

NW Arkansas Championship

Wednesday, August 26, 2020

Rogers, Arkansas, USA

Pinnacle Country Club

Inbee Park

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome everyone to the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G.

We've got Rolex Rankings No. 8 and seven-time major winner, Inbee Park with us.

Inbee, first of all, welcome back to the United States. How does it feel to be back?

INBEE PARK: Yeah, it's been a while since I've been here in U.S. because I've spent most of my time in Korea while we had this coronavirus.

So it's good to be back, and obviously it was a long flight from Scotland, but we safely got here. Yeah, happy with that.

THE MODERATOR: Speaking of Scotland, that was your first event back on the LPGA Tour since the pandemic started where you placed fourth.

How do you feel about your game now and what are the strongest parts of your game and maybe the weakest?

INBEE PARK: Yeah, it was a tough week in Scotland with the wind and rain conditions, but I feel like I played really well. First day was a little bit disappointing, but except for the first day, second round and on, it was great.

I feel good about the game, especially I putted really well last week, which makes me really happy.

Well, the last time I played before Scotland was in Australia and I've been putting really good there. I was a little bit worried taking six months off after that. Am I going to have my putting feel back? Yeah, there was a little bit of that worry.

After playing in Scotland it gave me definitely a little bit of confidence.

THE MODERATOR: In Scotland you had your husband on the bag.



INBEE PARK: Uh-huh.

THE MODERATOR: How did you feel about that, and then this week, is he on the bag, off the bag, or what are you guys talking about this week?

INBEE PARK: Yeah, he's retired now. So, yeah, I have Brad on my bag from this weekend on. Yeah, we had great time last weekend together in Scotland. You know, we just love being in Scotland and playing in Scotland. It is tough, tough golfing conditions, but we kind of really love that challenge and that cool weather and little bit of rain.

We really enjoyed that. It was hot in Korea as well and hot here, hot everywhere, but it was nice and cool weather.

THE MODERATOR: We might get a hurricane now or some symptoms from the hurricane. Speaking of this event though, you've won here before and played really well last year.

What are you most looking forward to in terms of the course?

INBEE PARK: Well, this golf course is very comfortable golf course for me. I've played this golf course many times. Almost know this golf course like a home golf course.

So there is nothing to study about this golf course for me anymore. It's just go out there, have some confidence, and try to make some putts.

You're going to -- I think this golf course is going to have a lot of birdies, unless like it gets really windy or gets a lot of rain. I think it's going to be like who makes more putts.

So just got to try to hit it close and make a lot of putts. That's the game plan.

THE MODERATOR: We have a couple questions.

Q. You mentioned the conditions in Scotland. With the possibility of storms rolling in throughout the week here, what are some adjustments you have to make on this course specifically to score well during those potentially wet conditions again?



INBEE PARK: Well, I think the most different thing would be I think around the greens, because in Scotland there is nothing that we needed to hit it really high. We had to use a lot of, you know, bump and runs and chipping really low, doing a lot of low shows.

This week will be a little bit different. I think greens are going to be soft and you're going to have to hit into some pins really high and attack the pins a lot more than playing in Scotland.

Playing in Scotland was you try to make pars and move on, but I think this week will be you have to try to definitely go for birdies, whether it is rainy conditions or not.

Q. Great playing last week. You've now moved up to 8th in the world rankings, 4th ranked Korean player. I know that the Olympics is somewhere in the back of your mind. How closely are you following the rankings, and is it something that you're continually working towards?

INBEE PARK: Well, I really haven't looked at the ranking for five or six months because it was obviously paused.

After playing last week I looked at some press and the rankings, and I've moved back into top 10, which is great news. It's good to see that. I got to say, comparing to earlier in the year and now, everything is just so uncertain that Olympic in my mind is pretty much almost gone, I should say.

You just don't know what's going to happen next week. You just really can't guarantee anything next year, whether it's going to happen or what's going to happen, how many tournaments we're going to have. Everything is so uncertain.

So I'm just trying to focus on just every week, and whatever we have, whatever tournament we have, whatever tournament I compete in, I just try to do my best.

I don't know whether -- if we get an opportunity to go to Olympics it's great, but I don't know. I don't know if that's really going to happen. Yeah, hopefully. Yeah.

Q. You have throughout your career been the queen of overcoming adversity, whether it's coming back from injury or overcoming a lot of things that are going on around you.

And this has been about as adverse a year as you could have. We don't know what's going to happen week to week. How do you do that? How do you get into that mindset where you just have to take care of the things you

can take care of and not be distracted by all the ancillary things?

INBEE PARK: Yeah, I guess it was hard for a lot of people thinking, What do we prepare for? Every week we practice for something. We try to prepare for some tournament or try to make our conditions for the major championships.

But I think this year has been hard because we just didn't know what we prepare for, so it was probably hard for me and hard for everyone else. But I just think for first couple of months I was like, What do we do? No tournaments. I feel bored. What kind of life do I need to live from now on?

I was a little bit confused first couple months. After that, I really just got used to just staying home and not going tournaments. I think it was really easy thing to get used to. I really had fun time relaxing and comfortable time back home just trying to focus on what I can do while I'm there.

THE MODERATOR: I have one more question. Speaking of staying at home getting used to being at home, you have the cutest golden retriever; his name is Rio. How is he now? Is he back at home in Korea? How did you guys spend time during quarantine?

INBEE PARK: Yeah, he's back home in Korea now, so I think it was a special year because we spent so much time together, five or six months together, which never really happens.

He had a great time and I had a great time. It was actually tougher to leave him than any other time that I had to leave him. He's probably used to being me by his side.

But, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much and good luck this week.

INBEE PARK: Thank you.

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