

Pelican Women's Championship

Friday, November 12, 2021

Belleair, Florida, USA

Pelican Golf Club

Christina Kim

Quick Quotes

Q. Here with Christina Kim, taking advantage of that sponsor invite. Currently tied for the lead. What was your reaction when you got the call you would in be in the field this week?

CHRISTINA KIM: I'm pretty sure that I would've been drafted into the NBA, because my vertical, I leapt up into the air. I was on the driving range. I played the Monday qualifier. I was first alternate.

Then I played the Monday qualifier, missed that by one and then just drove myself to the golf course. Said, I'm here. Just I'm just going to be practicing. Then I got the phone call while I was on the range. Jumped up in the air. Literally rolling around doing somersaults on the ground because I was just so overjoyed. And here we are.

Q. What does it mean to you to have this additional playing opportunity at this stage in the season, currently not in the field for CME and looking to secure your position and status for next season?

CHRISTINA KIM: Oh, what, because I'm 98th in points and top 100 keep their card? Not stressful at all. Well...

Q. How are you managing that stress this week?

CHRISTINA KIM: Well, knowing that I'm in the field was a huge relief. Tim Aaronson and Dan Doyle and the entire Doyle family, obviously they own this property and they own DEX Imaging. They were kind enough to provide me with one of the sponsor invites, and I just said, you know, I can't look like a scrub. I can't make them look bad by playing poorly.

So I just gave it my all on every single shot. It's been a huge relief. My Whoop numbers have gone up incrementally. The last three weeks have been quite stressful.

Q. We were just talking while we were waiting to come



on the air that you have been not in this position in a couple years. How does it feel to be back on top of the leaderboard?

CHRISTINA KIM: Now that round is over I couldn't -- I mean, I'm ready to swear because I'm chilled out enough where my filter is just shy of coming off.

No, it feels amazing though. Obviously we have such an incredible field here: No. 1 in the world, leaders of the CME race, race to CME points. It's a phenomenal field, and kind of cool that an Old Betty like me can still occasionally just whack it around and find the bottom of the cup every now and again.

Q. Christina Kim, back at the top of the leaderboard. It's been a minute since we've seen you up there. What are the emotions right now?

CHRISTINA KIM: I'm just truly elated. I'm at loss for words. Obviously Dan Doyle, the entire Doyle family, everyone here at Pelican Golf Club, everyone with DEX Imaging, Konica Minolta, the fact that they were willing to give me a chance, especially with everything that's on the line this week, it really means so much to me that they were willing to believe in me and give me an opportunity to come out here and retain my card.

And, hell, now, thinking about trying to lift that trophy.

Q. Well that, with so much on the line, being just kind of on the cusp of 100, got to be a lot of stress going on out there. You don't seem like this is bothering you too much. How do you keep your stress under control?

CHRISTINA KIM: Well, I practiced really, really hard the last three weeks prior to the field being set being hyper stressed.

So once Monday came around and I got the phone call from Tim Aaronson and Marci Doyle saying I got the invite, I mean, it was just the biggest, the biggest sigh of relief.

Ever since then it was like, all right, we know -- because for me, I was talking with my caddie, Todd Petri. Turns out I'm



a bit of a control freak. So not being in control of my own destiny, not a big fan of that.

So once I knew I could control my own destiny I was able to just hyper focus and just focus on getting the job done. You know, it's such a treat to be able to be here obviously playing and being here in Florida. I live in Orlando now.

And getting to play such an amazing golf course like the Pelican Golf Club, there is no reason to be stressed because it's an amazing property. You get to write your own history. It's a hard golf course, so that's very stressful.

Q. What have you found in your game recently that's helped you put those two scores back-to-back?

CHRISTINA KIM: It sounds really silly, but I just tell myself, Strong knee. I'm just going to leave it at that. Just kind of re -- apparently at nearly 38 years old my body still doesn't know what it's doing.

So just kind of giving myself a little bit of a thought to be able to position my body in the right place and just not guiding the ball. You know, I trust myself. Last time I checked I'm not trying to hit it into a penalty area or miss the fairway or anything like that. A lot of just forgiveness of myself, of whatever I do.

Whether it's in a good way or in a way that can teach me to work on improving myself, like I'm doing my best. Everyone is out here.

Q. How would you describe the year as a whole?

CHRISTINA KIM: Interesting, in a word. Yeah, it was very interesting, because obviously -- and I to this day still agree with the choice that the LPGA made last season when we had to shut everything down due to the beginning of the pandemic, that when we did go back, our then commissioner, Mike Whan -- we miss you -- didn't want players to feel obligated to play because there were so many unknowns in terms of everything regarding COVID-19.

And so that being said, you know, two Top 10s, you know, I played CME last year, and that meant nothing once this year turned around. So I missed the first two starts of the season in Florida, which kind of wasn't awesome.

But, again, I just said, I have to -- I still do and I know that Mike and now Mollie and everyone at the LPGA is doing everything with our best interest at heart.

And so sometimes things go your way; sometimes they don't. But that's life. What are you supposed to expect?

Q. When you were doing the broadcasting, everybody kind of assumed, this is Christina's second act, because you're quite good at it.

CHRISTINA KIM: Well, damn.

Q. Then you sort of started playing well again. Did you recommit yourself to playing and decide this is really where I need to be?

CHRISTINA KIM: No. Honestly, and it means -- there is nothing -- I love when I get the opportunities I do to do the PGA TOUR live. I absolutely love it. I don't mean that it's like a side gig in any way negative.

I'm able to do some broadcasting when I'm in a couple weeks off because I want to truly devote myself to whatever it is that I'm doing.

But from day one talking with the team I said, I'm a player first and foremost, so it had nothing to do with recommitting myself.

It was just that -- it was just the wheel's kind of -- the wheel's kind of slow right now, so needed to find a little bit of a hill to get a push off.

I've been driven. Pretty much since the pandemic hit I was like, This is a chance for me to really work on myself and emotions, mental game, physical game, physical body, because I only get this body.

So, no. That being said, I do remember when I was -- after commentating in February I drove -- after four days of just straight doing commentary, drove straight to the driving range I practice out of over at Grand Vista, and just -- I said, I got this thought. I was watching Rory all week. I got this thought.

Honestly hit some of my highest swing speeds with my driver and just murdered it. At the end, that was like so like nine months ago. I have no idea what this thought was. It's gone.

Q. But it was great for --

CHRISTINA KIM: Yeah, it is awesome. It worked for a couple months.

Q. Do you think broadcasting may be the second act for you?

CHRISTINA KIM: You know, I'm so focused on playing right now. You know, yes, I'm 37 years old, but I still tell

fart jokes, so I don't really feel like -- you know, and I'm truly in the best shape of my life, so there is no reason why I can't sit there and think all the experience that I've had both in the great ways with three Solheim Cups, three singles, no big deal, my tour wins around the world, that that can't help me out here.

You know, yeah, sure, there are literally players on here that can be my children if I had chosen to have them. That doesn't mean anything, though. This is my passion. This is my love. My entire life is golf.

So I'll stop when it's -- I'll stop when it's time. I'm damn nowhere near close to that yet.

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