

LOTTE Championship presented by Hoakalei

Saturday, April 15, 2023

Ewa Beach, Oahu, Hawaii, USA

Hoakalei Country Club

Grace Kim

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome inside the media center at the 2023 LOTTE Championship presented by Hoakalei with our champion, Grace Kim. Played some really solid golf down the stretch; won in the playoff.

What's going through your mind? Rolex first-time winner. You were talking to Kay Cockerill and you were like, oh, my gosh, what just happened. How did it go out there?

GRACE KIM: Yeah, I really didn't have high expectations. Just really tried to play my game. Didn't try to force anything. Just trying to I guess go with the flow.

Yeah, I'm still speechless that it's kind of done already and I got the job done. So, yeah, mind is kind of busy I would say.

Q. Coming down the stretch there, I know probably watching the leaderboard a little bit, what was going through your mind the last four or five holes?

GRACE KIM: Well, I think after bogeying 14, I think I just tried give it my all. Yeah, I tried my best and it came out to be a good result.

So, I mean, birdie on 17, again, of course was a great momentum forward, so definitely gave it an aggressive go on 18, and, yeah, birdied it twice, which is good.

Q. That birdie putt in the playoff. That was a knee-knocker, sliding down the hill, sliding a little bit to the left. Tell me about that putt.

GRACE KIM: Yeah, having that putt before during my actual round, had a little left-to-righter, but it was a little further left than the original putt. Seeing the girls- seeing Yu miss it left, Yu Jin miss it right I'm like, I think this is straight, so I went straight at it and got it done.

Q. You join a very, very storied list of Australian champions: Karrie, Hannah Green, Minjee Lee among



those names that have won on the LPGA Tour. Four time recipient of the Karrie Webb Scholarship, but what does it mean to join that list?

GRACE KIM: I think really just puts the cherry on top of my career. I know it's just the beginning, but seeing how much they really motivated me to get here, yeah, it's really exciting.

I'm really excited for the fans back at home. But, yeah, I guess it is just a cherry on top.

Q. Congratulations, Grace. You mentioned that bogey on 14. What was kind of maybe if it was a conversation or an internal conversation you had with yourself to par the next two and birdie the next two to get to the playoff and win the thing. What was that conversation like?

GRACE KIM: I think playing 15 it was always going to be a hard par-3 no matter what. Just making sure I par that. I have been in that water on 16, so I was just making sure my tee shot was in the right position for an aggressive play for any second shot.

Yeah, just kind of keeping it one shot at a time just so that my mind is not rushing through. Yeah, I think I've done well mentally throughout this week, and I think that's just kind of paid off for me.

Q. Congratulations on your win. You were just talking about how Yu and Sung's putt dictated your putt for the birdie putt. The question I have is for your second shot on the playoff hole, did you like already plan to aim like at the flag and/or seeing them bail-out left gave you confidence to go for it?

GRACE KIM: I definitely wanted to have a good go at it knowing that the green wasn't the best I guess angle in from where we were.

I would have to admit that I wasn't planning to go that aggressive. I did push it right. So just letting you guys know.

Yeah, I guess, yeah, I got lucky. Yeah, definitely aimed at the pin for a little kind of play for luck in between -- landing



in between the bunker and hopefully does something miraculous.

But I guess you can make birdies in other ways. So, yeah, a different way of miraculous happened.

Q. It was just your time, huh?

GRACE KIM: I guess.

Q. Congratulations on the win. You had some times in the tournament you had to bounce back from some bogeys. You finished birdie-birdie. You've been so poised these last couple days. I am wondering, 22 years old, you come out here and show such poise, where do you think you get that from being so young?

GRACE KIM: I think I've learned a lot through the Epson Tour last year. I did my whole year except the first two events, and just being in contention every week, week in, week out, you know, living out of a suitcase, being just on tour life I think has really I guess hit reality for me.

Kind of just the taste tester of what life on the LPGA Tour is like. I try to take as much in with the advice everyone -- majority of everyone has given me with just enjoy the moment. I think I did quite well.

I would say it was probably the least nerve-racking playoff I've ever had and I'm quite surprised at that myself.

Yes, I was nervous over the putt, but was focused enough to block that out. But I think having that year on the Epson Tour, even though I missed final stage the year before, was, yeah, the greatest plan for me.

Q. Then just wondering, how did that compare to getting ready for today and this morning coming out here knowing you had a chance to win an LPGA Tour?

GRACE KIM: I did have low expectations for myself. I didn't want to get too excited or too down on myself and making sure I'm staying in the present. I kind of had to put my phone on mute so that I don't get distracted.

Yeah, I guess that worked.

Q. You talked about crediting this victory to Karrie. Did you have any conversations with her before today's round and/or reflect on any advice she's giving you over the years preparing for today?

GRACE KIM: No, I did not personally have a conversation with Karrie. I guess I can spiritually feel that she was supporting. Yeah, she's always just been really cool with

talking. She's just a great contact to have. I can reach out whenever I want to. I think just knowing that makes me feel really relieved.

And knowing like even Hannah Green and Su, you know, they've been here, done that, so I guess their advices all worked.

Q. And you talked earlier in the week about the duck that you're wearing on your hat. Did you have any thoughts about Jarrod throughout the day, or what this win might mean for that organization?

GRACE KIM: Yeah, I did think about this duck. It's Leuk the Duck. But I think I've managed to make everyone at home proud, which is, yeah, a big tick on my list, so very happy with that.

Q. Have you spent time in Hawai'i before this week, golfed out here at all? And then coming into this event, your course knowledge of Hoakalei, just wondering what you personally expected from the week?

GRACE KIM: No, I did not go to the beaches and I'm very sad about that. I didn't have time to go to any of the beaches.

So it'll be fine. I'll come back. But I think my course management throughout the week got better each day. Just speaking to my caddie, making sure I communicated well enough to have options and then pick the best one from that situation.

Really glad that I have such an experienced caddie with me even though I'm only just starting. It's kind of new for him as well because he's had people in their mid or towards the end of their career. I think we're a pretty good team.

Q. A lot of times when we talk about the playoffs we compare it to match play. It's a little different with three. The question is: Do you have playoff experience from the Epson or before that maybe as a junior golfer or whatever?

GRACE KIM: I don't think I've had a playoff experience last year, but I had had a lot of playoff experiences during my amateur days. I think I was a bit more nervous then than I was now, which was great. It's a good sign.

But, yeah, I guess that's also a great eye opener to what nerves feel like. I know, like I said yesterday course, like you get nervous because you know you're good enough. I think I just really applied that well in my day today, and,

yeah, I'm pretty surprised at myself how not nervous I was, if that makes sense. (Smiling.)

THE MODERATOR: Last one. Just confirmed off camera you will be playing Chevron next week. How excited are you to tee it up in your first major as a rookie and the first major of the year next week?

GRACE KIM: Very excited. I actually didn't register until Superstition week because I thought I had no chance of getting into Chevron. Hearing other people saying that they could get a chance, I was like, oh, yeah, you know what? I'll just enter. Just topped it off today. Very excited.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much. Congratulations.

GRACE KIM: Thank you.

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