

LPGA Drive On Championship

Friday, July 31, 2020

Toledo, Ohio, USA

Lydia Ko

Quick Quotes

Q. Here with Lydia Ko. What a way to punctuate your first round here with that nice long birdie. Take us through the last hole.

LYDIA KO: That was pretty much the only putt I holed today. Made a chip-in for birdie, and then on the par-5 I got on for two, so I two-putted birdie for that.

And then another one I hit it to like three feet, so it was actually so nice to see something longer than that range to fall in. And always nice to finish off with a birdie on the last.

Yeah, no, I think it was a pretty solid start to the comeback since Australia.

Q. I like that. And with your first day on the course here, what did you like about Inverness and what did you think was some of your strengths today?

LYDIA KO: I hit the ball fairly well. I think I missed a couple here and there, but other than that I thought I gave myself quite a few looks for birdies that I actually wasn't able to take advantage of.

So hopefully I'll be able to continue doing that. The greens are pretty tricky. They're undulating, so if you're on one wrong side or a difficult side, it's actually quite a tough two-putt. I think throughout the week it's only going to get firmer and drier.

Yeah, I think you have to play smart around here. If you do get the opportunity, try and grab it. Outside of that, par is, on a lot of these holes, aren't a bad score.

Q. I know this is definitely a different tournament than maybe all of us are used to on tour. What was it like preparing for an actual LPGA Tour event again?

LYDIA KO: I mean, it's nice to just be playing. I saw some of the girls and I was like, Man, it's nice to not see you through a virtual app or just on social media. So it's nice to just be able to see them.

Obviously a great pairing today for me to be paired up with



Minjee and Sara, and especially Minjee. I've known her since -- I think she's probably the player that I've known the longest out here, like over ten years, since we were juniors.

So it's nice to play alongside them, and everybody played really solid, so it's good when the whole group gets into a good momentum.

Q. I know during this quarantine you also had some time to play some matches against some other people that are in Florida with you. Take us through that. How helpful was that as you started preparing for competition again?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, there was quite a few girls in the Orlando area, so I played a lot of golf with them. Especially with Anne van Dam and Lindy Duncan.

I played I think even up to a couple weeks ago -- Lindy and I played like four or five times a week. We would just be practicing, and we would be like, Let's go play. So we would go and play, and we played for push-ups a lot of times.

If somebody made a birdie the other had to do push-ups. We were getting physically stronger at the same time as I guess being in that competitive mode.

It's nice. I don't know what I would've done without the, to be honest.

Q. Who had to do the most push-ups?

LYDIA KO: I was pretty fair. Lindy has been playing really well I think, and so we just had a fair bunch. I think the max we did was like 40 in nine holes, so...

Not in a row.

Q. So you were dropping right there by the green?

LYDIA KO: Yeah. So if Lindy makes birdie on 1, then -- we used to play for ten push-ups but now we play for five because we were like, Man, we can't do like 40.

She'll do or I'll do five straightaway, and then do it on the next hole. I've had a few members seeing me doing it which is kind of embarrassing, but, yeah.

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Q. Did you feel yourself trying to hit it further when playing alongside Anne van Dam?

LYDIA KO: I have bragging rights that I hit it further than her once, because I don't think she hit it very good and I hit probably one the best drives.

So I remember taking photo of it just for my pride. I know that I need to hit a couple sprinklers along the way for me to hit it alongside her, or even in the same area code as her.

But Anne, she obviously hits it hard, but she's got a very rhythmic swing. It's not like she's going 110%. It goes really far. So it's such an athletic movement, so I always love watching her swing.

Q. Playing early in the morning, did you feel like it was a pretty favorable time to play?

LYDIA KO: Either way we have to play one day in the morning and one day to the afternoon. I don't think it plays into a huge advantage. But obviously being in the morning it definitely is a little bit less firm or has some dew from the morning, so that makes it a touch easier.

But even that, you know, I hit like a 3-wood like almost 300 today, so that's how firm that it's playing. I'm sure it's going to get firmer throughout today.

It's nice to have the first round under your belt. Yeah, that's why I think it's really important to just play smart and have a good strategy around the golf course.

Q. You started working with Sean Foley during the break?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, like month, month and a half ago started working with him. Obviously super easy as he's in Orlando.

Q. Anything key in particular that he's helped you change?

LYDIA KO: Not a lot. He asked me the question, Hey, if somebody asks you what are you working on, what are you going to say? I was like -- I said I'm just putting -- we're just getting into a position at the start of the swing to make sure that I can hit it freely and not like manipulate it.

So, yeah, it's actually -- he hasn't ripped anything apart. He said what I had there was still pretty good. So very small things. I've been looking at lots of my videos or swing videos. Kind of weird to Google or YouTube

yourself, but I've been doing that to just see my swing as an amateur.

He's I think gotten me not to think too much about the lines of everything. I've tried to change my mindset of not trying to take a video of my swing every single time I'm on the driving range.

Just going out there, and if the ball is going the way I think it's going, then just play wit it. It doesn't need to look like a perfect swing for me to just play golf.

Q. He can be philosophical at times. Anything he's said that helped you mentally?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, he's very -- obviously comes with a lot of intelligence and experience, so he's I think -- I think he's kind of cleared my mind in the golf area and off it as well.

For me, I've been asking him a lot of questions. Hey, I've heard this. Is this right. And he's like no or yes or whatever his idea on it.

So I think when somebody kind of gives you that clarification then you're like, Okay. That's something I don't need to worry about. But he obviously has so much experience, so it's really cool to be able to hear some of the different situations he's been in with different players.

You know, obviously he's worked a lot -- well, a long time Annie and Sara Jane Smith as well.

Yeah, I think we're trending in the right direction.

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