

Women's Olympic Golf Competition

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Saitama City, Saitama, Japan
Kasumigaseki Country Club

Nelly Korda

Jessica Korda

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Same question for both of you. Jessica, just what it means to be here representing the United States in the Olympic games?

JESSICA KORDA: It's awesome. I mean, I didn't know what to expect. We walked around the Olympic village a couple of days ago when we got here and what an experience that was, just itself. Then watching the guys yesterday battle out for bronze and seeing just what it means, it's just such a cool experience and any time we get to represent the United States and wear red, white and blue is just such an honor. And what an exciting time to be able to play. Sad, obviously, that we can't have fans out and really get kind of the experience that we were looking forward to, but still extremely grateful to be here.

THE MODERATOR: Nelly, same question.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I pretty much agree with Jess, it's been pretty cool especially walking around the Olympic village, putting on the USA gear every single day has been really exciting and even like the traditions of the pin swapping I think that's really cool, I'm already kind of decked out, I've only been here two days and it's been a lot of fun. It's something that I'm always going to look back on and really cherish.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. You mentioned being out here yesterday watching the guys. Curious if there's anything about the course that you can learn from them or if it's just a little bit different between the men and the women watching them. Do you learn things?

NELLY KORDA: I think more around the greens you can learn more about their play and what they did. But when it comes to like game plans and the shots that they hit into greens, personally I don't think so, but I think more around



the greens.

JESSICA KORDA: I think the golf course is set up, going to be setup differently, so I don't think it will be fair if people compare us to them. They obviously hit it a lot farther than we do and put more spin on the ball. So I think coming out of the rough they might be able to stop some things faster than us. And they're coming in with probably shorter clubs than we are. So I think it will in that sense as of right now we have only played nine holes and seen that, but for me it was really fun to just see how aggressive of players they are. Drivers were hit where not necessarily we would be hitting drivers. But again for them they were saying that it was just so soft that they could be super aggressive. So that was just really fun to see and just seeing everyone and how they play in tournaments and I just like watching golf and so it was just really fun. They made it really exciting.

Q. For either one of you, did you watch Xander finish up yesterday and given how tight it was towards the end were there any nerves that you felt for him?

NELLY KORDA: I, yeah, definitely for me I was nervous on 18 when he pushed his tee shot out to the right and had to lay up. But what a clutch pitch shot into 18 and making that putt. Especially with how well the guy in second played.

JESSICA KORDA: Yeah my Whoop registered an activity in like the last hole. So I think we're really feeling it for him and like Nelly says, it was just so clutch coming down the stretch and that last hole and with the putt and everything that it's bigger than us and than golf. So it was just really cool.

Q. Nelly, for you, only because you've spoken about this in the past, curious if you had had any thoughts on what Simone Biles went through last week.

NELLY KORDA: I mean, I think everyone struggles with something different. I feel for her, but I don't know, it's kind of hard to touch on. I think every person goes through different struggles, different kind of pressure and just kind of taking a step back thinking about life in general is very important.

Q. Couple of historic questions. Given your age difference at what point as you guys were growing up would you say you guys became competitive?

JESSICA KORDA: When Nelly came out on Tour.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. Do I need a comment from Nelly here?

JESSICA KORDA: No, that's kind of like we didn't compete. When we were younger against each other, because the age gap is so big we were in the same tournaments but different age groups. No, the first tournament we played together was Bahamas in 2017.

NELLY KORDA: I don't know.

JESSICA KORDA: I don't know, either 2017 or 2016.

Q. I guess what I moment was just at home playing.

JESSICA KORDA: I wasn't home.

NELLY KORDA: I mean, Jess, her rookie year was 2011, I was 13. So I started playing tournaments when I was nine, but like we were even, like I was in school until 3 and she was gone, so my brother and I were very close growing up and then once I got on Tour Jess and I --

JESSICA KORDA: I think by the time like Nelly would be done with school like I would already be done with practice. So I was -- it's not like an, oh, was it competitive, it just wasn't like that when we were growing up because of the age gap.

NELLY KORDA: We would have putting matches.

JESSICA KORDA: We would have like short game.

NELLY KORDA: She would get mad at me because I would pick the most ridiculous putts and she's like, this is not practical.

JESSICA KORDA: She would pick putts across the entire green. And I'm like, no, like putts to, like makeable putts. She's like, this is makeable. I'm like, okay, whatever.

Q. I think a lot of people have really embraced watching you guys do what you've done Solheim Cups, competing, the whole nine yards. How much fun is it to be competing individually on Tour together, be Olympians together and everything like that?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I mean it's honestly surreal. It's so much fun. I don't know what I would do without Jess. I think we had a conversation like a couple days ago, I was like, so you're going to be playing until the end of my career too, right? (Laughing) like you're going to be out here as long as me, you're not going to leave me, right. Yeah, I think I'm going to, it's definitely going to be really weird and I'm just super grateful to have her, honestly, every step of the way.

JESSICA KORDA: For me it's just been really fun and it's definitely, it's kind of, not that it saved my career but I definitely think it refreshed it. It's really lonely and it's really hard to be out here and I did a lot of it myself. They were growing up, I have a younger brother and a younger sister, so it's not like my parents could come out every week and travel with me, so I did a lot of it on my own. It gets to be a lot and you forget what normal life is like and that balance kind of just blurs a little bit. Then just having her come out, it really refreshed a lot of the love of the game and the love for the Tour and kind of just like wanting to be out here and doing this with her.

Q. Was it a pretty good struggle those first three, four years, just, I mean it's true, it's very lonely out here.

JESSICA KORDA: Yeah, the adjustment's definitely tough. I always tell anyone that wants their kid to play professional sports is they better love it because it is really hard. But it's just like anything, a job isn't easy either, you have to love your job to do a good job. Especially starting out, you got to grind through it and that's kind of how it is in professional sports.

Q. Jess, was there anyone that really helped you out early on? Because I think you can play a bit of a mentor role maybe that's wrong for your sister, but was there anyone that really helped you?

JESSICA KORDA: I had made great friend out here. I was so young when I came out, now the younger wave, I mean the Tour has gotten so much younger since then, but back then it was kind of just Lexi and I and no one really younger or younger or around our age. But I had great people, great players take me under their wing and there's not just one and kind of made my own little family and they have been my friends for 11 years now.

Q. Curious about the pin exchanging thing. Where do you get the pins from, do they hand you a bunch, who is the favorite person or best pin that you've gotten.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I mean when we got all our bags there were some pins in there. We have some USA golf ones and then we also have just like the regular Olympic

ones. Just mainly with other players we exchange -- I don't know there's some really cool ones, China has a really cool one with a panda on it. I think that's really cute.

JESSICA KORDA: China has three of them.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, China has three pins. I think every one of them is special and they're all really cool.

JESSICA KORDA: It's just a cool memory.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. Are you particularly close to anyone on the guy's Tuesday, any of the Olympians specifically, JT or?

NELLY KORDA: Well Jess lives in West Palm.

JESSICA KORDA: I live in Jupiter.

NELLY KORDA: So she practices with a bunch of the PGA TOUR players, I necessarily don't.

Q. Any conversation with JT, Olympic-related or anything else in the weeks --

JESSICA KORDA: Yeah, I was grilling him when he first landed here. I was like, how is it, like, what's everything like, I need to know details. And so he even texted me this morning he goes, I'm dying to know what you think about the golf course. So it's nice to be able to share this with something that you grew up with and, yeah, it's just a cool experience. He's like wait until you land here, it's going to hit you. And I was like, okay, I can't wait. And he's right, I mean the whole experience for us I don't feel like we're really prepared what it was going to be like and like he said, it just kind of hits you when you get here.

Q. The other thing I wanted to ask you as it relates to kind of support and given the restrictions we have, who do you have with you this week, anybody? Was your dad, mom able to come out?

JESSICA KORDA: Each other.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. That's enough.

JESSICA KORDA: Yeah. Exactly.

NELLY KORDA: Our caddies.

Q. How many times have you been to Japan before and if you have something interesting story in Japan

could you share about that.

NELLY KORDA: This is only my second time, so I haven't really gotten to explore too much.

JESSICA KORDA: I played a lot. I played a decent amount. I think one of the coolest was playing a JLPGA event, being paired with Ai Miyazato and Ai Suzuki in the first round and just the people, it's like five deep down the fairway, it was a very, very cool experience, just how big women's golf is here. Like I keep saying that it's just such a shame that we can't have fans here because this would have been huge in Japan. So it's a little bit bitter sweet, but I love coming here, I love playing here, I love the food here.

NELLY KORDA: I was just about to say the food is amazing.

JESSICA KORDA: The food is so good. When we played in Ibaraki I literally would take the train to Tokyo and like eat. Just 45 minutes I would sit in the train just to go eat.

Q. Which food did you like best?

JESSICA KORDA: Sushi, ramen. I mean, I waited in line for 45 minutes to eat sushi. So like we'll do anything to eat good sushi.

Q. Do you enjoy the sushi in players village too?

JESSICA KORDA: We have a -- Team USA, we have a chef and everything and they made sushi last night and it was really good, so, yeah.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. Is there anything difficult at all to be coming off one major and going into another major and have something pretty special right in the middle of it?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I mean it's super cool. A little tiring, but there's no experience like representing Team USA. It's been really cool. Honestly, we went from France to Tokyo and then we're going to go straight to pretty much to British. So I mean then we're going to be home and then represent USA again at Solheim. So it's a long stretch, but we can't wait, it's going to be a lot of fun and I'm already excited to get the week going.

JESSICA KORDA: Yeah, I think we'll be surviving off of adrenaline by the time we get to Solheim you cup.

NELLY KORDA: And coffee.

JESSICA KORDA: And coffee.

Q. And kind of on the Solheim lines and I realize they're entirely different tournaments, but when it comes to playing for a flag, the representing country, what are the differences? How is it different?

JESSICA KORDA: Solheim Cup? What do you mean?

NELLY KORDA: Like you're not playing for yourself, I mean, at the end of the day, you're playing for your country. And it's super special.

JESSICA KORDA: At Solheim?

Q. At Solheim you're playing for country and stuff here you're playing for yourself?

JESSICA KORDA: Well also your team.

NELLY KORDA: Well also your country. I mean, you're representing your country.

Q. Representing your country but still somewhat individual. I'm just wondering the whole spirit and having team uniform, team bag, are there more similarities or differences between that and something like Solheim Cup?

NELLY KORDA: Oh, we kind of have a team feeling.

JESSICA KORDA: We have a team feeling. I think Solheim Cup, it's so different because you're playing best ball and you're playing alternate shot. So there's a little bit more tactic and like really being a team, especially with your partners. Whereas here it's more like a normal event where you're playing more for yourself, but you're playing like for your country, so they're just, they're different but you still are playing for your country wearing red, white and blue and you feel honored to be at both of them.

Q. I'm wondering if it would be weird at all and I guess we'll find out Wednesday. Like last week it had Xander and Collin and JT, same bags, same uniforms, practice round, just like they would at a Ryder Cup, and then the bell goes off on Thursday and it's, they're playing for themselves and their country. I good get you're representing, but it's still just an individual tournament. How do you keep involved in team when it's not necessarily a team event once the tournament gets going?

JESSICA KORDA: Team dinners.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

JESSICA KORDA: I don't know. Wearing the same uniform. I mean, those people are in your bubble, so you hang out with them outside of the golf course, I would say, and I don't know, we're all friends, so we have dinner and we hang out. It's really about it. You're so tired by the end of the day by the time you get back to your hotel you spend an hour on the bus, so you just hang out with everyone and then go to bed.

Q. How much does jet lag hit you? You mentioned France to Tokyo to Scotland back to America.

NELLY KORDA: It hit me the first day. I fell asleep around 9 and then I woke up at 1:30 thinking, oh, I'm ready to get my day going, it's probably 7 a.m. Nope. And then I couldn't fall asleep until around 4:30. So first day was bad, but then I think if you kind of stay awake or try to stay awake past 9 p.m. the second day's much better. I slept through the night.

Q. JT mentioned that 9 p.m. Is that like a threshold you guys think about?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, it starts hitting you by 9 for sure. And, or if you kind of come in that day like we flew in, what, Saturday in the morning. Right?

JESSICA KORDA: Yes.

NELLY KORDA: We wanted, we made sure it was a goal to stay up until 9. That's why we walked around the village that day, just so we wouldn't be in the hotel.

JESSICA KORDA: Yeah, we tried to stay away from the comfy bed.

NELLY KORDA: It looks very nice.

JESSICA KORDA: You lay down, you're done. Like you're not getting back up.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

Q. Following on from what you're saying there about the team feel, would you like to see some sort of team event in the Olympics rather than just an individual stroke play?

JESSICA KORDA: I would like to see it. I think it would be cool. I feel like a lot of the other sports have, it could be mixed, you know, I don't know, I mean that's something for everyone else to figure out. For us, we're just given the task at hand and our job is to play and then not really the other stuff. But I think it would be cool to have like a mixed

event, more team-like.

NELLY KORDA: Golf is so new still to the Olympics that they're still trying to figure it out.

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