

CME Group Tour Championship

Friday, November 19, 2021

Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

Lydia Ko

Quick Quotes

Q. How are feeling about your start overall?

LYDIA KO: Yesterday I thought was a little bit rusty. Didn't hit the ball that great; didn't putt that great either.

Today I hit the ball extremely well. I feel like I left a few putts there that was so close to going in but didn't, but that's kind of been the case last week as well. I hit the ball really well.

But you know what? As long as I keep giving myself opportunities and take it one shot at a time, I feel like all I can do is put a good roll on it.

That's kind of been the focus. It's not easy out there. I felt like Jin Young and I made it feel a little easier because we were both hitting the ball fairly well.

I think around a course like this when it's breezy, if you're hitting a lot of fairways and greens it's good. Just got to be patient out there.

Q. Thursday you completed your 70th round of the season to officially qualify to the Vare Trophy. With all you achievements in your young career, where would that recognition rank for you when you've seemingly all but won it come Sunday?

LYDIA KO: That would be, you know, pretty awesome. I was really close a few years ago and it was down to In Gee, and I think that's kind of the case in this year as well.

I think I made a bogey on the 71st hole and she made a birdie on the 72nd and she just overtook me. Just shows that golf, you never know until that putt drops on the last hole.

I'm just trying to play the best golf I can. I've been really not thinking too much about the Vare. All those awards and everything, they come at the end of you playing well, so I'm just trying to play the best I can this week.



If I get it, it would definitely be a huge honor.

Q. We have a video from a St. Jude Research Hospital patient for you.

LYDIA KO: Oh. Oh, cute.

Q. I haven't even played it.

LYDIA KO: No, the face. (Video played.)

Q. As you heard, that is Alexander. Just your reaction?

LYDIA KO: First off, I didn't even see the video and so cute. Look at that smile. What is -- I don't really know where he is or like what patient he is, but it's like -- seeing that is like so inspiring and motivating. I feel like I'm going to cry.

Yeah, you know, like seeing that smile is -- obviously he's at the hospital and I'm sure there are days where he's having tougher types than all of us.

I complain that I got a zit on my cheek. You know, this kid, he's a fighter, and you know, like really taking it day by day. To see him support and root for me, it means a lot.

I think it just shows like how grateful you should be for what you have. There are people that go through so many different things. Could be mental illnesses, physical illnesses, different things.

Just to see that smile, the support that Alexander gave to me, I would love to give that support to Alexander, and hopefully one day I'll be able to meet him. It's really inspiring, and I think this just makes me -- I think it made me tear up just seeing like how bright he is.

We have days like where I miss a birdie putt and I sometimes feel like my whole world is coming down. But there is a kid like Alexander that's smiling and having -- as if the world is perfect with rainbows and unicorns. I think that's super cool, so it was very touching.

Q. Is there a message you would like to look into the camera and tell Alexander?



LYDIA KO: Hey, Alexander, I know we haven't officially met, but thank you so much for your video. I don't know if I'm just very emotional, but you got me a little teared up there.

It means so much that you support me and you watch the LPGA, and hopefully our paths will cross and we'll be able to see each other on the golf course.

I wish you all the best, and just keep that beautiful smile, because that warms my heart as well.

Q. Awesome. Thank you. Jin Young said that you are your arguably her favorite player to play with. Why do you think that is?

LYDIA KO: Same last name? No, I don't know. You know, I haven't had many opportunities to play with Jin Young. It isn't been a pairing we been in a lot.

I'm a fan of her and of her golf. I think her demeanor on the golf course is great. She's very even keel, and the level of golf she's been playing has been -- impressive is an understatement.

So, yeah, I think when we're out there playing, we're just having a good time, having a good laugh, talking about golf, nongolf things.

You know, over the times that we have played together, I think we've just like gone comfortable to talk about all sorts of things. I think as players, even though over our shots we're focused, we're still trying to have a lot of fun out there.

I think when I play with her, she's super fast as well and I'm not the fastest player in sort of the speed. She kind of gets it going and she always plays great, so I feel like I watch and spectate and also like learn from to the different shots that she hits, too.

Q. Is it more impressive how she played today considering that her wrist has been bothering her, as someone that's dealt with injuries, too?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, she said she hasn't done a single warmup since last week as well. Yesterday I said, Did you warmup today? She was like, No, I didn't. Injuries are no fun.

You know, golf is hard enough playing with 100% health and beautiful weather, but to have lingering injury, it's one thing to just feel pain, but when you know at the back of your mind that you could feel pain, you kind of back out of it.

So the level of golf she's been playing with that shows she's a grinder, and, yeah, you know, hopefully we all finish the season off strong.

Q. For your game today, how much is it the momentum carrying on to basically put yourself right there in contention again this week?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, yesterday I thought even though I shot 3-under it was very rusty, I would say. Didn't have great long game. Didn't putt overly well. Just hitting fairways and greens, but not really there.

Today I thought my ball striking was good. Apart from pretty much one drive I hit everything really solid. My iron, like the contact and all that was much better.

I feel like even last week I left a lot of putts out there. That was kind of the case again today. At the end of the day, all I can do is keep hitting solid shots and being committed over it, and whatever the result is, it's going to be.

So, yeah, definitely having played well the last couple weeks, it does feed off momentum. You know, I think when you're in a run of playing well you feel like even if things aren't that good you're able to reach back. It doesn't feel like it's out of reach as far, yeah.

Q. Sean was saying earlier this week that you're still doing the same drill or drills that you worked on like your very first lesson with him. What is that?

LYDIA KO: Making sure that I line up right, straight. I have a tendency to aim right, so Sean's like, Oh, my God, is she still aiming right after over a year?

So he's checking my alignment. I have a drill where I just have like a little kid's toy soccer ball between my wrists, and that really keeps it very simple and me not manipulating anything.

Just hitting a few irons off high tees, and those are kind of always the drills that I've been doing and I've continued to do.

So sometimes it's a little bit more of the high tees; sometimes a little bit more of the ball, so it's very circumstantial.

But those two and hitting fairway bunker shots are probably my three biggest drills that Sean gave me.

Q. Is it funny how a kid's toy or like teeing it up high and hitting it, is it funny how that can have such a big

impact during the course of a round?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, I actually had a smaller ball that had Elsa on it, so it was even cuter before.

Q. What happened to that one?

LYDIA KO: I don't know. I misplace a lot of things. It's one of those things that got misplaced.

But, yeah, you know, it's simple things, right? Sometimes gadgets, you pay X amount of money for a certain gadget and that works; sometimes small things like that does its job as well.

Just shows it's got to fit the player. I'm sure that's not a drill for everyone, yeah.

Q. As long as you don't misplace a TrackMan or something like that.

LYDIA KO: Yeah, I've good at GC Quad, so let's not misplace that. That would be very costly day, yeah.

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