

# CME Group Tour Championship

Tuesday, November 15, 2022

Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

## Jin Young Ko

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome inside the virtual and onsite media center here at the CME Group Tour Championship. I'm pleased to be joined by defending champion Jin Young Ko. We will get things started with you, Jin young. Welcome back to Naples.

JIN YOUNG KO: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: What's it like being back in this environment that you've played so well at before?

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, I have great memories in here. Last two years I had two wins, so I'm happy to be here. And I like to play this golf course, but it's not easy, but I have great memories. So hopefully this week same as last two years.

THE MODERATOR: You are a two-time defending champion of this event. What is it about this golf course that brings out the best in your game?

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, 2020 I played just four events, but I won this tournament, and last year I had great season and then after the summer.

So, well, I think I was thinking last year and I focus really well on the course. And a lot of good players behind me, and they trying to follow me, but I was nervous because Nelly was there and Nasa and many good players.

I did my best. So I had a win, and hopefully this week too.

THE MODERATOR: What do you like most about Tiburón Golf Course?

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, greens are fast, and the course are tough. It's Bermuda, so it's not easy to Korean players.

THE MODERATOR: I know there's been a little bit of rain. This course was impacted slightly by Ian a month ago and Hurricane Nicole last week. Were there any changes? I know you were able to practice this morning. Did you feel



any changes on the course?

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, not really. Just around the green, the grass a little longer than last two years. But I played golf really early last two days, so I didn't check yet. I was going in the afternoon the conditions, so I'm going to check tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Before I open it up to the group, what are you specifically working on as you head into the season-ending event?

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, just don't think about too much. Now in my mind I have a lot of things from golf or from life, so I want to just clarify in my mind. Just one tournament left, so I'm just going to tough it out.

#### Q. How is your wrist?

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, it's ok, but not good. But it's ok. Last tournament.

#### Q. Can you tell us what the pain level is on a scale of 1 to 10, and which shots hurt the most?

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, out of 10, 7 or 8 now.

#### Q. What was it in Korea at the BMW?

JIN YOUNG KO: Inflammation.

THE MODERATOR: Inflammation?

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, thank you. When I was in Korea just out of 2 or 3.

#### Q. So it's way worse?

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah. Practice a little too much.

#### Q. Oh, okay. So 2 was really bad. So is it when you hit it in the rough, or which shots are the most difficult for you?

JIN YOUNG KO: Every shot.

#### Q. You feel pain on every shot?



JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah.

**Q. Oh, wow.**

JIN YOUNG KO: Even chipping, yeah.

**Q. Is it worse than last year at this event?**

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah.

**Q. Yeah, goodness. How does that impact your swing when you know that pain is about to come?**

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, it's hard to think I'm fine like this because I know I'm painful here. So when I was gripping, I'm painful already from take-away since my swing. But it's hard, but only I can do just medicine and just tape on it. Just trying to play, yeah. Nothing to do.

**Q. Last year you still managed to win here even with the pain. What are you doing this year to try and rest it? Are you limiting your practice at all like you did last year?**

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, I didn't practice last two days at the range. Same as last year.

But I played golf on the course last two days. So, yeah, I know my swing right now, so I don't want to practice hard with this hot weather. I want to just protect my wrist during the tournament.

**Q. The last few weeks have been some of the most difficult that you've had since joining the LPGA Tour. Would this stretch compare to any other time, or would you say this is one of the most difficult?**

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, it's first time to difficult situation in my life I have, but I think I need time like this because I need to think myself.

Last few years I played really well, and I was ranking since over three or four years, so I don't have much time to think myself. So I wanted to think myself. But, well, hopefully my swing or my games are getting better for next year, next season. So I'm ready to practice already before next season, so yeah.

**Q. With your pain level as high as you say it is, why do you continue to keep playing out here?**

JIN YOUNG KO: Well, I just want to know what problem in my game right now. (Speaking Korean)

THE INTERPRETER: Until she flew to the States she was

thinking of should I go back to States or not to play two games until she gets on the plane. Even though she is having a hard time right now, the two games will make her stronger. She has to feel something from this pain and her difficult situation.

**Q. She wasn't sure she wanted to play?**

THE INTERPRETER: She was thinking should I go to the States or not until...

She changed her flight, so originally we were supposed to come on Saturday, but she was thinking let's go early Thursday and then practice more for two last games.

**Q. What have you learned about yourself during this difficult time?**

JIN YOUNG KO: Golf is hard (laughing), and I don't know what happened last few years with me (laughing).

THE MODERATOR: Golf is hard. I think a lot of people can relate to that. Even at the beginning of the season, though, you came away with a win. You came away with a couple top tens. When you think about this season as a whole, how do you assess it?

JIN YOUNG KO: (Speaking Korean.)

THE MODERATOR: When you think about the season as a whole, how does she assess it? How does she rate this season compared to other times in her career?

THE INTERPRETER: After she won the Singapore HBC she thought it was a great start and then she can do better. But as time goes, her result was not, like, that great as she thought. Now she's thinking so she can be stronger.

THE MODERATOR: Have you done anything differently mentally preparing for these last two events in Florida than maybe at any other point of your career? As you say, you've got things going on personally and in golf. What do you do to stay mentally okay through all of it?

JIN YOUNG KO: Just two more tournaments left, so I'm just going to tough it out.

THE MODERATOR: Tough it out?

JIN YOUNG KO: That's it.

**Q. What do you feel like that has been the biggest challenge for you this year?**

JIN YOUNG KO: Just patience with my game and don't



cry, big smile (laughing).

**Q. Is there any additional treatment or surgery or anything that you can do during the offseason to help your wrist?**

JIN YOUNG KO: I'm just think I'm going to shot blood spinning or nothing too -- treatment, only ice or medicine. So I just think I'm going to shot blood spinning.

**Q. Have you tried that before, or would that be a first?**

JIN YOUNG KO: No, no. I heard it's really painful, so I'm worried.

**Q. Nelly was talking on Sunday about when she had the blood clot, the uncertainty was the hardest thing for her not knowing when she would be able to play again or what the future looked like, how much this was going to impact her. I would assume you're feeling very uncertain too not knowing how long this wrist injury is going to last. How much does that consume your thoughts just in terms of the longevity of this injury?**

JIN YOUNG KO: Same as Nelly. Yeah, I think, yeah. Yeah, I'm worried about my wrist, how long this takes, like, injury. So I'm worried, but I don't know.

I think a lot of players has injury on this tour, so I don't want to say, like -- I don't want to say I'm sick more than any player is like this. This is my fault because this is my body. I didn't any care of my body, so it's... (speaking Korean).

THE INTERPRETER: She thinks she didn't take care of her body by herself. That's why it caused the problem on her wrist.

**Q. Just overwork?**

JIN YOUNG KO: I think so, yeah.

**Q. Lydia Ko is coming in here in a little bit, and I'm just curious. You're not too far apart in age. What you first remember about -- I think you were playing on the KLPGA when Lydia first started playing on the LPGA. What you were thinking of what she was doing all those years ago as a teenager?**

JIN YOUNG KO: (Speaking Korean.)

THE INTERPRETER: (Off microphone.)

**Q. When did you first meet Lydia, do you remember?**

JIN YOUNG KO: I think 22 years old when I was.

**Q. A while ago.**

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, six or seven years ago.

**Q. In Korea?**

JIN YOUNG KO: In Korea, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: To wrap it up from me, the winner of this year's tournament gets \$2 million. It is the largest first prize in the history of women's golf. A two-parter question. One, would there be any specific purchases if you were to win the \$2 million? What does that just mean for the growth of the LPGA and women's golf in general to have a \$2 million winner prize?

JIN YOUNG KO: First question, I would say I want to buy Ferrari, the car.

THE MODERATOR: A Ferrari, all right.

JIN YOUNG KO: And second question, yeah, it's good for us. So I hope the other tournaments, the prize getting higher too. Fingers crossed.

THE MODERATOR: Fingers crossed. Thank you for joining us, and best of luck this week.

JIN YOUNG KO: Thank you.

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