

Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions

Friday, January 30, 2026
Orlando, Florida, USA
Lake Nona Golf & Country Club

Lydia Ko

Quick Quotes

Q. All right, here with Lydia Ko after the second round of the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions. 67 today. Can you just give your reaction on today's round?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, I felt like I played pretty solid overall. I surprised myself a little bit yesterday. I don't know what I was expecting, but I saw a lot of good and I think I just kind of carried on that momentum to today.

I think it was really important to capitalize on how nice of weather we had these last couple days because I think everybody is expecting some -- a cold front to come in this weekend.

So, yeah, I think I'm in a good position leading up to some tough golf ahead.

Q. And 5-under seemed to be one of the lowest rounds we've had over the past couple days. What do you think it is about this golf course? Obviously you have the experience here, but doesn't seem like anyone is going super low. What do you think factors in?

LYDIA KO: I think green reading is really difficult. I've been a member here for a while and I still read some putts the wrong way round.

So there is just a lot of subtleties and grain around these greens. You think it breaks one way and it does more or goes the other way so kind of catches you off guard.

You know, it's not a fairly long golf course, but it's not short either. Obviously with it being cold in the mornings the course does tend to play a lot longer.

But I think the greens are really the most difficult thing, especially with the cold weather that we've had. The green are getting firmer and drier so putts are getting faster and it's getting a little bit more difficult to hold the greens than



maybe when it was softer.

Yeah, I think those combinations are why.

But even though I play this golf course I would never say it's easy. No, I'm not surprised that no one is tearing up the course.

Q. You have the least number of putts across the field, too. Anything with your putting you worked on during the offseason?

LYDIA KO: I felt actually pretty solid with my putting. My putting coach, Chris, was here so we did some work and kind of sharpened up the alignment, the very simple things.

Yeah, it's just been a while since I felt pretty solid, and you never know what the next day is going to be like. It's been good to see some putts go in, and honestly, my putts start online and I think there were some points -- some parts of last year where that was kind of what I was struggling with.

So, yeah, it's good to see the work kind of reflect in the scores. Yeah, just been really solid, so I think it just gives me a lot of good confidence and momentum for not only this weekend but going forward for the season.

Q. And then last question from me: Tied at the top with Lottie. You guys have a couple things in common, like same agency. What is it like to see her come out here and do what she's been doing as well?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, she's obviously a very impressive player. The way she came on Tour through the LEAP program and winning the Irish Open and then almost winning in Evian and then winning the Scottish Open, she kind of came on with a bang.

She was obviously a player that I had known and seen before she was part of the LPGA. It's no surprise that she's playing about golf here.

Outside of just her talent she seems like a very hard worker and she's grinding out there before and after play. I think all of that time and effort really shows in the results.

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It's been very impressive to 6see. I personally didn't know Lottie very well, but in the times I've gotten to talk to her she's very sweet and very funny.

I enjoy her company. I'm not really sure how the pairings will be for tomorrow, but be fun to play alongside her.

Q. How difficult is this golf course, say, on a Wednesday in May?

LYDIA KO: Pardon?

Q. How difficult is this golf course on a normal day, a Wednesday in the month of May?

LYDIA KO: I would never say this golf course is easy. Obviously we play mixed tees. We tee off some of the black tees and the white tees and the blue tees.

You know, I think this golf course changes a lot depending on how the conditions are. In May actually it actually plays hard because it's so soft because of that time of the year.

But now the greens are really -- really the biggest change I think between a day-to-day time that I play out here and when it's tournament-ready.

The superintendents do an unbelievable job making the greens as pristine as possible and as fast as possible.

I was talking to one of the superintendents early this week and said, oh, it's not as fast as it was the last Thursday, and then the next day it was really quick. I need to watch my mouth in ways.

I think it's like a medium-length golf course. I don't hit a lot of short irons in and that makes it a little bit more difficult to attack some of the pin positions.

But just with especially how the greens are running it makes the golf course a lot harder. The fall-off areas are more in play, whereas normally if you go in the ridge it just stays there. Now the ball can run 20, 30 yards away.

The greens are probably the biggest thing that changes, and that's what really makes it more difficult when we're out here playing.

Q. Other pros who have tournaments at their home courses have said that sometimes you have to just put your everyday rounds out of your mind because of the changes that are made. Are you able to make that switch pretty easily?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, I think like when I was younger I didn't particularly love playing at my home club. It just felt like I needed to know the course better than anybody else, which is obviously true, but then just because I played a golf course ten more times it doesn't mean I'm going shoot one less score than somebody else.

I still at the end of the day have to hit good shots and play really well to contend, but I think the hardest thing for me was to just kind of stay in my tournament routine. I looked at my yardage book and I was writing what my line is off the tee, and normally I walk up and go, oh, that tree and just hit. To say the left edge of the gray tree is a lot more specific.

For me to be more focused when I'm out there playing, it's more important to just do what's normal in tournament situations, and that's what I've been trying to focus on.

But at the same time, I was telling Amy I played this golf course so many times when I played good and bad, so I put myself in some questionable positions so it doesn't really catch me off guard when I do hit a bad shot. I know I've been there before and I have a decent idea of what I can do from there.

Q. How good is two tournament rounds bogey-free when this course is in tournament conditions?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, I'm not really sure if I had a bogey-free round at some point last year. It was a little bit more calm in the years before. Regardless of how many bogeys I make the rest of the season it's always nice to have a couple bogey-free rounds and just keep the good momentum going.

Yeah, I've had to hole some good par putts but I really haven't put myself in that many difficult positions as of yet. I think that's why I had the two bogey-free rounds. I'm hoping to kind of continue that good momentum this weekend.

Q. And then I just had one last question. Since you're at home does Kai make more appearances this week?

LYDIA KO: He was on the driving range, by the side of driving range just sitting there, but, yeah, I was driving out of my house today and he like ran up to the window and I was looking at me. Normally he's on the golf cart with me and driving out, so I was wondering if he's thinking, why is she leaving me at home now where normally I get to go out with her.

I don't know what he thinks of it, but he's like a celebrity out here. A lot of people know him, so he gets all the treats.

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He knows exactly at what points to stop because the starter normally gives him a couple treats. The clubhouse staff, Dale, gives him a couple treats. He knows his way around.

He probably doesn't understand why he has to be home most of the day and I get to go out.

Q. Just kind of an off-the-wall question, what gets under your skin out on the golf course in the middle of a round? Not talking like drunk fans making loud noises. As far as your own game, what gets under your skin the most and how well are you at kind of recuperating and recovering from that?

LYDIA KO: I think obviously I would be most nervous when I'm in contention and I have the lead and obviously I'm trying to finish and get it through to the finish line.

But I think I would be most frustrated when I kind of go through all of my golfing knowledge and I still can't figure out how to hit it ball straight or why this putt is not going in.

I think golf is one of those weird things. I played it for like 25 years now and I still hit some shots that I was like, wow, I feel like -- I look like I've never played golf before. I don't know if you can do anything else for 25 years and feel like you're such a beginner at it.

So golf tests us, but I think the times where I feel like I'm doing everything right or I don't really know why I'm hitting certain shots, that's probably when I would get most frustrated.

Q. Finally, I came in a minute late. With the weather being up in the air, no pun intended, tomorrow, did you do anything today to kind of -- did you try and push a little bit extra with that uncertainty?

LYDIA KO: Hopefully we get 72 holes in. Obviously we have an off week next week so I think we have some time. At the end of the day it's the Tour and the boss people that make the big decision.

This is a great event. I really love being out there with the amateurs and the celebrities. Hopefully we can all kind of have the whole experience like we usually do.

And I did think that I needed to capitalize and play the best golf I can in the first two rounds, especially when the weather is warm, because it's going to play a little bit shorter and presumably a little bit easier than when it's cold and very windy.

So it was important to get off to a really good start and I

feel like I put myself in that kind of position. But, no, it doesn't matter if you're from Chicago or Edmonton in Canada, the next couple days are going to be cold regardless. I just have to stay as warm as I can and just do my best, and I'm sure there will be points where it's not pretty but it's the same for everyone. I'm just trying to keep a level head and just focus on my game.

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