

# Cognizant Founders Cup

Sunday, May 15, 2022

Clifton, New Jersey, USA

Upper Montclair Country Club

## Minjee Lee

### Quick Quotes



THE MODERATOR: Welcome inside the virtual media center here at the Cognizant Founders Cup. I'm pleased to be joined by the 2022 winner, Minjee Lee.

I want to start off, you said as soon as you were talking with Jerry Foltz off the green that this was a day full of hard work. Now that you've had a little bit of time to reflect, what was this final round like for you?

MINJEE LEE: In the very beginning I missed a couple of short putts. I sort of didn't catch that momentum. Then through the middle to kind of the back part of my round my ball-striking kind of went out the window.

I fought really hard this whole day, and just to finish with a couple of birdies and just to come out with a win is just really special. I'm really happy.

**Q. A bogey on the front nine and pars. What did you say to yourself when you were making the turn to kind of get it back and raring to go like you have the last couple of days?**

MINJEE LEE: To be honest, I was just trying to take each shot at a time. I couldn't really get too far ahead of myself or anything like that because Lexi was chasing me, and we were tied at some point -- at a point.

Yeah, I just kind of just told myself to keep going and just to try and put the best swings that I could on each of the shots that I had and the best strokes on my putter. That's pretty much what I did.

**Q. You got started with the first birdie of the day on No. 12, which seemed to be your favorite hole of the course this week. How much did that help you just start the momentum for the rest of the round?**

MINJEE LEE: Yeah, I hit a really good shot in and just had a really easy 2-putt birdie. It was nice just to have my first birdie there. It was quite an easy-ish par-5 to get the momentum going, so I knew there was -- like 14 is also a par-5, and just if I made birdie there, then I would have a

good chance.

**Q. You celebrated when you made your birdie putt there on 18. It kind of felt like a bunch of relief of the day of the grind just melted off your shoulders. Would you say that's how you were feeling when you saw that putt go in?**

MINJEE LEE: I was actually quite calm the whole day. My emotion was actually quite just very, very level, so it was just nice just to win. I think that's why I celebrated.

Obviously, to finish with a birdie is nice as well.

**Q. Of course, it's nice to win. The seventh win of your tour career. How does that feel to get your first one of 2022?**

MINJEE LEE: I just feel like I've kind of been trending. I've been hitting it really, really well this whole -- I mean, this whole season, and I just felt like it was kind of around the corner. I kept knocking on the door, and here I am now. I finished with a win this week.

**Q. I was hoping, speaking of keeping your cool, you could take us through that shot just outside the bunker on No. 8, what you were thinking in terms of what you faced and walking off that green how you felt having salvaged bogey?**

MINJEE LEE: On 8?

THE MODERATOR: Your feet were in the bunker.

MINJEE LEE: Oh, my tee shot was very average. I didn't think it would have -- it didn't -- I didn't know it ended up in that little hump area, so I just thought it was in the bunker.

But to be fair, it was quite a simple bunker shot. It was just all kind of running towards the hole, so if I landed it just on, then it would release to the hole.

So I was pretty calm even in that situation as well so I didn't really have to think too hard about it.



**Q. Yeah, it looked like that was a really tricky second shot.**

MINJEE LEE: Yeah.

**Q. So my next question is, I know you had a fun experience at the Masters with your brother, and I'm just curious what the vibe was leaving there and if that kind of, I don't know, just how you felt about the whole experience and how maybe it kind of boosted you?**

MINJEE LEE: It was a whole lot of fun just to watch Min Woo play. It was something different. I don't really get to watch the men or even my brother play that much, so just to be there and to be able to experience the Masters with him, it was really cool.

I was pretty refreshed after that, and then I also had a week off before playing L.A. so I could do all my practice and do all my prep before those two weeks.

It was just nice to not have to think about my golf and I was just kind of focused on watching him and just spending time with him. With Min Woo.

**Q. If I could ask one more. Obviously, we're really close to the next major. How much are you focusing on ahead to Pine Needles, and does it feel different going into Pine Needles? I know you've already played in a major as a major winner, but does your mentality still feel different?**

MINJEE LEE: Not really. I obviously want to play well at the U.S. Open. That's one of my all-time favorite events. I'll just go in having -- I'm going to play in Vegas. I'll see how I go there and do a little bit of playing prep, take the momentum into -- the playing momentum into the Open.

I think I'm going to be -- I'm still going to be fresh because I have next week off. Yeah, I think I'm not going -- I'm going to do all the best prep that I can for the major. Yeah.

**Q. Some victories you feel a sense of adulation, and in some you just feel relief. And I'm wondering given how well you've played this year if this wasn't one of those situations where you were just like, whoo, finally. Can you kind of go through the emotions that you had after the victory?**

MINJEE LEE: I never really got a super high. I just -- after I holed that last putt, I was really happy, obviously, and I have been playing really well, so I'm just proud of myself just that I played four days of really good golf and I was able to fight through this round and come out with a win.

**Q. Speaking of fighting through it, were you aware of how well other people were playing? Not just in your group, but around the golf course. And, if so, how do you keep from pressing in that kind of situation?**

MINJEE LEE: I really didn't have the time to worry about what other people were doing today. I was just really kind of focused on my game and how I could make a birdie or how I can make -- hit it close to the hole to have a good look at birdie.

But I knew where I was because I looked at the leaderboard, and I knew everybody was playing pretty well. Obviously, Lexi was tight -- we were tight at some point. I knew where everybody was even though I wasn't too focused on it.

**Q. You said you were calm out there. Was it hard to kind of not get ahead of yourself when you were coming down the stretch and you did get your lead back?**

MINJEE LEE: Not really. I knew I had to make a few birdies to regain the lead and obviously take my lead into the 18th hole.

On the 17th hole I hit a really good shot, and I also hit a really good putt, but it didn't drop, so I just told myself just hit a good drive down 18, and that's all I could do.

I pretty much just tried to stay in the moment and just be focused on the shot that was ahead of me.

**Q. There were sometimes when you were the only one in your group that was hitting those fairways on the back nine. When you were waiting to actually take your shot, what were you trying to focus on? Your placement, or you were just trying to step away from the game a little bit?**

MINJEE LEE: Just, yeah, I was more focused on just the spots that I wanted to hit. I wasn't really focused on what other people were doing, to be honest. I mean, they were able to hit to the green anyway so it wasn't too much trouble, so I wasn't really paying too much attention.

**Q. You seem to be very even-tempered on the golf course. Is that something that came naturally to you, or is it something that you had to work at?**

MINJEE LEE: No, I've always kind of been very even-tempered, very calm. I'm not really too emotional, but I wish I could show a bit more of my emotion, but this is just the way I am. (Laughing).

**Q. The other question, Australia has produced so many wonderful golfers of both genders. How do you avoid putting pressure on yourself to match what they achieved or match other people's expectations?**

MINJEE LEE: To be fair, I think everybody is special in their own way, so I just do the best that I can in every situation that I have on and off the golf course, and I try to take the expectation as motivation, so I think that's the best way you can take it anyway. Thank you.

**Q. I was just wondering if you had any special memories with any of the Founders?**

MINJEE LEE: Not really. Just I have only really known Shirley, but she was always -- I mean, she always spoke to me and gave me a big hug when she saw me, so that is probably the -- she's the only founder that I kind of have memories with.

**Q. A couple of quick questions. On the fourth hole, that was a short birdie putt.**

MINJEE LEE: Yes, it was very short.

**Q. What happened?**

MINJEE LEE: It lipped out, but I probably hit it a bit too hard. Just too hard.

**Q. And on the bogey on 8, is that a good bogey in a sense?**

MINJEE LEE: I obviously didn't hit a good tee shot, and I put myself in that situation, but it was a pretty difficult second shot, so to come out with a bogey I think it's minimizing damage.

THE MODERATOR: You talked about how hard you worked this round. Can you remember maybe a round on the tour or towards a win that you have worked this hard or grinded as much, do you feel like?

MINJEE LEE: I feel like just situationally it was in the final round and in the final group, so I think there was a little bit more pressure that I probably put on myself.

Maybe that's what made it a little bit more hard. But I don't remember the last time I worked this hard for a win, but I don't know. This is probably the first time. New experience.

THE MODERATOR: That makes it even more satisfying, do you think?

MINJEE LEE: I think so. I'm pretty proud of myself how I came out today, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Absolutely.

**Q. I just want to kind of ask about you said you've been trending in the right direction. That's kind of culminated into today. Looking ahead, we've got the meat of the calendar coming up.**

MINJEE LEE: Right.

**Q. How much confidence does your recent play give you heading into what's really our major season?**

MINJEE LEE: I'm super excited for the events coming up. We have a really great stretch with the U.S. Open, the KPMG Championship.

I feel like I've been hitting it really well and just with my putting I've been working a lot more with that, so I feel like I've done pretty good. I've done better this week, and obviously there's always room for improvement, but I think if I work on the same things I think I'll be in pretty good shape.

**Q. You talked about being proud of yourself. When it's not going your way and maybe you're not playing the way you want or some of those putts aren't dropping, and you're able to get this win when it's a pretty high pressure situation; you're playing alongside Lexi. What does that do for you mentally moving forward?**

MINJEE LEE: I think for the most part I have a pretty good attitude when I am on the golf course, but today I did have a great attitude, but I just -- I just really stuck with what I knew. You know, the birdie on 14 I think really kind of gave me a little bit more confidence just for those final few holes.

So, yeah, I think mentally I was in a quite good head space. It was just more my iron play that I kind of struggled with on the back nine. I feel like I did a pretty good job in that aspect.

THE MODERATOR: Why No. 14?

MINJEE LEE: I just think because I was tied with Lexi at that point, and then I got to 18-under, and I knew the last four holes would be tough to make birdies on, so I just kind of figured that if I made birdie on 14 it would give me a pretty good chance to be leading or tie lead going into 18.

I think that's what kind of turned the tables a little bit then.

THE MODERATOR: What specifically -- you talked about working on your putting and that's something you're focusing on. What specifically have you been working on in your putting?

MINJEE LEE: Just getting the speed right. I think sometimes I struggle with the speed, and if you don't have your speed, then you don't have the right line. I think just matching the line and the speed together. That's kind of what I've been working on the past couple of weeks.

THE MODERATOR: I think that will wrap it up for us here. Thank you, Minjee, and congratulations.

MINJEE LEE: Thanks.

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