

Cognizant Founders Cup

Thursday, May 9, 2024

Clifton, New Jersey, USA

Upper Montclair Country Club

Nelly Korda

Quick Quotes

Q. All right, joined by Nelly Korda after her first round to the Cognizant Founders Cup. Take us through the round. How do we feel after your first round here at Upper Montclair?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, feels good. I made four birdies and one bogey, so overall a solid day. Didn't really make too many mistakes, and if I did - this golf course is very, very narrow off the tee - I kind of gave myself a good chance at par.

So definitely got bailed out with my short game a couple times. Overall, it was a solid day.

Q. You said your track record here is not very good. How do you feel one time around the track?

NELLY KORDA: Actually I think I played pretty well the first day last year as well and then the second was not very good, so I'm hoping for a good day tomorrow. It's just a completely different golf course compared to last year. It was so firm and fast and then the wind picked up a lot last year when I played.

So overall, you can definitely be a little bit more aggressive with just how the course is this year.

Q. Throughout this win streak you've won on so, so many different types of golf courses and conditions. This week is another new one.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. How do you stay so consistent with all those varying factors?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I think you just have to stay very present and know that you have the game to play on anything. You know, if you're hitting it good or even if you're not, you have to make sure that you have the confidence that you can lean on the stuff that you have practiced, like your short game.



If you're not hitting it well you can lean on your short game, your putts. It's hard to make -- and these kind of like po-bent greens as well I would say, so in the afternoons it'll be a little tougher. Making those four, five footers for par are really, really big, big confidence boosters.

When you're not hitting it well you have to lean on all the stuff that you have practiced, and then just capitalizing on your opportunities. Everyone is in the same boat. Everyone is playing the same golf courses every week. You have to think of it that way.

Q. When you're in your kind of brief off week, what did you do to reset after such a hectic stretch?

NELLY KORDA: I just put my clubs away for a few days. Didn't even want to look at them.

And then I spent a lot of time with my parents, with my family. Went to the beach. Kind of just recharged, sat on the couch, watched a couple movies, shows, and then I volunteered at the Satchel's Sanctuary, which is just near my home, so I walked a couple dogs on Monday, and that whole week got going with my junior event and getting ready for The Met. It was a little hectic the first week; second week was calmer.

Q. Another question about The Met. Obviously amazing night.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. Were there any other notable interactions where you got to meet someone you were dying to meet?

NELLY KORDA: Not really. I was just in awe the entire night. I feel like whoever I was introduced to I was just in awe. I sat at a table, and very close to me was Kylie Jenner, so someone that you've -- I mean, someone that you've seen everywhere on all tabloids, on TV, everywhere, and you're finally like literally face to face with these people is just like -- for me, I was just in awe that I was in the same room as everyone.

But can confirm Chris Hemsworth is definitely a very good

looking person. (Laughter.)

Q. You spoke about in the off-season really focusing on the gym and training.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. Have you ramped that up this year more than other seasons, and are you doing anything differently?

NELLY KORDA: I had a longer break this year compared to years in the past, so I definitely had an opportunity to work in the gym and prioritize that a little bit more than years prior.

So, yeah, definitely think that we really focused on kind of getting my body ready for the year. Like you're never going to maintain what you built up during those seven weeks because you're never going to spend that much time in the gym, but making sure I had a base and knowing like what my body -- stabilizing my body a little bit more.

I'm not going to say I'm not going to be injured this year. Just because you spend so much time in the gym it doesn't meant it's going to prevent all your injuries, but it's another way to feel better with traveling week in and week out, sleeping on different beds, and just knowing you put a lot of the work into it.

Q. You mentioned the greens maybe being a little firmer and faster than you may have expected.

NELLY KORDA: Softer.

Q. They were softer?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, last year was firmer and faster.

Q. I misheard that.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. When it comes to that last hole, getting that one-putt birdie, what can that do for you going into tomorrow?

NELLY KORDA: It's definitely a confidence booster. I was not hitting it too close on the back nine. I had one birdie which was a two-putt birdie on the par-5, on 2. I started on the back nine. On 2.

And just getting that birdie on the last hole is definitely a nice confidence booster. Hitting a good drive in and lay-up shot and then wedging it really close making the putt. I mean, it's a nice feeling having that going into tomorrow.

Q. You mentioned maybe wanting to be more aggressive as you move through the tournament. In terms of today, what was the plan going in?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, trying to be aggressive if I can be. I hit some of my shots a little to the right in the rough and it's just -- you can't be aggressive out of the rough here because it's so thick. You're just hoping for middle of the green two-putt and kind of get out of there. I did that a couple can times where there was just some pins where I couldn't be aggressive or it was just kind of stupid to be aggressive on your first day where a mistake can set you back instead of just being very consistent through your round.

Q. Along those lines, I assume that you can't win the tournament on the first day but you can lose it.

NELLY KORDA: Yep.

Q. Was today a day where you put yourself in position?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, there is still three more days. You still have a lot of things that you -- I know the weather is not supposed to be great and there is just different factors that go into the rest of the tournament.

So it's definitely nice to get a good round in. You know, still a long, long ways away from Sunday.

Q. You opened on 10, so got the birdie on 18. Looked like after the birdie on 18 you seemed to be hitting it better.

NELLY KORDA: 18? As in my 9th hole or --

Q. Your 9th hole.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I was -- I actually was hitting my irons really good. Just hit some drivers out right. This golf course is pretty intimidating off the tee, and with the wind you kind of have to play -- being very kind of aggressive with your line, making sure that the wind will take it and sometimes the wind just didn't take it or I just didn't play it enough.

So it's definitely a very hard golf course off the tee. Irons I hit well.

Q. Overall, I mean, there are just every time somebody talks about you it seems they're talking about the streak. Once you start playing, was that out of mind, out of sight?

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

NELLY KORDA: I have not thought about the streak at all honestly. I think that's only going to do more harm for me than do good. Big thing for me is taking it a shot at time and being present and in my own bubble. That's what I'm focusing on.

I'm not trying to think about the outside noise. Would it be amazing? Of course. But it's still so far away and proud of what I've achieved so far.

Q. On the par-3, was your caddie going to steal the apple?

NELLY KORDA: No, that was a plum. I was so hungry. My physio knows me and usually has a bunch of fruit in her backpack. My caddie came up to her and asked if I could have the plum.

Yeah, that's about it.

Q. You had a big team with you at Chevron. Who from your team is here with you this week?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, so Chris Mullhaupt was here with me at the beginning of the week. No coaches. Jamie is out with Patrick Cantlay. Sometimes when Jamie is not out here I work with Brett who's kind of Jamie's protege in a sense. They work together, so it's nice. Brett is going to be out next week.

And then, yeah, just the standard old Jason and Kim. The squad.

Q. The duo.

NELLY KORDA: The trio. Yeah, yeah.

Q. Last one. You start working with a putting coach. Eric, around Solheim Cup.

NELLY KORDA: Yep.

Q. How much has he helped you with the streak?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, Eric, it's nice to have someone I can send videos to and know I have consistency in that part of my game.

Obviously I work with Jamie on my entire game and I already work with David Whelan on my short game who has been my coach since I was 14 and has always been on my team, and he is the one that built my golf swing. I always make sure that he gets the biggest shoutout because I would not be here without him.

Everyone in my team plays such a crucial part. I'm so happy and grateful that this team did come together and that's who I have in my corner.

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