

The LPGA Drive On Championship

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Bradenton, Florida, USA

Bradenton Country Club

Auston Kim

Quick Quotes

Q. All right, I'm here with Auston Kim at the LPGA Drive On Championship. Solid round to start your LPGA 2024 season here. Can you just walk us through your round and maybe some of the highlights you had out there?

AUSTON KIM: Yeah, I had five birdies today and a double. The double was a bit unfortunate. I skied my 3-wood. Landed in a bunker with a fried egg. Just a couple bad shots in a row.

Soon as I got my ball into the green and I made my putt, I wasn't worried. I kind of laughed it off with my caddie. I knew that it was just an unlucky break, and just one bad shot.

Kept going and the putts dropped in the second half of the round.

Q. How do you mentally recover from something like that? I know probably laughable at that point I think.

AUSTON KIM: Yeah, I just accepted the fact that I hit a bad shot. Bad shots will happen. I told myself that this morning before I started the round. Bad shots will happen. I unfortunately skied a couple today. I managed to regroup and adjust.

Felt really good after that. Got a couple bad shots out of the way, so that was oddly calming in a way. I kept taking it one shot at a time and laughed the mistakes off and felt really good.

Q. Birdie, birdie on the last two holes. Walk us through that, par-5, par-3.

AUSTON KIM: Yeah, second-to-last hole I hit a really solid drive. Had about 215 in. Nice two-putt there from about -- I can't remember exactly -- about 18 yards first putt, and then two-footer, tap-in.

On the last hole I hit a really good tee shot to about 15 feet



and sank the putt. It was great.

Q. What were you seeing on the greens that was really clicking with your eye? I know these are super undulating classic Donald Ross.

AUSTON KIM: Yeah, I think when I was preparing for the week I really emphasized specific portions of the green that I had to land on. So I separated each green based on where the pins could potentially be, and I just wanted to leave myself in the best spots possible.

I knew that I wasn't going to hit them super close, but if I happened to get one close, great. I would be leaving myself like 15-, 20-, 30-footers.

If I could roll a few in, that would be great.

Q. How cool is it to have Sarah on your bag? Obviously been out here and done all of this with Alena throughout the years. To have a veteran caddie, how much does that help not first round?

AUSTON KIM: Yeah, the experience is really important, but also when I started out the round today she was really calm and that affected me in a great way.

After I made double I looked at her and smiled and she smiled back. It was really funny. Helped get over that a little bit better. I wasn't really angry to begin with. It was nice having someone who really believes in me, too, and can smile back in moments like those.

Q. What's the secret to your calm, cool, collectedness? Just seem really chill.

AUSTON KIM: It's not natural. It's a lot of work also, a lot of good internal dialog with myself, keeping myself calm, acknowledging what's happening. If a bad shot happens, like I know that I want to be the best that I can, and if a bad shot happens it's totally okay. It's up to the next one.

I know that's a bit of a cliché, but it really works. I feel like I got a really good thing going.

Q. And then I was just going to ask about your first tee shot. How were you preparing for that? You obviously had an LPGA start before. This time you



have your card, a full rookie season ahead of you.

AUSTON KIM: Uh-huh.

Q. What were the emotions as you were going to tee off and preparing for that as well?

AUSTON KIM: I would be lying if I said I wasn't thinking about it last night, but it's just like any other shot that I've hit. I've hit millions of tee shots. Hit thousands of first tee shots.

Just tried to rely on my experience. I definitely was nervous, but it wasn't as bad as Pelican and I hit it a little high but got the job done, so...

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