

# KPMG Women's PGA Championship

Friday, June 21, 2024

Sammamish, Washington, USA

Sahalee Country Club

## Sarah Schmelzel

### Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: All right, joined by Sarah Schmelzel after her second round at the KPMG Women's PGA Championship.

Fantastic round. Six birdies, only one bogey on the card. What went into today?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Just staying really patient out there. Staying aggressive off the tees is kind of our game plan this week. I drove it really well, so fortunately I was able to take advantage of having some shorter irons in today.

Saw a few putts go in early, which always helps build the confidence for the rest of the day and fortunately just kept the momentum all day.

**Q. Speaking of confidence, to have a pretty decently clean scorecard and then to finish with back-to-back birdies, how much confidence does that give you heading into the weekend on a course like this?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, for sure. I mean, kind of caught a glimpse of leaderboard on 17 and saw I was right around the lead. It was just nice to be able to finish that well, too, knowing I was around the lead in a major.

Just going to continue to be confident in the fact that I can make birdies and make good pars out here and just try and keep rolling.

**Q. Can you take us through the last two birdies, what you hit in, how far?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, for sure. On 17 I kind of got away with one. It was a perfect number for an 8-iron and I left it out to the right a little bit and it only -- it covered just that fringe just to the right of the hole and went maybe a yard past pin high.



I kind of got away with one there and made a good putt.

Then on 18, we went driver, 3-wood and hit both of them about as well as I could. We were just short of the right bunker and chipped it up to about a foot and easy birdie. It was nice to finish that way.

**Q. In the game plan decision to be aggressive off the tee, is that a difficult one to make on this, or how do you make that call?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, I mean, I think it's such an advantage if you are hitting driver well out here. I feel like I drive the ball well, so if I can commit to my shots, I think that I can drive it well around here and then be able to take advantage of having a little shorter clubs in.

I think it's pretty visually daunting for sure, but just really seeing my shot shape and committing to that and wherever it goes it goes and just keep plugging along all day.

**Q. You had one of the most solid stretches of gold probably of your career in that spring, March area. Not been super great since. How have you managed to reset, refocus knowing it's coming and looking ahead to this week?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, definitely. I think just relying on my team a ton: Swing coach, mental coach, putting coach, strength coach. Just they're really great at reminding me how much of a process this is. I can tend to kind of veer away from that and not get so process oriented and I get a little more perfection oriented. They have just been awesome helping me continue to work on the right things and encouraging me.

I think they've just said it enough I started to believe it. It's nice that it's been working out this week.

**Q. Obviously playing golf in Arizona you do not have a lot of the margin for error.**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah.

**Q. Does that help you at a venue like this?**



SARAH SCHMELZEL: I don't know if it helps me. At home I play one of the very few tree-lined courses in Phoenix probably. I think to travels really well.

I'm kind of used to seeing trees. Used to if I hit it in I'm kind of hitting around it. I like to shape the ball, so I like that about being out here. If you're in the wrong side of fairway and you got to shape it a little, I think that's fun.

The course I play I at home, yeah, would probably be an advantage. I don't know if desert golf is necessarily an advantage to coming out to trees like this, but it's been traveling well, which is nice.

**Q. What's at that golf course?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Moon Valley Country Club.

**Q. Great round today.**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Thank you.

**Q. You started with a new instructor not too long ago. Can you tell us just what Chris focused on and how that helped you?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, I started working with Chris pretty early on in the off-season. Went to San Diego quite a bit to see him over the off-season. He's been out for a few events this year, which has been good.

We did a little bit of just swing mechanics trying to make it a little more dynamic, trying to be a little wider, use my legs and strength a little bit more instead of just swinging my arm at it.

He's also just been amazing at the mental side and the process side of it. Really got me dialed into this is your game plan of the day. If you continue to take care of each day then the bigger things will happen, and that's really helped me just let go of all the other stuff, all the end goals and that kind of thing, and just really focus on the process.

**Q. As there anything specific for this week that he told you so far?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: No. I mean, I saw him after I guess that was U.S. Open. I went to go see him and I played -- honestly I started to hit it well again at Founders and hit it really well at the U.S. Open; just didn't putt very well.

He just told me, I was kind of in that perfection frame of mind. Like what do I need to do to play well. He said,

you're going to play well. Relax and it's going to happen and believe it.

So I've just been last few weeks thinking of that. Saw some really positive stuff last week and took that into this week.

**Q. What made you choose him?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Honestly, Alison Lee. She is obviously an amazing golfer. Love how she swings it. Played with her a few times over the last couple years and was super impressed. She spoke so highly of him. He's also in San Diego, so super easy to get to from Phoenix.

Really lucky that he and I vibed really well right off the bat and it's been working out so well.

**Q. A few players hit driver off the deck on 18 in the practice round; did you test that at all?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: No, I did not. I know my strengths and weaknesses. I'm not going to try and do that.

**Q. It seems like the greens are starting to firm up a little bit more. Is that where having the shorter irons into the greens is going to have that much more effect?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: I think so. As long as you're hitting it straight it works out well, right? I think you just got to take your I guess chances out here, where even when we have had 8-irons and 9-irons, we're still playing up the mouth of the green because the pin is tucked over a downslope and you're just not getting close to it.

It is nice to have a 9-iron instead of 7-iron. I think overall, for the rest of the weekend I think it does play a bit of an advantage.

**Q. What was your best birdie out there today?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Best birdie? I mean, probably one the last two just being able to finish the round off that way knowing I was close to the lead. Probably 18 just hitting a really good drive and second shot and chipping it to a foot was about as easy as it could feel for the most part.

**Q. You mentioned Moon Valley before. Is there a tie-in with Annika's 59 with getting you into golf?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, for sure. My parents have been members there since the late '90s, and I grew up just across the street from 7th Street, so I'm about five minutes from Moon Valley. My dad pulled me out of school that

day when she was shooting 59. One of the guys in the bag room called him and said, you got to bring the kids out. Something special is happening.

I don't remember much of it other than the atmosphere. But from at that point forward I went out to Moon Valley every year that the Safeway was there and went and watched Annika and followed her around. She's been so inspiring to my career, really just the way she worked really hard, the way she still works really hard, and the way she carries herself. She's just been such an awesome role model.

**Q. Have you shared that story her?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, for sure. I was with her for an outing earlier this year. I've been fortunate enough to play in The ANNIKA as a junior and The ANNIKA when I was a college and then obviously at Pelican. So our paths have crossed a few times.

Yes, she does know that story and it's fun to share with her.

**Q. What's your lowest round?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: 62 I think. No -- yeah, 62. Yeah, in Portland.

**Q. During that great stretch that you had in the spring, what was working so well for you? What did you gain the most confidence from that period?**

SARAH SCHMELZEL: I think it was a lot of the mental stuff. Obviously I was hitting it way better, so it's -- that part made it easier. Being able to be day-to-day focused, being okay with being nervous, okay with not hitting it well, not hitting it my best, maybe speed doesn't feel great on the greens but being able to perform because I'm in the right headspace, that has allowed me to stay confident in the physical stuff I'm working on knowing it's not going to be perfect every day but you're still very capable.

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