

Dana Open presented by Marathon

Friday, September 2, 2022

Sylvania, Ohio, USA

Highland Meadows Golf Club

Lauren Kim

Quick Quotes

Q. Lauren, I know this wasn't the plan to play this week and this was kind of a last-minute decision when a lot of things fell into place. Technically you're retired and this was your crowning glory.

LAUREN KIM: Yeah.

Q. What were the last two days like for you?

LAUREN KIM: A little bit surreal in a certain way. This was -- Marathon was the first LPGA event I ever played in 2015 I believe was my first year. It was the summer after my junior year, after we won the national championship.

And so, yeah, it's like kind of weird that it started here and then now is ending here. Pretty special. You know, I saw Judd on the course out there today and it just feels full circle, which I'm really happy about.

I think there is many ways that you can end a career, and this is kind of a sweet way do it. Yeah, just coming full circle and being able to spend the week with friends.

Yeah, it's cool.

Q. Some wonderful insight that you were in Europe on Sunday and then flew straight here. I know you told me earlier in the week you didn't pick up your clubs for the last couple of weeks. You're getting your Masters currently. What was it like preparing for competition?

LAUREN KIM: Well, I have some sort of hip spasm weird thing going on, so I think body is protesting. (Laughter.) I'm old.

My body is protesting for sure. I moved to Philly on August 1st, and have touched a club I think exactly twice on like a simulator. So coming here, like Wednesday afternoon was the first time I hit on grass in like a month. That was weird. I was like, grass is so soft, so much softer than simulator.



But it's been fun. I don't know how involved with golf I'll be like in the near future, but we'll see. I think, yeah, I'm just trying to enjoy being a normal person and kind of the mental freedom that comes along with retiring.

It's weird to say retiring. I don't think it's like settled in yet that it's true retirement. I wanted to play the last event to at least give myself the opportunity to be an LPGA member and kind of stay involved and, yeah, still feel like part of the family even though I'm not physically competing every week.

Q. A lot of your tour family met up last night I think to celebrate you. What was that like?

LAUREN KIM: It's just so fun. I think the biggest thing I'll miss is just friends. Like I wouldn't have been out here for six years I don't think if it weren't for them.

Yeah, we took a picture where they all held me up. It's like emotional because it kind of represents how I feel like they've been in my life the last six years, just like supporting me.

Yeah, I really truly would not have played for this long if it weren't for them. So, yeah, it was really special.

Q. And with that, as tears are coming through, being able to also play with Aline Krauter the last few days, Stanford grad; she talked very highly of you yesterday when we talked about just your career in golf and career outside of golf. What was that like to see another young, Stanford hot start come through?

LAUREN KIM: Got it's impressive watching her play. Like she's just consistent and hits fairways, hits greens, makes putts. And like if that's the future of the game, then that's like an incredibly amazing place to be.

Just watching her, I was fortunate enough to watch her play in Hawaii in a couple events through the years. I was at Nationals in May and watched them win. She's so solid. She was a huge, I mean huge, huge, huge part of the reason they won that National Championship. I'm sure coach is going to miss her next year.



But it's just incredible to see the talent, and like just, I mean, obviously they work hard, but to see like the focus just it's amazing. Like I'm kind of at a loss for words. To think that I played when I was a rising senior and was just trying to make the cut, and she's like in the top 10, you know, in contention, it's like, yeah, it's just -- golf has gotten so much better over the years - even just in the time that I've been playing.

It's cool to see. I mean, like it's kind of crazy to be on the exit when she's coming in because we spent some time together at Stanford, but I think it's very telling because I feel -- if I'm honest with myself, I feel like competing against the new kids coming out of college, even those that haven't gone to college, is just like -- it's on another level.

Like I just feel like it's like I'm playing a different game. Like my goal is to like not be injured and kind of play pain-free and like just physically be healthy.

They're coming out like firing and just making birdies, and it's pretty cool. It's really cool to watch her play.

Q. Now, I'm guessing you missed classes this week.

LAUREN KIM: Yeah.

Q. In person. Did you have to get a leave from professors? Did you have to explain, Hey, I got to go do my side hustle real quick?

LAUREN KIM: Yeah, I'll give a shout out to my stat professor, Professor Weiner. I just met him on Monday. He emailed me the other day. He's like, you missed the golf discussion being out there. It's cool. It's cool that they like sports and I'm fortunate that they like sports. They've been very accommodating and pretty easy to work with.

I'm excited to learn from them. I think it's going to be a really interesting two years. Already I can see kind of like real world applications to what I'm learning, which is I guess the best part. It's not like college where you have a bunch of like general requirements to complete. It's really just a focused learning environment.

Yeah, but I missed a lot and I'm going to have to watch a lot of videos and it'll take some time, but I'll get through it.

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