

Fortinet Founders Cup

Sunday, March 22, 2026

Menlo Park, California, USA

Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club

Hyo Joo Kim

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, we are joined by Hyo Joo Kim. The 2026 Fortinet Founders Cup champion. Talk a little bit about today and what it was like for you.

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) Today was a very difficult day. Obviously the first day I played well. The second day I had some mistakes and the third day I also played well.

And today was just pretty difficult. I ended up sharing the lead and having some shots but I think overall I ended up winning so I'm glad about that.

Q. Can you talk about the emotions that went through today? You mentioned you were tied for the lead. Heading into the day you had a five-shot lead. Talk about how your feelings changed throughout the round and if you felt a little bit more nervous as you got toward the end.

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) I don't think I was necessarily shaken up or my emotions were all over the place. I was just trying to keep my focus on my shots and what I was doing.

So I think was just trying to keep and lock in on that.

Q. This is your eighth LPGA Tour victory. Talk about how this one might be different from the other ones?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) This is where I actually won my rookie year and winning twice for me is very meaningful. So this is very meaningful for me.

Q. This is the second time in your career you've gone wire to wire to win a tournament. Talk about what is so significant about doing that to you.

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) I don't think it's necessarily a big deal. I think there is obviously a name to being wire to wire, but at the end of the day it's about who is on top at the final day.

So I think it didn't really mean that big of a deal to me.

Q. Congrats on the championship win. I wanted to start out on 17. Obviously big when Nelly had the three putt. What was your reaction seeing that?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) Honestly today wasn't really about looking and focusing at other players. I was just so focused on playing well and my shots that weren't playing well. So I don't think I really had the luxury of even having my emotions spread out from other players.

Q. Them with that in mind on 18, obviously you guys both into the bunker at different points. What was the key to getting out of it and being able to set up that final putt?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) Green. I honestly didn't have many thoughts. My sole focus was on making par because Nelly could birdie that.

Q. For sure. And then I know you said you're focused on yourself. When a player closes a five-shot lead in ten holes are you aware of that? Just trying to play your game? What's going through your head at that moment?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) I think just there is obviously talks about being in the lead and if you're in that position of being chased down, and I couldn't really widen the score gap in the front nine, so my focus later, in had the later half was wanting to birdie and I just wanted to birdie so bad.

Q. It's been a while since there was an LPGA Tour event in the Bay Area; how did you enjoy to this week, and do you think this area is important to have an event on the LPGA Tour?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) Honestly just playing in San Francisco, too, the weather was just so nice and I was worried about it being cold and stuff.

But I was just able to have a good round and good memories from this place.



Q. We talked about up and down round but you made the shots you needed to down the stretch. Then what was the emotion of winning that championship, especially with how wild of a round it was for both of you today?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) I think honestly instead of it being just a par round, it was better that I had bogeys and birdies and that it was key of all over the place.

I unfortunately ended with a bogey, but I'm so glad because I was able to win.

Q. And curious, looking at that trophy it's an interesting design. What do you think of the trophy?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) I have one at home actually, and so I'm glad I am able to add to that. I think it's great.

Q. Awesome. Thank you, congrats again?

HYO JOO KIM: Thank you.

Q. Wondering what you're most proud about given the fact you lost the lead today. ^ what makes you most proud about being able to win?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) I think just in the back nine my two par saves were probably the things I'm proudest about today just because my shots weren't playing as well.

Q. And what was it like? I know you talked about you're trying to focus on your own, but if it you can take a step back and look at two of the top 10 players in the world having a nice duel in the final round for golf fans, to be a part of that?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) I actually really like Nelly's swings out of all the LPGA players. Instead of even watching a video I was able to see it real life today, and I think I was just able to learn a lot today.

Q. What do you feel like stood out in your game most this week? We're heading into Ford Championship presented by Wild Horse Pass next week where you will defend. What from your perspective went really well for you?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) I think overall this week my putting went well. I just need to focus on making birdies and I think next week that will be the same thing as well. Just making sure I'm able to make birdies.

Q. I should ask you about your chip on 17 after you went over the green. What was it like setting up that shot and just being able to get you in a position to save par on that hole?

HYO JOO KIM: (Through translation.) It was honestly so difficult. I didn't really have an approach shot like that this week so I really tried to picture that in my head and play it out in my head and even use image controlling, and I think it worked out really well which was why I was able to make that par save.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much. Congratulations.

HYO JOO KIM: Thank you.

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