

ANA Inspiration

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Rancho Mirage, California, USA

Mission Hills Country Club

Lexi Thompson

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Lexi, an outstanding round out there in an afternoon where not many people are going low. What worked well for you?

LEXI THOMPSON: I had a good front nine, got off to a good start. I was 2-under through 3, but really just stayed in the moment, focused on picking out small targets for my lines off those tees and committing to my shots. I left a few out there, but also I made a lot of good putts, as well.

THE MODERATOR: You said outside that you were able to catch some of the broadcast this morning to really see how firm the greens were going to be. Were you surprised or were you able to adapt quickly do you think?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, I was expecting them to be maybe a little bit firmer, but I was playing for a good amount of bounce-out which was definitely expected. You know, it's very hot out, so playing for about five to six of bounce-out with a wedge is a good amount. Growing up in Florida you get the number and it's just pin seeking with that number. But the course is in great shape for us, so I'm looking forward to the weekend, hopefully get even better weather.

THE MODERATOR: You were able to hit kind of three quarters of your fairways and greens out there. You have had such success out here at ANA. What is it about the Dinah Shore tournament course you think lends pretty well to your game?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, I just love this tournament in general, whether I play good or not. It's just one of my favorites, just the atmosphere of the whole event. When we do get fans out here I always say they're some of the best. Just the atmosphere, the history behind this tournament, and the course is always in perfect shape for us. Different grass this year, but it's still in the most perfect shape that I've seen it. It's just great to be here once again, and I look forward to this event every year.

THE MODERATOR: We talked about yesterday the new putting green, the new putting stance, but you also went

back to your roots with a newer coach. Talk about your decision to go back and see him before you came out here this week.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, I was struggling a bit. Didn't hit it so well at the British and wasn't too happy with how I played in Ohio even though I had some decent finishes. I just wanted to get more comfortable over my tee shots and just go back to hitting it up the right side of the fairway and drawing it. I went back to Jim McLean about a week before I left and he knew my swing better than anybody growing up, so I was like, let's just go back to maybe old Lexi and see him and we changed a few things, and it was a good thing. I spent a few hours with him and he helped me out a lot.

THE MODERATOR: How confident are you in your game after being able to put a round like this together going into the weekend?

LEXI THOMPSON: Oh, I'm definitely happy about it. Like I said, I just tried to stay in the moment out there, and I think that's the most important thing on major championships, just really have to focus on your own game and commit to your lines and just do your routine. You can't control anything else but your emotions and your game, so that's really all you have to focus on.

Q. Old Lexi, like when you were 15 you mean?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, I mean, basically. I worked with Jim when I was under 15, probably more when I was 12.

Q. Details on your first three birdies if you don't mind, what club you hit in and distance?

LEXI THOMPSON: On my first three, yeah. No. 2 it was a par-5, I hit a 4-iron from 220, bounced it up there to about six feet for eagle and I missed the six-footer. The next hole, I hit a 47-degree from 132, I believe, and it was about 10, 12 feet and made it. And then the par-3, 5, I hit a 9-iron from 164, I believe. I'm just kind of figuring that out, to about 15 feet and made it.

Q. Obviously you deal with Bermuda all the time at home, but if you had your druthers, do you enjoy playing this course more with rye overseed or this?



LEXI THOMPSON: You know, I'm used to Bermuda so it's definitely the grass that I'm more used to, but I don't really have a preference. Honestly both are in great shape for us. I'll tell you what, the rough is probably harder to hit out of Bermuda way than it is the other way just because it always finds a way straight to the bottom.

Q. Given what you've done here, do you feel like your name means something on the leaderboard?

LEXI THOMPSON: If it means something on the leaderboard? To the other players? I'd like to think everybody just focuses on their own game. Of course we look at leaderboards and see the names up there, but we all just try to do our best. I'm up there, but also a lot of other players are playing great. We all just want to win, so we're doing what we can.

Q. Would you be worried if you saw your name up there?

LEXI THOMPSON: Would I be worried? Well, I'm myself, so I'm not worried. (Laughter.) Tried. Failed.

Q. You must be looking forward to the weekend but you always look forward to the weekend at this golf course?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, I do. I look forward to Thursday on this golf course. Just this tournament in general is one of my favorites, just the memories I have here.

Q. You've got such a great record here over the last six, seven years, what is it that you feel like you have to do to be in contention at this golf course every year?

LEXI THOMPSON: It all depends on weather conditions. We always know that the course is going to be in great shape for us, but weather conditions, if it gets windy here -- it obviously hasn't, but if it's perfect weather like it has been, you know you have to take advantage of the birdie holes out there and get some birdies.

Q. Did you feel it was hot today? Because it's going to get hotter this weekend.

LEXI THOMPSON: You know, I don't think it's too bad. I'm in Florida, so the humidity there I feel is a lot worse. This is more of a dry heat. But I didn't feel like it was too hot. I'm kind of used to it, so I'm ready for the weekend of it getting hotter.

Q. One of the topics that have come up in the last couple months without the fans is how some people

really feed off the energy. Rory was talking a couple weeks ago about having to find something. Have you found that to be a struggle at all, to not having energy coming from outside the ropes?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, it's a lot different, I will say that, especially in tournaments like this where it's known for the fans and the fan base here. I definitely thrive off it because I love people watching and just hearing the cheers and just seeing people root for us. The fans make the game, and I think we absolutely love that. So it's a lot different, but we hope to get back to normal and hope to have everybody out here supporting us again.

Q. When you think about your experiences here or Opens or wherever it may be and having the experience of dealing with that in the last hour of a tournament, have you lost that advantage if it comes to that, from being able to cope with outside noise?

LEXI THOMPSON: Like coming down the stretch? No, I mean, I have only played a few events so far, but I think just in general through the beginning of the round to the end it's just a lot different, but you just have to stay in the moment, focus on your game. It might not be just as hyped up without as many people, but at times that could be good, as well, for a lot of players.

Q. Have you had to learn how to control your nerves here, Opens, what have you?

LEXI THOMPSON: I've had to learn how to control them throughout every event. From being in the spotlight at a young age, you kind of have to learn how to cope with your nerves at a young age, and growing up with two older brothers, being put in older age divisions, I've had to learn at a young age. That's what's great about the game, you learn about yourself every day, what to fix and what to improve.

Q. Length is always an advantage; how much more of an advantage is it this year given the time of year we're playing and the firmness of the greens on this golf course?

LEXI THOMPSON: I would definitely say it's an advantage, especially if you do miss the fairway you can get it down there a little bit closer and have a little bit shorter of a shot out of the rough. The greens are firmer so it's definitely a little bit of an advantage to have a shorter shot in to these greens and some of the tucked locations. But just keeping it in the fairway here I would say is the biggest thing with how deep the rough is this year.

Q. Is there a way to quantify it? Would you say it's a

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half shot a round or a shot a round difference to years past?

LEXI THOMPSON: With distance?

Q. Yeah.

LEXI THOMPSON: It's hard to really put a number on it because, I mean, yes, distance is important I think on every golf course, but here, like I said, with the rough being so thick, and I mean, it's firmer, so even maybe some of the shorter hitters are getting a lot of roll-out on the fairways and getting it closer, but you just have to keep it in the fairway.

Q. Jim was saying that he has an extensive catalog of Lexi Thompson swing footage and you guys looked at some old videos. What did you see when you looked at yourself, and how old would you have been in those videos?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, he has a lot of videos, a lot of notes, and it was great to see. You know, I worked with him when I was 12 and younger, so it was great to see those old swing videos. Basically what I saw is a lot of people always notice my foot movement and how I get off the ground, and when I was little it might have been even more than it is now. There was no restriction, I just hit it hard and got off the ground and I knew it was going up the right and turning back. Just kind of getting to that -- like that confidence is what I've kind of changed.

Q. So you're trying to kind of go back to what you did as a kid in that regard?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, I mean, I'm not trying to jump off the ground or anything, but I would say just more of how I played golf when I was little, aiming up the right and just playing my natural draw. That's always how I've hit the ball, so I'm not going to fight it anymore.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Lexi, for joining us.

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