

# Aramco Saudi Ladies International Presented by Public Investment Fund

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King Abdullah Economic City, Saudi Arabia  
Royal Greens Golf & Country Club

## Lexi Thompson

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Today we have with us world No. 7, Lexi Thompson. Welcome, Lexi, and thank for joining us today.

LEXI THOMPSON: Thank you.

**Q. So to kick thing off, the Aramco Saudi Ladies International is the first event you're competing in this week and for the season. What's your focus on?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, I'm really happy to be here first off. First time being here, so it's been exciting so far. Got to play the golf course, full 18 yesterday, and it's in amazing shape. A little windier today, but just been very welcome so far, so looking forward to the start of the week tomorrow.

**Q. And in terms of your off-season, did you focus on anything in particular? What did you do?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, I had quite some time off after I played in the QBE Shootout in December. Made sure I spent that quality time with my family and friends and just get that relaxation, but at the same time, I trained harder than ever.

I worked extremely hard on my game and fitness, and really just trying to keep everything intact, work on a few things in my game, and to keep on improving.

**Q. And you mentioned about the course today. How has it been? What do you think need to do to tackle the conditions such as the wind?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, it's an amazing golf course and layout. I've heard that it plays quite a bit different in the afternoon, especially if it gets super windy and the course maybe dries out a little bit.

But I played in the morning yesterday; get nine in probably today. But really probably if it gets windy, fighting your shots properly and just to start it off getting in the fairway is always No. 1.



The greens are a little tricky. There is quite some hills in them, so getting in the right sections and really thinking about those second shots going into the greens with the pin placements.

**Q. What's your take of the 16th hole overlooking the Red Sea?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Amazing. I definitely took quite a few pictures. It's a beautiful hole, and tricky one, too, so it's a really good par-3 and there are some beautiful holes out there, but that's probably my favorite.

**Q. This week you'll be competing for a slice of the U.S. \$5 million prize fund. The largest on the LET of the majors and matches the men's event we had last week. What's your take on that in terms of sponsors and partners really helping elevate the women's game?**

LEXI THOMPSON: It's amazing news, first off, being an athlete and just to see the game grow and move in the right direction. But I think we're all just so grateful to have this partnerships and to have people to support women's golf and that we're moving in the right direction gaining these partnerships and raising these prize funds.

That's what we want to see, and I think we're moving in the right direction. To be here this week, to be playing for the same prize fund as the men did, it's quite the accomplishment, and I think it's just showing that the women's game is moving in the right direction for us.

**Q. I have a couple questions if that's okay. Obviously you mentioned it's your first time out here. You do have quite a connection with the Middle East going back quite a while when you won in Dubai.**

LEXI THOMPSON: Uh-huh.

**Q. And also you've won in Aramco event in New York. Do you have a certain affinity with the Middle East now that you've come back here? What's your memories of Dubai?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I think it's just a matter of feeling welcomed at the events that I've been to, especially the Aramco Team Series events. Just feeling welcome and the hospitality that I received. They're amazing events,

and I love Dubai. It's one of my favorite spots that I've ever been to, let alone winning. Of course that's a bonus.

But just the hospitality that I received just going to those events, I thoroughly enjoyed it. I'm very happy to be here. I heard nothing but great things about this event.

Just happy to experience it all.

**Q. And once again, Solheim Cup year.**

LEXI THOMPSON: Uh-huh.

**Q. I think you played in five so far, so you're one of the veterans. But you lost the last two. What's the drive and ambition to get that Cup back in Spain?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, of course. You know, it's such a high honor to be able to represent my country any time I can. Whether it's Solheim Cup, International Crown, or any team event, I want to be on that team representing my country.

It's been unfortunate the last two years that we've lost, but it happens. We did the best that we could. Representing your country is the highest honor, so hopefully we get that trophy back in Spain. Really looking forward to going there.

All we can do is the best we can so and bring our A games, but I think the Solheim Cups bring a whole 'nother level of people's game. Representing your country you have that drive. You're not only fighting for yourself out there, you have your partner next to you; you're fighting for your country and representing it.

So it brings out a whole 'nother side and attitude of people, which is great to see.

**Q. And just one quick one. There is a new wave of talent coming through. What's your key to the longevity in the game?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I think the key for me is taking the time off when needed, not really overdoing playing, skipping events that I feel like I need to to get the rest and make sure my game is in the right spot for the tournaments that I thoroughly enjoy and the golf courses what I really like that suit my game the best.

I think that's been the key for me, instead of just playing four, five weeks in a row and tiring myself out. Just taking breaks when needed.

I just finished my 12th year on tour, so it's pretty unbelievable to think I just turned 28. It's just, yeah, taking the time for myself, living life and enjoying it, but at the same time, performing the best that I can when I do.

**Q. First of all, you're here now participating in the Aramco Saudi Ladies International. You've done ATS in New York, but you're here now. Obviously couple of Saudi female golfers playing in the pro-am today, some initiatives happening as well, and these tournaments as well inspiring all these girls. What's your message to those girls who want to take up the sport and want to really follow the steps of Lexi and the other golfers?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Uh-huh, first off, I think it's amazing to see just that the game is growing. As an athlete, I just want to leave the game in a better place than it was when I first stepped in.

To have those role models and to encourage girls to pick up the game at a young age, it's important. I didn't know some of the girls were playing out there today. Hopefully I get paired up with one.

But it's great to see girls thoroughly enjoy the game. Whether you make it professionally or not, it's such an amazing game that you learn so much about yourself, your dedication, responsibility. Even if you're not professional it's great for business, because you don't get the opportunity to spend multiple hours with business partners for that matter.

I've learned so much about myself along the way, met some amazing people, so I always tell people, you should pick up the game. It's one of the best out there. Could be frustrating, don't get me wrong, but you will enjoy it so much, and just have fun with it and just be grateful for the opportunity that you can.

**Q. In terms of the tournament, what are your preparations going into the tournament? Obviously just mentioned that it's your first of the season, so what are the preparations and how do you think it's going to prepare you for the long season ahead?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, of course. I worked extremely hard in the off-season, whether it's training in the gym one, two times a day, but I've spent multiple hours each and every day in the practice facility working on the things that I needed to improve on and just keeping everything consistent.

I had a good finish in my last two last year, so just trying to bring that into this year. Consistency has been key, so just keeping the things that I've been working on and just continuing to improve on them with my game, on the mental side as well.

So coming in I played full 18 yesterday; play the pro-am today in the wind, so hopefully get a feel for how the golf course is in the wind, but I will say that the golf course is in great shape for us.

Really looking forward to starting it up.

**Q. Last one, Lexi, you mentioned it's your first time here in the kingdom. Can you tell us what was this experience like? Is it as you expected or can you tell us just more?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, I heard it was amazing, where the golf course was and the hotel and everything. I didn't get to experience much so far. I landed at like midnight two nights ago and played the full 18 and was here for the full day.

It's been beautiful. The weather is supposed to be super nice the next few days, so I'm really looking forward to just experiencing it all. Everybody has been so welcoming and the hospitality has been great, so I couldn't ask for anything more.

**Q. It's a really unique field this week. What's sort of the vibe been like out there, and has anyone you've had a chance to catch up with that you haven't seen for a while and it's been good?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, I haven't seen a lot of the players since a while, since Naples in November. Haven't caught up with too many of the players, but I think everybody is excited to be here. I think it shows the strength of the field, shows how important this event is for the women's game in general, and how excited we all are to be here and to show that we just want to keep on continuing to grow the women's game.

I think everybody is just thoroughly excited to be here. Ready to tee it up tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, thank you, Lexi, and all the best this week.

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