

The Chevron Championship

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Houston, Texas, USA

Memorial Park Golf Course

Nelly Korda

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, joining us after the final round of The Chevron Championship is our winner, Nelly Korda.

How does three-time major champion Nelly Korda sound.

NELLY KORDA: Just amazing. I'm sure it has hasn't really settled in yet, but what a week. I mean, I feel very relieved after what I felt mid-round, the nerves of holding that lead and the golf course, and I just feel so happy.

Q. You said it was a mentally tough weekend for you in your trophy ceremony speech. Can you just elaborate on that and tell us a little bit more?

NELLY KORDA: It's not easy going in with that big of a lead. I think that you have almost like a bigger target because maybe girls are like, we have nothing to lose so we're going to go after everything.

For me I'm like having to play defensive at some point but also not wanting to get too defensive because I want to play my own game. That's where I struggled this weekend of, okay, I wanted to be aggressive on this hole, but if I make a big mistake, I mean, that cuts my lead.

So having to kind of adjust with that mindset, I think that's what was really tough. I'm not a player that loves to play defensive. I mean, that putt that I left myself on 17 today I would've never left myself that. I would've hit a 7-iron controlled and tried to go for that. Here I am hitting an 8-iron to the middle of the green, or beginning of the green, and having like a 50-foot putt.

That's not Nelly golf at all.

I thin that was the challenging point with like where do I still play like Nelly and where do I play a little defensive.

Q. At what point did you play like Nelly on the back? At any time?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I did. So I made a bogey on 12

and then Jason told me that I should hit it probably eight yards short of 13, and I actually just sent it at the pin and I had a tap-in birdie. It was a great bounceback birdie.

Q. What club was that?

NELLY KORDA: It was a 50-degree. Obviously having the two back-to-back birdies helped. The par-5s are easier for me to play like myself. I mean, on 16 I literally laid up with a 54-degree wedge and hit a 58-degree in. Jason didn't let me hit any other club, which is fine because there is a lot of trouble all around the green.

But like he even told me, I know this is not the golf their want to play but this is what we're going to do.

Q. I had one more, but I am curious, if you were tied for lead, what club are you hitting on 16?

NELLY KORDA: I would've gone for it.

Q. With what?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I would've been between a 6- and 5-iron, yeah.

Q. And secondly, when you look at this really super start to the season, all five times in the final group, does this feel special or normal?

NELLY KORDA: It feels special because the first win was a funky win of not getting to finish on a Sunday and people saying that, you know, what would've happened if I did finish on a Sunday.

For me to put myself in a position going into every tournament, being in the final group on a Sunday and not getting it done and finally getting it done in a major championship, it's all worth it to me.

Q. Congratulations. Wondering if you can tell us how was the jump into the temporary pond, and was it refreshing on such a hot day?

NELLY KORDA: So refreshing. Yeah, it was so hot this



weekend in Houston. I got to do it with, an addition of Jess this year compared to 2024 when Jess wasn't in Houston.

And, yeah, I mean, if I'm hoisting the trophy then I'm jumping in. I'm going to keep the tradition alive. Everyone is going to have their own opinion. My opinion is if you kill a tradition it's going to be gone forever. They're making the effort to wanting to continue the legacy of the jump, and there is a lot of the effort from Chevron, from Glenn, Mike Wirth, to wanting this tradition to move on, and, you know, yeah.

Q. What exactly did you land on? Did you land feet first?

NELLY KORDA: In the water?

Q. Yeah.

NELLY KORDA: I did a cannonball, yes.

Q. Because Jason said he landed on his behind.

NELLY KORDA: Oh, really? Yeah, no, feet first. I knew it was four feet so I was expecting to hit the ground very fast.

Q. Yeah. Can you put into perspective the last few years winning seven times, playing well but not winning last year, and now what you've been able to do this year finishing first or second in all events, can you encapsulate what you've been able to do the last few years?

NELLY KORDA: Honestly, if it's taught me anything, it's to just focus on myself, not listen to the outside noise. Every year will be so different. I love the game of golf and I feel like that really helps. I love competing. If you come out here and you're just focusing on a paycheck, then I feel like the times when you're not playing well and you get down on yourself, you go through it a lot tougher and you start to kind of think about, you know, is this life for me.

When you actually love the game of golf you enjoy playing in front of amazing crowds. Seeing all the little girls and boys come in between every hole give me a high five, I had such a smile on my face. There were these two girls today on every hole that were saying, go Nelly, go.

That's another part to why I love this game so much and why I love being in this position so much. I get to inspire those girls that want to jump into Poppie's Pond or want to do what I do.

They see me miss the short putts and they know it's okay at the end of the day. It's just about grinding and figuring

out what this means to you. If you're never going to have passion in what you're doing you're never going to succeed.

I've loved the game of golf from a really young age and I think I give a lot of props to my family, because I've always tied my family into the game of golf. Like growing up we were all on the range hitting golf balls. My sister was in the same tournament in a different division, but I always wanted to compete alongside her.

And then my first couple years on Tour I competed with her on Tour and I traveled with her and we became best friends. Those all have -- those all play a part in what I love about my life, and that's even if I have really tough years, I'm still going out the next day and I'm still grinding on my game, still grinding on my body.

I have the same exact team. No matter what, I'm not changing anything up. We're just putting our head down and working.

Q. Congratulations.

NELLY KORDA: Thank you.

Q. You're the first American since Meg Mallon in 2000 to win three majors. Can you tell us what majors mean to you and your legacy?

NELLY KORDA: They're the reason why I started playing this game. I mean, I walked on to the range at the U.S. Women's Open in 2013 at Sebonack and that's where I realized, like, this is what I want to do. You're playing against the best players in the world, playing a challenging golf course that testing every part of your game, but it's also testing you mentally.

You get on to the back nine of a major on a Sunday and there is no bigger rush of emotions that you feel. Like right now the last thing I want to do is eat. I just feel sick to my stomach because there is a major rush of emotion.

I don't know, I mean, yeah, even growing up watching my sister compete the only time I watched her compete was in major championships. Then also like the people -- people that you looked up like Tiger, my sister refers to our generation being Tiger's kids, and seeing the amazing shots and how much it means to every person that has come before us to win a major and then how much that has inspired other generations to keep wanting to come out and grind.

Q. The amateur, Farah O'Keefe, was saying earlier in the week when she was ten on her goal list she had win 20 majors. Curious if you had a number when you

were a kid and if you have a number now.

NELLY KORDA: No, I don't have a number. I'm not like that. I'm just more of like process-oriented where I want to do the work and I want to continue grinding on my game and I want other players to test me. When I finished second to Hyo Joo twice and second to Lauren, that fuels me.

I like that. I like the back and forth competition. I want them to motivate me. I want to motivate them. That's what's brings the best out of everyone.

Q. You were saying you have to work next week, no?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. How much do you know about Mayakoba and Riviera Maya?

NELLY KORDA: I've been there once. I played 18 but I don't really remember it. I will not be playing tomorrow. No one will see me on the golf course.

But I will go out Tuesday and Wednesday. And then I know it's a beautiful location, beautiful resort, so I'm super excited. But I got remind myself even when I'm at a beautiful resort with a perfect pool that it is time to work. (Laughter.)

Q. What was my followup. How much do you embrace the opportunity to relax and how much do you embrace the opportunity to compete more?

NELLY KORDA: I love competing, so starting Tuesday -- I'm in a mindset I'm going to enjoy today, and tomorrow and from Tuesday I'm locked into a new week.

Q. You talked a lot this week about changing your mentality and maturing as a player.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. How do you think your maturity as a player and a person led to this moment?

NELLY KORDA: I would say it was a very big part of why I'm sitting next to the trophy. Last year was definitely a super frustrating year. You know, everyone was talking about my stats. I would come into a room like this and everyone would be like, you know, your stats are great, better than last year, but you have zero trophies under your name this year.

I'm like, I see that, yes.

It's just -- it wears on you because that's what you're working for. Everyone in this field is grinding and spending hours and hours and hours out there. Sometimes you see I don't remember stats better last year than the year that you were in 2024 and you're like, well, I have zero trophies under my name.

You're like, okay, I don't want to reinvent the wheel. I don't want to do anything crazy. But I do want to get better. So what am I going to do better? The first thing was I was getting frustrated last year on the golf course and I started overanalyzing everything and I started overthinking, and then that was paralyzing me.

I told myself I don't ever want to feel like that on a golf course. There is a reason why Jason has so many gray hairs and it's because he works for me. Probably partially. And then another is last year was really tough.

We talked about it, him and I. We were like, yeah, last year wasn't easy. It was because I was like overanalyzing absolutely everything. Sometimes there is a power in just letting go.

Q. Given how mentally taxing you you said the weekend was, when you finally holed the last putt what's the emotion, the feeling?

NELLY KORDA: Relief. The tension I felt internally on the back nine I didn't love, because I had -- just because I had to play it safe a lot and I didn't feel like I was playing like myself. To make that putt on 18 I was just like, thank God. Like I just want to enjoy this moment now.

Q. You kind of touched on this just then, but playing so well this year. Are you starting to get the vibes and you see the similarities of your 2024 season? Can you compare this year to 2024?

NELLY KORDA: I can't compare. Every year is so different. I would say the only the thing that's similar is like when do you get into like a zone like this you're kind of in your own little bubble, and that's what I was feeling in 2024. I was in my own little bubble.

But as for the way that I am mentally -- was mentally in 2024 versus what I am mentally right now, they're almost two different people as well.

Q. Finally from me, did you notice the increase in the crowds this year from Carlton Woods?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, it was amazing. It was a lot of fun to play in front of. I thank them a lot for chanting my name



and being so supportive. It was a lot of fun to play in front of crowds. It's always been a lot of fun to play in front of crowds, especially when you're playing good golf. When you're playing bad golf it's not good to play in front of big crowds.

Q. Start off by saying congrats on the big win.

NELLY KORDA: Thank you.

Q. Can you walk us through the most challenging shot you faced during this entire tournament?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, 17 tee shot. I had a five-shot lead but the wind was off the left and it was like humming, and that's just not a very comfortable wind for a righty.

I told Jason after, I'm just happy to get this shot over. Once it landed in the fairway I was like, thank God.

Q. You set the tone early in the tournament. Can you tell me what's the importance of starting off fast and staying in the lead?

NELLY KORDA: I mean, the tournament can get away from you if you don't have a good start, and then you're always playing catchup in a sense.

I had an amazing first two days where I felt like everything that I kind of looked at I made. It got a little tougher on the weekend, which it normally does. They put the pin positions in a little bit more difficult spots where you have a couple double breaks, even if it's a short putt, and then the wind started playing a pretty big role also on the back nine of the weekend.

Yeah, it's nice to get off to a strong start, but what you always want is to finish strong, too. It doesn't matter how you start, it's how you finish.

Q. Question from the Zoom. You're joining Mickey Wright, Patty Berg, Louise Suggs as players that have won three majors before the age of 28. What does making that kind of history mean to you?

NELLY KORDA: Just amazing. I mean, they inspired me and I hope to inspire the next generation, the next girl that comes in and competes at a young age that wins four majors maybe under the age 28.

At the end of the day, I mean, it's all about inspiring the next generation, the 13 Founders that paved the way for us, and it's an amazing feeling to be alongside such an amazing group of women. I hope to continue.

Q. You're also inspiring LeBron James. He was tuning in again and tweeting. Can you speak to that support from another great champion in a different game?

NELLY KORDA: It's so cool to see how much -- how many athletes love the game of golf, how many different people it brings together. I always say golf is very unique because it doesn't matter if you're my level or a beginner, you can all share the golf course together. You can all compete together. Like when can you ever actually compete against a beginner in tennis or basketball, right? At the end of the day like sharing the golf course with other athletes that are just getting interested in the game of golf.

And what's amazing to me is like they're interested in women's golf. They're hyping us up and they're putting us on their socials, they're watching, and they're supporting.

And then we're doing that to them and I think that's what is beautiful about sports.

Q. Congrats again on the win. Obviously a lot of great competitors in this tournament all over the world. Was there anybody in particular you had your eye on to make sure you stayed ahead of?

NELLY KORDA: I mean, the girls in the final group today, Ronni and Patty. I played with Patty the entire weekend and she played some amazing golf. Some of her chip shots were just so dirty. They were so good. And her up and downs were crazy.

But those were the two that I saw when I looked at the leaderboard that were the closest to me. Lucky me, I had a close eye on them. Other than that, I was just kind of focusing on myself. It's easy to get caught up in the outside noise, outside world of, you know, comparing yourself or looking at others.

Q. When you talk about Patty and Ronni being close to you, I don't think anyone was as close as four shots all weekend. It would lead me to ask, did your test come from them or from you?

NELLY KORDA: Probably from me. I would say you can get caught up thinking that that number is smaller than it actually is, when in reality, like, no one got closer to me than four shots, but maybe at points, at times yesterday, that number got mentally a lot smaller than what it actually was.

It was just when I missed a short putt and that's about it. I started doubting myself and I told myself and Jason as well, I was like I don't want to feel like I felt on Saturday today. I want to go out and play golf. Whatever happens,

if I jump into that pond, if I have the trophy in my hands at the end of the day, then great. I gave it 100%. If I don't, then I have next week.

I have the week after.

So that's going to be my mindset for the rest of the year. I'm going to make mistakes and short putts. I'm going to continuously put 100% into every single day. I think that the lesson I learned on Saturday that I started thinking like last year a little bit where I started overanalyzing and I kind of popped my bubble myself.

I needed to get back into that bubble.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much, Nelly.

NELLY KORDA: Thank you.

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