

Aramco Saudi Ladies International Presented by Public Investment Fund

Tuesday, 14 February, 2023

King Abdullah Economic City, Saudi Arabia

Royal Greens Golf & Country Club

Atthaya Thitikul

Press Conference

Q. Congrats on an amazing 2022 season. You made it to the World No. 1 ranking. What was that feeling like for you? Can you actually remember where you were, that whole situation, what you did right after that?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah, actually the week that I came up to the World No. 1, I think it was in Japan, and the crowd was so big, and they announced it at the microphone. Yeah, it's kind of like an excited moment and a memorable moment for me, as well. One time you get to the World No. 1, it's surreal.

It's pretty amazing there in Japan because as you know, Japan's fans are really crazy about golf, as well. So yeah, really amazing to be No. 1 in one of my favorite countries, as well.

Q. This will be your first event of the year. How has your preparation been?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah, I had a really good off-season. I did not really have a break after the LET because I had to go through the Q-school, and then the first event was in January, and then I don't really have one. But I had a really good off-season this year, about three months I get, and then spent time with my family and get to work before this event, like about one month.

I've been working with my coach, what I have to do and what I have to focus on this year more. My coach, he is in Thailand, as well, so pretty good off-season for me.

Q. You've always done well when you've competed on the LET as well as in Saudi. The last time you competed at the ASLI, you came in second. What's the aim for this week?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: I think it's nice, come here on the LET events, as well. They seem like my home. And also always be grateful to compete around Saudi again because I know they put everything more with women's golf and they're trying to elevate the women's golf more and more every day, every year. Always nice to be here,



and hopefully they had a really nice event here a lot more in the future.

Q. For this week, the Aramco Saudi Ladies International, you have an elevated prize purse of now U.S. 5 million, and it matches the men's event, the Saudi International, that took place last week. How do you feel about this move and creating more equality in the game of golf?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah, actually I've got to say, it's amazing and it's crazy that men's and women's equal prize money. We haven't seen this before since then. We don't have any the men's and women's, the prize money. I think it's a good sign for women's golf to have Aramco come and elevating the women's golf to get better and bigger to worldwide. Actually women's golf is not that small. I think we always have talented golfers coming every year, so I think it's a good move for us and then for all of us, as well.

As you see, a lot of LPGA players coming to this event, as well, so hopefully we can have more even like this in the future so then we can combination LET and LPGA together.

Q. What are your memories from when you were here? I know it's two years ago.

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: My memories are like me and Lydia Ko on the last round. I think I had a really good final round, but I couldn't beat her at the same time. She shot like 6-, 7-under and I shot like 5 or 6, something like that, just the two of us playing.

For this event, I would say that is my incredible memories for me.

Q. Obviously that was the first time you had properly played with her then, but obviously since then on the LPGA for the past year you've gotten used to being out there with her. Have you gotten more used to playing alongside her?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Actually last year I used to play with like all of the top 10 in the world already, I guess, like everyone on the top 10 in the world. I just saw they're all so amazing.



As you know, I'm just young and a new face, getting to play with them, it's a really amazing experience for me, as well. But it's a lot of things I have to learn from them at the same time.

But yeah, with Lydia, I think she is more special than others. As you know, she won when she is really super young.

Q. So did you.

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah. But me it's not the same as her. She's done more than me, and yeah, she's kind of -- I think she's inspiring like other generations to play golf, to be like her one day. Yeah, it's really nice to play alongside with her and some other top players.

Q. You just said about inspiring the next generation. We've had quite a few Thai girls come through Q-school and they all mentioned your name as someone they look up to. Is that strange to know you've inspired people to come and play on the LET?

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: I don't know, because like -- actually 80 percent of Thai players, they've not really seen LET. They're always going through the qualifiers and then going to the Epson Tour. Just like once or twice the women came on LET, not through Epson, and maybe they saw something. They saw something in LET, not from me, and saw something in LET that had more opportunities to play the major events, and also they have like Trust Golf, that Scottish Open. All the top players come and play, and it's a really good experience.

I think the LET is also elevating the Tour. I think LET is getting bigger and bigger since I played because I see so many events coming this past years and this year, as well. I think it's not because of me. Maybe I just open up for them.

Q. They've seen that you did it --

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: Yeah.

Q. -- and they're like, oh, I can do it, too.

ATTHAYA THITIKUL: I think there are many different ways for you to go and stop by before you're going to go to LPGA Tour, so yeah, maybe because of that.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports