

AIG Women's Open

Tuesday, 18 August, 2020

Danielle Kang

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Danielle, thank you for joining us at the 2020 AIG Women's Open. Can you tell us what it's like to be back playing golf, major golf, as well?

DANIELLE KANG: I am really excited to play our first major championship of 2020. I don't know, I think I've had a pretty good run up to this date, so I'm really excited to play. The golf course is absolutely tremendously impeccable.

THE MODERATOR: Can you talk about how that has set you up now coming into the year's first major?

DANIELLE KANG: A lot of people asked me before the break, after it or during it, but hey, you were playing so well before it, but are you bummed that it stopped and it's something that you always kind of worried about a little bit when you kind of don't play for a long period of time and I never have experienced that and never has any other professional golfer.

Coming back out, and actually performing the way I did and being able to trust my game and get back into the rhythm has helped my confidence, helped to see my goals to play out the way I envisioned to play out. Pretty happy about the results.

THE MODERATOR: This is the first time that Royal Troon is hosting the AIG Women's Open. You went out for a practise round yesterday and today. Is that the first time you've played Royal Troon.

DANIELLE KANG: Yesterday was the first time I've ever seen Troon, Royal Troon. Depending on the weather, it's going to play so different. We've had beautiful weather the last couple days, but today the sun is out and I don't think we are going to get that for the rest of the week, kind of excited to see what this golf course is going to challenge us to do.

THE MODERATOR: The Postage Stamp is obviously a renowned hole in world golf. Can you tell us about your first impressions of that par 3?

DANIELLE KANG: You just can't miss the green. I looked

down on the right side, the left, and it's a small -- it's a small green and beautiful hole and it's short. The yardage is very short, but can't underestimate that wedge shot and you can't -- I feel like you can't get too greedy and you just have to hit the green.

Q. You talk going into these two weeks in Scotland about getting used to links play and adapting to it and accepting things. How do you feel like you executed last week of that plan of accepting things and being positive?

DANIELLE KANG: Last week was tough for me, actually. I hit the ball so well, and I think that set me up for this week. I got a good feel for links golf, the bounces and the rolls that we are going to get.

Last week, it's a bit different than this week. We had really great weather for four days. The greens were a bit slower than this week, so I think one of the things that I come here to do was to get used to the green speed and around the greens, but can't underestimate Royal Troon, either. I tried really hard. I just didn't make a lot of putts last week but hopefully they will drop this week.

Q. So when you say "tough," that's what you mean? What do you mean exactly? You said it was tough last week for you?

DANIELLE KANG: It was tough last week for me to accept -- I mean, links golf, people know that it's just going to be a little bit slower greens, subtle breaks and accepting missed putts were a bit harder for me than normal.

Greens, I'm used to just kind of putting the way I do and if you miss 2-, 3-footers here and there, you freeze over them and that's what was tough for me last week. Other than that, I think I hit the ball quite well and went around the golf course pretty well. I'm really proud of how I took on links golf in general because my results in links golf hasn't been great, so a fifth finish is my highest finish.

Q. So I'm going to ask one more. When you look at a major championship, usually there's so much buzz going on with just people in general, with entourages, so what's it like being in a bubble with no one but you and your caddie?



DANIELLE KANG: My caddie and I are sharing a car this week, so we talk about that. Usually the car ride is our time. It's my time and he has his time. Right now we are just always together.

So it's different, but the bubble protocol has been fantastic, though, the way Scotland has handled it, AIG, R&A. Everyone has made everything so efficient and the protocols have been really easy, easy to access food, cleaning and everything's that we need is there. But you're right, it's a bit different than a major in America when you used to have family and friends come visit you. It's a bit of a -- it can be overwhelming, however, I have always been kind of in a bubble just during tournament days how I normally handle things or the way how I am here in the same way.

So it's not that much different than what I would do, practise, long practise rounds, go home and order in and watch some Netflix and read a book and go to sleep.

Q. You mentioned yesterday was the first time you saw the golf course. How much of the course did you get to see, and what did you sort of think the key is this week to playing well? Ball-striking, would it play into your hands?

DANIELLE KANG: I think so. The greens are a little bit more receptive because of all the rain that the golf course has received but I think the ball-striking is quite important. Even on No. 17, you can't miss it left or right. You just have to hit it straight. That's pretty interesting. Even on No. 8, The Postage Stamp hole, you can't miss it left or right. You have to hit it straight.

But then you have the other factors that come into play such as wind, rain, things like that, so I believe that you're going to have to just be really on top of your game, stay focused. Around the greens, it seems a little bit easier than people can stay because it's -- the greens are softer, but I think the easiest chips can be really tough depending on the conditions and where the pins are. So even if you're a couple yards off the green, some people might think, oh, I can just putt this but it might roll off away and you have to make those 4- or 5-footers for pars and make some good up-and-downs. It's just going to be a really good test of the game of golf, which is why we have major championships. So, excited.

THE MODERATOR: Looks like the weather forecast could provide some true British weather. Are you looking forward to that.

DANIELLE KANG: Yes, I am ready. You're just going to have to take whatever it gives you. I just got all the laundry

done. Have the rain gear ready. Towels ready. Just really excited to tee it up on Thursday.

THE MODERATOR: Prior to coming to Royal Troon, did you do much research on the course or played here or watched many Opens? How did it match your expectations.

DANIELLE KANG: I didn't watch many previous games played, but watched Apple Maps, 3D, zoomed in, went through the holes and where the bunkers were. I did the golf course research on Google. You can kind of map out and figure out how the golf course is going to play.

All in all, you're just going to have to come out here and just execute your shots because even on 1, you might hit a 3-wood, but 1 might be firmer than 2 or 3. 3 is playing softer or No. 7 is actually playing softer than 1, things like that. So you have to kind of really feel out of golf course and I think that's going to be the beauty of it.

Q. Thinking about the weather, is there anything in particular that you've been working on this week either out on the course or on the range with a view to conditions?

DANIELLE KANG: I've been working on a lot of flighted woods because I feel that we can't hit a lot of drivers off the tees in the first front nine. So I've been working on that kind of shot. However, there's a lot of wind coming off the left, and I think that's going to be the -- hopefully the stock wind is off the southwest, which means it's off the right. So I've been working on a lot of flighted wood shots into the wind and with the winds and I think those are going to be crucial because the pot bunkers in the fairway is very penalising. That's one of the shots that I've been really focused to work on on the range.

Q. Do you think staying out of those bunkers is ultimately going to be a key this week?

DANIELLE KANG: Little bit, yeah. But in order to try and stay out of those bunkers, you're going to have long irons in, as well, and around the greens are not that easy, either and having five 4-irons in all day, 180 left into a green with bunker front left, front right, back left, drop-offs, it's just going to be leaving yourself the proper shots and missing the right way if you're going to have a miss.

So I think knowing your misses and knowing the golf course is going to be a big help.

Q. Laura Davies is going to hit the first tee shot in her 40th appearance in this event. Can you imagine playing in 40 of these, No. 1, and No. 2, just the

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significance of having Dame Laura Davies hit a shot in an historic like this with the women competing at Troon for the first time. What does that mean, do you think?

DANIELLE KANG: In my opinion, how I see that, it's remarkable, because Dame Laura Davies is a legend, an absolute legend, and she's a role model how she approaches the game, how she plays the game is different, her style of golf is different, and she's so strong in how she plays the golf and plays her game, yet so different and it's so graceful. For her to be able to play this Open Championship for 40 appearances, that is amazing. It kind of tells you that, you know, you can do it for a long time, and golf gives you that.

It's just -- and being able for her to come back out and to have -- to hit the first tee shot for us, especially in just like we've been in such a tough run for the last few months for everyone, whether it's Scotland, England, around the world in the United States. I know that AIG and R&A, LPGA and the Women's Open has gone through so much and so far out of their way to make this happen; that in order for her to make that appearance for us and be able to hit that kind of shot, and be in good health to hit that kind of shot and hit the tee shot for us, it's kind of like an opening for like, we can do it and we're here and we're here to play.

Any time she plays, I still watch from across the fairway. I think it's really cool, and it gives us hope and confidence that, like, she's our rock. Like she's there for us. That's how I kind of interpret that, how she -- what she means to me in the sense of when she hits the shot for us.

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