

The LPGA Drive On Championship

Sunday, January 28, 2024

Bradenton, Florida, USA

Bradenton Country Club

Nelly Korda

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, we are joined by the LPGA Drive On Championship champion, Nelly Korda. You got nine of these things. How special was this one, the playoff, in your hometown? Just take us through the emotions.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, definitely not a boring day. The amount of support I received this week was unbelievable. I'm so grateful for it and so surprised with how many people came out and watched.

They kept me in it. I didn't think I even had a chance, and then obviously making the eagle on 17 I knew that I needed a birdie on 18 to even have a chance it get into a playoff.

Just wow. Good ole Nelly fashion making it dramatic.

Q. I was going to say, especially these past two rounds, but always seemed like you were at the top, someone would creep up, but then inevitably here you are. Had the eagle-birdie finish last round and same thing here. How does that speak to your resilience and being able to find a way?

NELLY KORDA: I'm not going to lie and say that there weren't doubts and negative thoughts in my head. Fortunately I have an amazing teammate, caddie, right next to me that I get to share the journey and the gray hairs with.

He kept me in it a good bit as well as the crowd.

Q. What did he say to you specifically down the stretch?

NELLY KORDA: When I made that double on hole 15 he just told me, hey, listen, you're still tied for the lead. Let's go. Come on. He was just -- he pretty much told me to get my head out of my mmm, so...

But I like that. I like when he tells me that I need to get my head out of my ass.

Q. What was it like playing alongside Megan throughout the day? Was it different than a...

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I think it was different compared to the first two days that we played. There was more on the line. I think we both were a little bit more serious. At the end of the day we were still talking. We were still laughing out there.

But she played really well on the front nine, and I -- when she hit it close on I think the first par-5 on the front nine I told Jay, I'm going to need to buckle down. She's playing really well.

Q. Was that Jess you were talking to?

NELLY KORDA: It was, yeah. It was Jess.

Q. What did she have to say about being on the edge of her seat?

NELLY KORDA: She was like I thought he were going to send me into labor. (Laughter.) Thankfully baby is still in belly, so we're good. (Laughter.) Yeah.

Q. I know all of your wins are special. What does this mean to get it done in front of these fans and this super supportive crowd? You spoke to it on the green.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, every win has a story. This one was definitely -- just with the struggles of last year and just with today as well, I thought I completely lost it. Being in my hometown and having the hometown support was incredible. I didn't think this many people would show up. Even on the first day, Thursday, the amount of people that were out here supporting was incredible.

I couldn't have done it without all their positive energy.

Q. I know last year might have been a little frustrating, in the top 10 so many times. How gratifying is it to get it done this early in the year when everything else is going on this season?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I definitely at the beginning of the year -- I would never say golf is easy, but the Top 10s were flowing in a sense. I was just flowing, playing well, but I



could never take that step of winning.

I didn't play my best golf last week, and thankfully I was so thankful that my -- that Jamie, my coach, came out for the first three days of this event and that we could put some good work in for this week. I just said my Jamie. My coach Jamie.

Q. Could you walk us through what was going through your mind on the last putt? That had to be nerve-wracking.

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I was just trying to dial into the spot on the cup. I knew it was going to sneak left to right and I was looking at the left edge and trying to make a good stroke.

Q. Can we go back to regulation. Can you take us through the eagle and then the second shot on 18?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, so the eagle, I didn't necessarily hit my first shot great off the tee. I hit a 3-wood, which I've like hit a different club there every day. Yesterday I hit a 7-wood off the tee.

Today I hit a 3-wood and had a perfect 3-wood in. Jay it would me that bunker has been good to us so just aim at the bunker. I knew the wind was off the left and knew that I had to make an eagle. I knew that I had to just pretty much have an unbelievable finish to catch Lydia.

And yeah, I hit this amazing like high 3-wood; landed perfectly. I probably had just over 20 feet and rolled it dead center.

On the last hole, I kind of floated my -- I actually wanted to hit more of a penetrating 7-iron and I floated it a tiny bit, and that's why it came up a little bit short. Sometimes you just need to get lucky, and I think that's just the golf gods gave me a little present there.

Q. Was there something specific that Jamie said to you early this week, a swing thought that really propelled you?

NELLY KORDA: Gosh, I was hitting it even so good last week. Like I was giving myself so many opportunities, but he just told me to groove. Like just to relax and to groove. He loves that word.

That's what I tried to do this week.

Q. Are you going to tell the commissioner that this event needs to come back next year?

NELLY KORDA: I mean, look at the crowds we had. It was amazing. I can't be the only one to say that -- I feel like the support that we all received this week was amazing. It's always nice to come to a town like this that the entire town gets behind the event.

It makes it way more -- it makes it really fun playing in front of them, but there is just a different energy that you get.

Q. Just talk about the course itself. Between the conditions and all that, just what kind of -- I lost my question.

NELLY KORDA: How was the golf course?

Q. Speak to kind of the difficulties of it and the intricacies of it.

NELLY KORDA: Honestly, the first three days played completely different to today. Even just playing to the playoff and playing my last, 18th hole, I had a 7-iron in the first time I played 18; then I had a 9-iron in and then I had a 6-iron in.

It was just completely different golf course. The first three days I had a wedge, a 58 degree and a pitching wedge again. So just in general, the golf course was playing severely different compared to the first three days.

And the defense of the golf course is just the greens. It's not an easy golf course at all. When the winds pick up the fairways are bouncy, firm, fast. You just have to be positioned really well and miss to the right sides. Donald Ross, yeah.

Q. Just what will you take away from a this week in terms of momentum and building off it?

NELLY KORDA: Well, probably no momentum because I have seven weeks off. So, yeah, just knowing that even after a tough year that I can still win out here and I just need to relax a little bit more, do any working keep my head down, and keep pressing on.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much. Congratulations again.

NELLY KORDA: Thank you.

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