

Mizuho Americas Open

Sunday, May 19, 2024

Jersey City, New Jersey, USA

Liberty National Golf Club

Nelly Korda

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right here with Nelly Korda. Nelly has a flight to catch, so I'll start with Sarah.

Q. After the front nine, what did you turn around mentality too dig deep and make it happen again?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, definitely was not a good start to the day. Just couldn't get anything going, and Jay actually told me to pretty much get my head out of my um and to reset and to start fresh. There were opportunities that I could take advantage of on the back nine and it was still a tight race.

Even though I was 2-over, I was still tied for the lead, so it's not like I was completely discouraged with my play. Overall, you know, definitely tough start to the day and then grind it out on the back nine.

Q. Can you just speak to the tenacity it takes to win a battle like that going head-to-head with Hannah?

NELLY KORDA: It almost felt like I was back in Vegas at the match play event playing with Hannah. It was definitely a lot of back and forth. I felt like when of us hit it really close or could take advantage of something on the back nine the other hit it close too and made the putt.

Overall, it was just a battle until the 18th hole. You really had to stay really patient out there and trust that -- trust your game and that you're going to hit good shots.

Q. How much fun are you having? This is insane?

NELLY KORDA: It's a lot of fun. For me it's more rewarding that all the hard work that I've put in, all the rollercoaster that I went through from the end of 2021 with my injuries to this year is just super rewarding.

To have my team besides me day in and day out, you know, being so close knit really makes it special.

Q. Congratulations, Nelly. At the same time, felt like you didn't have your best stuff today compared to

yesterday. How did you fight through it? Made a couple early bogeys, but came up victorious in the end.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I feel like you never have your A-game throughout an entire tournament. You kind of have to grind through it even with your B, C, and D game. I definitely felt like I had my C and D game today. Didn't really play at that well.

Just told myself that even though I was 2-over, I still had opportunities on the back nine to take the lead or to battle with Hannah, because she was playing solid golf.

Q. And then what in your opinion was the best shot you hit all day today?

NELLY KORDA: Best shot I hit all day today? I mean, I don't know. I think that that chip shot that I hit on 17 where Hannah almost made that putt on 17 was really good. It was not easy. Short-sided myself. We told ourselves long is dead and that is where I went.

So that was -- we weren't too psyched about that. I think the chip shot that I hit into 17 in tap-in range, and then obviously Hannah pulled her tee shot left on 18, and 18 is a very tough tee shot.

So I would say 17 and the tee shot on 18 because I was not hitting my driver very good all day. To step up and hit those two shots, it was big.

Q. Last question: Did you have adrenaline in the fairway? At least from my angle looked like that shot was painting the flagstick.

NELLY KORDA: Oh, yeah, definitely adrenaline. I wanted to hit a controlled 9-iron into the wind. I told Jay that I have a bit of adrenaline, like I definitely feel it. It's lower than it was in the past, but definitely felt it.

And I just -- it was an arrow at the flag and it was just a little bit too much, and long left was just not a good place to miss it, yeah.

Q. Hard to get a rhythm today? Seemed like you were

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waiting every hole.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, we were waiting a lot. It kind of felt like a little bit of Chevron in a sense. I saw a lot of the group in front of me today. It's definitely hard to get the pace. You just have to deal with it in a sense.

Like you can't let that affect you too much. Even though I am a faster player, Hannah is fast, we just had to kind of put that aside just to focus on what's right in front of us.

Q. Does your strategy change on 18 once you're in the fairway? She's over to the left. I mean, do you sit there and say, I just want the center of the green because she's going to struggle?

NELLY KORDA: No, I was just trying to make birdie. I had a pitching wedge in my hand and I was in like a softer part of the fairway. I didn't catch it super clean. I caught it a little on the heavier side.

But, I mean, I was happy with it. It was an uphill putt and the hole before that I flew it over, so the last thing I wanted to do was be long on that hole.

Q. And finally from me: Winning without your best game, is that special?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, for sure. I mean, there is something special about the grind of not having your best stuff and then still mentally being able to pull it off.

Q. You have two parents who were both world class tennis players. With everything that you now go through off the golf course and all that is surrounding your success, just having their experience to rely on a little bit, does help you dealing with all that?

NELLY KORDA: For sure. We all say -- all three of us say that without their mentorship and guidance and knowledge we wouldn't be where we are today. That is something that we really cherish and we know is very, very valuable.

So my dad still actually does my schedule to this day. Like he's very, very involved with the scheduling of my entire year and how much time I have off and what I'm doing off the golf course.

So they're very much still involved. They were out here this week. I love having them out. All three of us are just grateful to have them in our corner.

Q. Is part of that being able to put all that aside when you get on the golf course and just focus on what you're doing? Can't be easy to do sometimes.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I have such an amazing team. They kind of take care of everything and I'm very much focused on golf. That's just the way I want it.

I don't love -- not that I don't love -- but I just don't really deal with much outside of the golf course because my true love is playing golf and competing; that's my main focus.

Q. Congratulations, Nelly.

NELLY KORDA: Thank you.

Q. Again.

NELLY KORDA: Thank you.

Q. Obviously a week off. Is that a good thing? How you feel right now would you rather keep the momentum going into a major championship? Since you don't really have a choice on that, how will you spend the next week gearing up?

NELLY KORDA: No, I'm excited for my week off. I've played two weeks in a row, and obviously with the amount of adrenaline and the pressure and the head-to-head battle that I had with Hannah today, I mean, that wears on you.

So I'll definitely feel pretty tired the next few days, and I'm just really excited to recharge my batteries. My sister is going to drive over tomorrow in the morning with Greyson, so I'm so pumped for that.

Just going to spend quality time with family and recharge my batteries and get back to the grind again.

Q. One quick follow up: Where does winning the U.S. Women's Open rank on what you want to do list?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, it's pretty high. It was the first event I ever played in 2013 at Sebonack. That was where I realized this is my dream and I would love to live that out one day, so obviously I have a tie to that event emotionally.

It's tough. There has definitely been some heartbreaking times where I just haven't competed well in U.S. Women's Open where I feel like I put a little bit more pressure on myself, because I do love the event and I feel like out of all the events that's like the event for me.

I'm not saying -- I'm not downplaying any other major. I'm just saying that is where my dream kind of became reality in a sense, so obviously it's on the top of my priority list. I just know there is never any good when you put more pressure on yourself. Just going to stay in my bubble that

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week and take it a shot at a time.

Q. Obviously the accolades continue piling up for you here. You're now the first American to win six in a season since Beth Daniel did so. Did you get any advice from her at the Founders Cup last week after not continuing your streak? Was there anything in particular she said?

NELLY KORDA: No, not really. They are always so amazing to be around. They're just nice to chat with about stuff off the golf course, but they're always super encouraging, too.

They always just tell deal me to keep doing my thing and to have fun out there.

Q. You mentioned yesterday having Nadal and Federer as idols and seeing that within your game. How did you see that within your round today?

NELLY KORDA: Definitely way more Nadal today's versus Federer. There as not much grace in my game. There was a lot of the fight out there with it being a head-to-head battle all the way down 18.

That's what makes sports so great, that even though you don't have your best stuff you can still grind it out and you feel the adrenaline, you feel all the feelings going down 18.

I mean, I felt sick to my stomach coming down 18 because I knew it was a tight battle. We were both tied at the top. It was a tough tee shot coming down 18. Just a tough hole in general.

Yeah, I just think that there is no greater thing than to battle it out when you don't have your best stuff.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, appreciate it.

NELLY KORDA: Thank you.

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