course, good test of golf.

I think you need to stay out of bunkers. I think that's the hardest thing. I think that's the same for most links courses, but for sure out here.

STUART MOFFATT: You've got three LPGA wins this year, clearly a player in form. Do you feel confident about your chances this week?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I think I kind of go into every week not -- I mean expecting but not expecting. So I'm just going to go out there and play my best. There's so many outside elements out here in Scotland, so I think just taking what I get and seeing what I can do with it.

STUART MOFFATT: The last American winner was Mo Martin in 2014. Nice to add another American name to the trophy I guess at the end of this week.

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I think that would be super cool, super special, but again, not getting too far ahead of myself.

Q. Do you consider yourself a good links golfer?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: I think, yes and no. I think honestly, I think links golf depends on a lot on your caddie, trusting him, trusting the shot that you're trying to hit. I think when I first started in links golf, I was not very good but I've gotten better every time I've played.

Q. What do you think you've learned beyond just trusting your caddie? Is there something that we don't have in the States that you have to just learn through experience over here?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: I think growing up in Colorado and playing winter golf, you have to hit a lot of shots where you bounce it up but not bouncing it up 30, 40 yards like you do here. So I think that's like -- it's like a mental challenge for me. I like to just throw darts, and you can't do that here.

Q. I think three holes is the maximum that goes into the same direction in a row. Can you talk about the challenge of constantly turning around in different directions on this golf course?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I think it's certainly interesting because at least at Troon, we were going out one direction, coming back in. So you kind of just have to know where the wind is at all times. Switches for sure. Definitely the harder holes are the into-the-wind holes, but downwind is a little bit easier.

Q. Today, the ninth, par 5, straight into the wind. What sort of clubs did you hit there today?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: I didn't play today. 9, I was in between 3-wood and hybrid. It's hard to kind of know. I didn't play when there was very much wind yesterday, so yeah, we'll see.

Q. Would you consider yourself a wind player?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I would say I'm a pretty good wind player. I think that's another thing out here, you kind of have to hit bullet into the wind, and I don't normally do that. So that's kind of been a learning curve. Usually in the US, you can just play for all of the wind like a normal golf shot, and that's what I usually do. But out here, you have to hit it more, bullet through.

Q. Being where you're from, you're okay with it being a wee bit colder?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I'm from Colorado, so it's cold there.

Q. The most recent men's open here was when Phil Mickelson won. Did you watch that?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Honestly I don't watch too much



golf, so no, I did not.

Q. How important is the mental game somewhere like this, especially if it gets windy, and staying patient and not getting too frustrated?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I think that's another thing that I've learned is that you're not going to hit every shot perfect, so you just have to give what it takes -- take what it gives you. But yeah, again, I'm used to golf where there's not so many outside elements coming in, and here there is. So you just kind of hit the shot and honestly just hope for the best.

I think coming over here now, I'm out here just playing and having fun, and seeing what I shoot.

Q. Can I get your thoughts on your pairing? You're with two former champions of this event. Must be quite an exciting group for you to have?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I think it will be really cool. Obviously both great players and fun people to be around, so they will definitely keep it light out there.

Q. Can I ask you about the sort of historical significance of being here this week? I'm not sure how much you're aware of the history of women golfers at Muirfield. Just wanted to ask you, how important it is for the women's game to come here, given all the history and the voting that everyone remembers and things like that.

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I think it's great for women's golf. Over the past few years, and even in the future, we're going to great golf courses, both here and U.S. Open and courses in the States.

So I think it's great we're using that for women's golf to be able to play in the same places that the men play.

Q. Catriona Matthew was talking yesterday about how much the event has been elevated in the time since she started. Are you starting to see that as well?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I think even playing my first year at Woburn, not that that's not a great golf course, but it's not a beautiful. To be out here is extremely special.

Q. You played last week, as well. Wonder if you can talk about the difference in the greens. Dundonald has got quite funky greens and here they are a little bit more flat, some of them. Can you just talk about the different challenges?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, playing at Dundonald, it was a very soft golf course as well as very undulated on the greens. I would say the greens out here are pretty flat. You can kind of putt from anywhere. That wasn't necessarily the case at Dundonald, and you couldn't get a lot of spin on shots coming into the greens at Dundonald; just throw it at the pin like any normal golf course.

Q. Just wondering, do weeks like this, major weeks, feel different since you became a Major Champion? Does it affect how you come into these events?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Not really. Honestly I kind of go into each week thinking the same as everything else. I think if you put too much pressure on a major championship, you're just not going to play well, so I don't really try to think about that.

Q. You're definitely not alone in terms of pro golfers who like hitting darts, throwing darts. I was here for The Scottish Open and the men's open and they kept using the word "fun" for this type of golf. Do you see it this way at all or is it more invigorating or does shooting a 68 feel better over here? Anything like that that stands out?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: I think, yeah being probably shooting a low score feels a lot better over here just because you're trusting the bounces that you're getting. You're not always going to hit it to three feet like you can on U.S. golf courses. I think it definitely feels better, and it's for sure more fun, and again, that goes with mindset of some people come out here and they dread the weather or dread everything. If you go into the week thinking this is going to be fun, let's go see what happens. That definitely helps.

Q. Did you grow up thinking about golf courses in terms of, I want to play a tournament there, just thinking like Pebble hosting the Women's Open next year for the first time, this course hosting a Women's Open for the first time, did you grow up thinking of courses that way, like I really want to play there, or was that not really on your mind?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: I wouldn't say I thought about that over here. I don't know why, per se, I thought about that. But for example, like wanting to play Augusta, like that's -- I think growing up in the US, that's different. But I guess St Andrews is always one of those that you want to play but I guess I didn't really have the golf knowledge growing up about that.

STUART MOFFATT: We'll bring things to a close. Jennifer, thank you for your time good luck this week.

