

The Chevron Championship

Friday, April 19, 2024

The Woodlands, Texas, USA

The Club at Carlton Woods

So Yeon Ryu

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, here with So Yeon. You announced prior to this week that you would be retiring after play. Just had what looked to be an emotional walk off the green. Talk about the emotions you're feeling now as you head into retirement.

SO YEON RYU: I'm very numb now. I just cannot believe this is real. Nobody push me to retire. That was my decision. Still I just cannot believe this is real.

I really feel like I got to -- I mean, I was still mad with the bad shot out there and then I feel like I need to grinding to be the better golfer at the time.

But this is it. This is a time I need to give myself enough credit and this is the time I need to be proud of myself, and then this is the time I start to send all the loves and like thank you note to all the people.

Q. Let's talk about what this week as a whole has meant to you. You announced prior to this week that you would be retiring. Talk about this entire week, what the emotions have been.

SO YEON RYU: I felt teary all the time for sure, but I promise myself I am not going to cry, because I feel like once I'm going to cry I'm going to lose it.

I wanted to make sure this week is like celebrate week, not sad week. It's been very touching. Like a lot of people just came up to me and then congrats me and then give all the warm word to me.

I just feel very blessed. You cannot really have this feeling often. Maybe this is my first and last. So I really tried my best to enjoy like all the thing. Even out there I tried to enjoyed having a thrill tee shot, tough chip shot, the nervousness when I had a birdie putt kind of stuff.

I think I'm very satisfied with my week.

Q. You had a group of young Korean players waiting for you off the green. You said you struggled to feel

proud of yourself, but do you feel proud of yourself when you see what you inspired in the next generation of Korean golfers?

SO YEON RYU: Yes and no. I don't know. Like to be honest, I'm always ready to help them out if they ask me to help. For me, they're already such great player, like I feel like they don't really need me help.

They were always so nice to stay like -- I mean, told me that I was the inspiration, so I sort of just keep telling myself, you should be proud of yourself.

Q. When do you think you'll feel it?

SO YEON RYU: When people told me, this player told me that you're the inspiration. (Laughter.)

Q. When did it hit you today during the round that, hey, this might be my last round of golf as an LPGA Tour member, and what were the emotions that you felt if it did hit you before the final hole?

SO YEON RYU: I actually tried not to think about it until like 16th hole, and then when I got to the 18th teeing ground, all of a sudden in my head, is this going to be my last tee shot?

Then I just couldn't believe it. There was a time that I really start to feel like this is it.

Q. (No microphone.)

SO YEON RYU: I saw them after I hit my first putt, and then I actually didn't really know what to do because I don't wanted to finish my last hole with a bogey.

My par putt was quite long. I'm not saying super long, four feet, but definitely don't want to miss the four feet par putt.

Then at the same time I was very thankful for everyone came out. Then I spotted my family and then my best friend, my agent and everyone, my whole team.

Without them, I don't think I was able to achieve my dream,



so I think that was the time I felt quite emotional.

Q. I think you saw the cutest baby I've ever seen. Who is that?

SO YEON RYU: That's my niece and she definitely been helping me out to being happy this week whole time because -- well, I think once you're a golfer you're a golfer, because like since Sunday I've met so many friends out here and they start to come out to me and we start to talk about my future and then my retirement and then I feel like oh, my God, I don't think I practice enough. I don't think I'm ready.

I was little anxious. But the baby really help me out to get relaxed.

Q. What's her name and how old is she?

SO YEON RYU: Isla Sung Lee (phonetic) and she's four month old, yeah.

Q. Just looking ahead to this evening, I know you said you still feel pretty numb, but will you sit and take a minute to reflect at the end of today and maybe after you check your phone and see all the messages from people?

SO YEON RYU: Well, I think I will feel a little emotional, but I guess it's going to hit me maybe tonight. I don't know. I'm still quite numb.

Like I just can't believe it. I just don't know what to say.

Q. Not to put more pressure on you to say something, but do you want to say anything to the fans, fellow players?

SO YEON RYU: I mean, to my fellow players, I'm very thankful to have you guys as my colleagues. You guys were the reason why I wanted to be the better golfer all the time.

And then to fans, no matter how I played you guys were there always to support me so I'm very, very thankful. I just want to send a lot of loves.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations on a great career, So Yeon.

SO YEON RYU: Thank you.

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