

The Chevron Championship

Sunday, April 23, 2023

The Woodlands, Texas, USA

The Club at Carlton Woods

Lilia Vu

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome inside the media center Of The Chevron Championship, and I am pleased to be joined by the 2023 champion, Lilia Vu. Take me through the emotions of what you've been feeling for the past two hours.

LILIA VU: Just nerves. I felt like today was a really hard day. The course was playing really difficult with the wind and the weather and it being colder. I just didn't feel great on the course. I was getting kind of moody, and my caddie Cole was there to basically ground me and remind me like hey, we're just going to try our best, and whatever happens happens. Just hit it on your line and then go from there and stop getting so upset over every little thing.

Somehow 17 and 18 comes, birdie-birdie, and then now we're here.

Q. The emotions flowed pretty quickly after that final putt went down. What was the first thing that went through your mind.

LILIA VU: I couldn't believe it. Honestly, the past two days, I was very angry. I didn't feel like myself, just internally. Golf game, that's whatever. I just felt like I was getting angry over every single little thing, and that's usually not how I roll, so I was upset about how I portrayed myself and how I handled myself.

It was just -- I couldn't believe that that happened, that we won a major.

Q. This was your local major growing up. Do you have any memories of watching the then-ANA and the previous Dinah, and what does it mean to win your former local major?

LILIA VU: Yeah, so I played when it was the final year of Kraft Nabisco as a junior golfer and then I was able to play again 2018 at the ANA. In that tournament in 2018, I made the cut, and I realized, wow, I'm good enough to be out here, and I could not wait to come back here and play. It's surreal to me now that we're here.

Q. You mentioned the course played really tough today. What was the hardest hole out there for you?

LILIA VU: All of them were hard, to be honest. You really have to drive the ball well here and putt really well, too. It's just hard on all aspects. Yeah, it's just really fun to play target golf, difficult, windy, you name it. It's difficult.

Q. It's your second win on Tour. What does it mean to have your family here to celebrate with you this week?

LILIA VU: It means the world. I honestly want them everywhere whenever I play. It's nice that I'm able to take my parents with me.

Q. You're the first person to jump into that pond. What was it like, and did you know all along that you were going to do that?

LILIA VU: I think Cole and I kind of passed by on 18 during the practice round and kind of discussed would you jump, and I was like, yeah, I would jump. If I won here, of course I would jump.

Yesterday or the day before we saw a snake on 17 pond, so I was kind of thinking about that today, but I think the emotions were high and just adrenaline, got to jump into that pond.

Q. Can you take us through the playoff, the decision on what to hit on the second shot, and then the two putts?

LILIA VU: Yeah, so I hit a good drive. Honestly, I don't know how it got that far. Maybe I hit something while it landed, but it was significantly further.

I think when I actually played 18 during my round, I had a hybrid in, and then all of a sudden I had a 7-iron in on the playoff hole.

I had just seen Angel hit, and then we were deciding what to hit, either going with the 7 or going extra with the 6-iron just to give it extra room to get over the water. I was just



feeling 7-iron and I was going to hit it.

We hit a good shot, and then I knew the green was really fast, but I wasn't sure with all the rough and into the grain from the fringe, so I left it short.

But I knew on that last putt, all I had to do was just do my routine, read the putt how I usually do, and just hit this putt because I've hit that putt a million times and I knew I could make it.

Q. How long was that winning putt?

LILIA VU: It felt like forever and more, but I think it was like 13 or 14 feet.

Q. I know how much your grandfather has meant to you. I just wonder if you could tell us a little bit about him and his role in your life.

LILIA VU: Yeah, the reason I'm here is because of my grandpa. When my grandpa and his kids and wife fled Vietnam, he actually went away for a couple months at a time building a boat in the countryside.

One day, he told my mom and her siblings, like it's time to go. It's time to go, and I remember her telling me that her and her little sister were running through the forest to get to that boat, and my grandpa took an extra amount of people -- I think, I don't know what the capacity was, but he took extra people from the village, and I think two days on the boat, and they shot a flare, and I think a U.S. boat came by.

I think because there was -- I think the bowl had a leak, so they really needed to find someone to help them out. Then yeah, now my mom is here, and then she had me, and my grandpa is the reason why I'm here.

He passed away at the beginning of COVID. I was just in such a bad place with my golf game. Just everything was life or death. I just saw everybody that I've competed with being successful, and I just compared myself all the time.

But now I know that everybody's journey is different, and everything happens for a reason. I was leaving for my tournament in Florida, an Epson Tour event, and my grandpa was in the hospital for his heart condition, and it seemed like he was fine, and the last thing he told me was to play my best.

He's in the hospital, thinking of me and my tournament.

When we came back from that tournament, my mom got a call from my aunt that grandpa is in the ER, and that day

he passed away. That's something that I think about a lot.

Even today, I was getting really upset on the course, and I just had to remind me, like grandpa is with you, and he'd be really disappointed if you were getting upset like this and that you didn't get your act together. Yeah.

Q. What's his name?

LILIA VU: He's just Grandpa to me. I don't know his name because he has a Vietnamese name. That's a question for mom. He's just always been Grandpa.

Q. What do you think he would say seeing from your low point when he passed to you now as a major champion?

LILIA VU: I think he'd say that all my struggles were worth it. Yeah.

Q. Have you ever been birdied the final two holes of regulation and then won in a playoff to win anything?

LILIA VU: I'm not sure. I've had a bunch of playoffs before, but not this way. It's been really amazing.

Q. Next week playing in Wilshire, how crazy is that?

LILIA VU: Yeah, I'm super excited to go back to where our home course for UCLA was. I'm super excited to go there.

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