

Pelican Women's Championship

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

Belleair, Florida, USA

Pelican Golf Club

Sei Young Kim

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the media center at the Pelican Women's Championship presented by Konica Minolta and Raymond James.

Joined by defending champion, Sei Young Kim this afternoon. Before we get to questions, we would like to take a quick look at your DriveOn video feature that was shared earlier this morning.

(Video shown.)

Q. Is that your first time watching it?

SEI YOUNG KIM: No, I watch it couple days ago, but I was so surprise. And then, yeah, it's looks great, yeah. Remind me at the moment (indiscernible), so it was very inspired myself.

THE MODERATOR: When you look back on your DriveOn journey and when you can put it into words as you did you are with your written piece on LPGA.com as well as in your words in a video format that we just watched, what kind of memories are sparked? What comes back to your mind when you hear those words from your father and look at the journey that you had to get here?

SEI YOUNG KIM: First off, I training a lot since I was young, and then from the like taekwondo, and then from the practice, during the practice, golf practice. And then, yeah, from the training I got a lot of how to overcome myself and then how to reach my goal.

So, yeah, I been thinking a lot all my life, so, yeah, and then I been reach the couple my goal -- not couple, yeah, my career.

So, yeah, at the moment I was really grind myself, and then I did my best. All my effort I was very, very I think successful myself, yeah.

Q. What is the biggest fear that you've had to overcome?

SEI YOUNG KIM: The biggest thing is compete myself. Yeah, it's really tough. Because golf is how to play well, and then it's all from the you. So always face my fears and then I talking myself, Okay, Sei Young, keep doing it. I keep push myself.

Yeah, that part always really tough to me, uh-huh.

Q. Is there a component in your upbringing, in your childhood, that really outside of the fear - and obviously we know the words from your dad - but was there a competitive component that stands out to driving your success to want to better yourself every day?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Well, every day I keep remind me, Okay, even I reach the goal, keep doing it. My dad, sometime I stay, just stay, and then just comfortable myself sometime and that relax.

But around me people told me, You have ability, so keep challenging. It'll be good for you. So, yeah, I got a lot of confident from what they opinion for me, so I keep trying to, yeah, push myself. And, yeah, I think around the people are pretty good drive on me.

Q. Absolutely. When you first came here in 2015 you couldn't say hello in English. Now you live in Dallas. You tell jokes. So you understand humor in a second language which is kind of next level stuff.

SEI YOUNG KIM: Uh-huh.

Q. How difficult was that transition and period of time when you couldn't speak English, and how hard was it to get where you are now?

SEI YOUNG KIM: First year I was really scary everything because all the people are different culture and different language. One day people talking to me and I wasn't understand, so it's like I living on the another world.

Yeah, just I picked up. Okay, just enjoy that, whatever,



enjoy my situation. Because if not, I can't overcome next level. So I keep tell myself, Okay, just enjoy what's your situation and that happens, and so it'll be -- it'll be great. (Laughter.)

Yeah, it'll be great.

Q. How did you learn the language?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Me?

Q. Yeah.

SEI YOUNG KIM: I wanted to study but when I too much focus my job and the golf I don't really time enough. So then I just hang out with the caddie and the player. It's more getting used it.

And then, yeah, I mean, if you're hanging out with the other people it feel like improve myself the language, yeah.

Q. And golf is not a game that has straight line progression. If you do push-ups every day you're going to get stronger, but if you practice golf every day you might not necessarily get better. How do you overcome that as well?

SEI YOUNG KIM: I'm still think about that. That's really tough to me. Recently I was like question myself that way, so it was like, Okay, just -- it's tough though. I couldn't find it still. Yeah, uh-huh.

Q. How would you compare your game now to this time last year?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Honestly, last year when I played this tournament right after the KPMG won, I won that tournament, after this tournament -- I played this tournament, so I got very confidence.

And then looks like a very -- I feel like very chill and then everything. But now, I don't know. Now it's little different. I been playing wasn't good, so I try to working hard this week, because last week I -- last year little relax than this year, yeah.

So I think this year more practice a lot around the green, and then short game and putting, yeah, I'm more focus on it. (Smiling.)

Q. Curious, when you were learning English, what were some interactive ways that you tried to develop your skillset for the language? Were you watching specific TV shows or reading books or listening to music that helped you understand more of the

nuances versus day to day conversation?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Yeah. I listen a lot of music then I watching the YouTube. Yeah, there is a lot of English subtitle. Yeah, it's good. There is a good, yeah, things how to learn the English way, yeah.

Q. What were some of the songs or artists that you were listening to?

SEI YOUNG KIM: A lot. I listen everything, so I like hip hop and Justin Bieber, yeah.

Q. Are you a Belieber?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Well, kind of. (Laughter.)

Q. One more. This event was the same week as the Masters last year, so it perhaps didn't get as much coverage as it otherwise would have. Are you happy that we not only have fans, but there is a lot more attention on this event now?

SEI YOUNG KIM: I like that a lot of people attention tournaments, because it's more energy and then it's more -- if I play well it's more fun, exciting.

Yeah, without the spectator I cannot imagine. I like to play with a lot of spectator. Yeah, I'm glad to be back to normal, yeah.

Q. Have you asked Austin for any tips on getting a hole-in-one on No. 12 for the Lamborghini?

SEI YOUNG KIM: I just heard it from my friends. I was like, Hopefully tomorrow. (Laughter.) Yeah. That's great, uh-huh.

Q. So you mentioned hip hop. Any specific hip hop artists that you listen to or any songs you really like?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Oh, it's a lot.

Q. Name one or two.

SEI YOUNG KIM: Nicki Minaj. Rihanna. They all my favorite girls singer and rapper, uh-huh.

Q. Do you have a favorite song?

SEI YOUNG KIM: They have a lot. It's tough to pick one. I forgot the name of it. I listen a lot. What's the name? Is it like snake something?

I have a playing list.

Q. Anaconda?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Yeah, Anaconda. How did I -- I'm just like snake, like this.

Q. Wild guess. Can you rap?

SEI YOUNG KIM: No, not really. I want to show you but... (laughter.)

Q. Sei Young, you won every year you've been a member on tour. What has that streak meant to you, and how much has that on your mind with two events to go?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Yeah, I think every year I setting my goal the higher than before years, so that's biggest key is how I success every year.

But except this year. Hopefully another win this year as soon as possible, uh-huh.

Q. And you mentioned you're a little less relaxed this year than last year. Have you done anything to try to relax or have there been any YouTube videos in particular that you've watched to try to reset yourself?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Yeah, last year I watching a lot how to keep push myself, so kind of that story. And then video, but not this year. This year I little change my mind. If I play too relax what's going to happen, but I think that way is not really good for me. So, yeah, back to normal. Keep, yeah, keep doing something. (Smiling.)

Uh-huh.

Q. When did you realize you should change back?

SEI YOUNG KIM: In maybe middle of the year in this year, uh-huh.

Q. You won LPGA Player of the Year last year. Again it's another tight race this year. Would you rather see it be a player vote or would you rather it be decided by points?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Player vote and...

Q. Player vote or decided by points for Player of the Year.

SEI YOUNG KIM: Oh. I think player vote. I don't even think about it, so I don't know. It's tough.

Q. What did winning Player of the Year last year, what did that mean to you?

SEI YOUNG KIM: It's means a lot because I never had that career. That's one of my target, and then another my -- I'm very glad to I had a good 'nother career.

So, yeah, that's great. And then my alternate goal is Hall of Fame, so that's -- without the Player of the Year I can't reach there. So, yeah, I'm very happy with that, uh-huh.

Q. So last year first year of the event and no fans. Very different from what you're use to. How does it feel coming back as defending champ and with everything so different this year? Do you feel any extra pressure? I think you said you're looking forward to having the fans to cheer you on. Talk about the differences from last year and coming in this year.

SEI YOUNG KIM: Yeah, it's going to be definitely more -- we get the energy, and then I'm very look forward this week because we have been without the spectator, so it's feel like just practice round sometime. So sometimes little boring.

And then, yeah, I'm very glad to -- I'm very exciting to play with the spectator, yeah, back to normal.

Q. Do you feel any extra pressure being the defending champ and having all the eyes this year?

SEI YOUNG KIM: A lot, lot. Yeah, I got a lot of, yeah, pressure. A little bit, yeah.

Q. No more than usual?

SEI YOUNG KIM: No more than usual, yeah.

Q. Also how does this course suit your game? What do you like about it? Talk about the course itself.

SEI YOUNG KIM: Feel like greens are really good condition and then greens are faster. So, yeah, I think lower score than last year, I think. I don't know. It's feel like longer course length.

I'm very look forward this week because golf course condition is all really good.

Q. Who has more fun on tour, you or Megan Khang?

SEI YOUNG KIM: She's my friend, my buddy, yeah.

Q. Does she rap with you?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Oh, she's rapper. She is, yeah. She's good dancing and, yeah, she got everything.

Q. A minute ago you mentioned the Hall of Fame as one of your goals. Will you play until you reach that goal?

SEI YOUNG KIM: I try. Yeah, I try, uh-huh.

Q. Is that the number one goal you have set for yourself for a long-term career goal?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Uh-huh, that's my, yeah, long-term goal. So since I was young, uh-huh. That's how -- that's biggest motivation to me, uh-huh.

THE MODERATOR: We saw in your DriveOn feature your love for taekwondo growing up and expertise in that area, especially learning from your father. What are the similarities that you learned or what are the similarities between taekwondo and golf that you've learned over the years and how did learning taekwondo help you in golf?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Taekwondo is kind of compete, the fight with the other person, so you have to -- you can't avoid somebody is like kick you. You have to defend or attack him.

So I learn a lot from that fight, because at the course if you get -- if it feels little fear you can't avoid. If you avoid, it's not good. You can't make the good score.

Q. Not a good result?

SEI YOUNG KIM: Not a good result, uh-huh.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us today. Thank you for sharing your story, and good luck this week.

SEI YOUNG KIM: Thank you.

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