

# LOTTE Championship presented by Hoakalei

Thursday, April 13, 2023

Ewa Beach, Oahu, Hawaii, USA

Hoakalei Country Club

## Christina Kim

### Quick Quotes

**Q. Here with Christina Kim. What a day; 5-under 67 out there in challenging conditions. Holed out on 6 I heard. Tell me about that shot.**

CHRISTINA KIM: I did. It was 168 yards out. I had a dog yapping in the middle of my swing so I was very happy to make contact. Hit it down the left-hand side, which generally with the way that that hole is constructed you want to kind of favor the middle to the right-hand side of the fairway.

So it was a little bit of an awkward angle, 168. Pin was all the way up in the front. It was a front hole location, excuse me. And I just said, this is going to be one of those shots where you just dead hand it, club up, remove any spin, land it short, have it trundle up, and then somewhere around there, and it was pretty perfectly executed.

I don't say that very often. I'm my biggest critic. So I was very pleased with that. I was like, I don't have to putt.

**Q. I was going to ask what the reaction was. Played solid golf today. Ending with a birdie on the last hole. What did you find today, maybe you learned something from yesterday that you carried over?**

CHRISTINA KIM: Well, it was a number of things. One, this is my first event of the 2023 season. Yes, I'm starting my 21st season on the LPGA Tour. Stuff is scary. I still want it so bad, and so the first eight holes or so yesterday I was white knuckling it. It was just amazing to be so terrified.

And I remember a buddy of mine, EJ, I played with him in the pro-am on Sunday here. We been talking on the phone. He just has like -- every now and again you meet people that just have these unbelievable things that stick in your head.

We were talking about basically short never goes in. I could not get a ball to get to the hole for the first eight



holes, and that's just one of those things where it's like, oh, I'm strangling the putter.

You know, he was talking about -- giving me an anecdote about a kid that he mentors, talking about just the mentality of the game.

I chipped in for birdie on 15 yesterday. That was awesome. I remember the last three holes I was like, okay, let's -- what are we doing now? It's like, no, no, no, bring it back home. Just keep doing what you're doing.

I was able to come in and go 1-under in my last three holes, which was pretty awesome.

Yesterday, again, really challenging conditions. Today was just the same thing: Just ride it and enjoy the ride. Just keep doing what you're doing. I've been doing this for so damn long and I love the fact that it still terrifies me.

**Q. One last one from me. First 67 since last April.**

CHRISTINA KIM: Did I shoot 67 in April?

**Q. April last year.**

CHRISTINA KIM: Wilshire maybe.

**Q. Yeah, Wilshire. But, you know...**

CHRISTINA KIM: Fair enough.

**Q. I know you made some changes. Switched golf courses where you play out of now, Golden Ocala. What did you find maybe in the off-season or even over the last year that you feel more comfortable out here?**

CHRISTINA KIM: Yeah, you know, I moved. I left Orlando. I was in Orlando for 19 years and I'm now in Ocala. Yes, like you said, I'm now a member at Golden Ocala Equestrian and Country Club. It's a new home for me. I've known the guys there for over a decade. It's such an amazing place and so warm. My old course, Orange Tree Golf Club, amazing people as well. There is just something about Ocala. It's quieter, a little more chilled out.



My best friend, my ride or die, Destiny Lawson plays on the Epon Tour and is from Ocala, and it sounds crazy, but she brought me to a pirate bar named mutiny, and that's my jam now. So I've like rediscovered myself.

Sometimes it's hard to feel like -- when I'm home it's sometimes hard to feel like I'm being seen as Christina Kim the human being. It's always Christina Kim the golfer, especially being in Orlando.

So, you know, took me to a rock bar. For me, two of the biggest discovery was enjoying working on my short game over at Golden Ocala, whiskey, and Doc Martens. That's about it.

**Q. I know you've been to Hawai'i a few times. This is the second year it's being played here. Low round for you today. Curious about this golf course in particular and maybe what kind of stands out about it?**

CHRISTINA KIM: Well, this is my first year here at Hoakalei. I did have to take last year off for a number of reasons. Your girl was going through it.

So this is my first year here. I love the fact that it's an Ernie Else design. We're able to come to a championship golf course from a modern-day architect. I think that's really, really cool.

I love the green complexes. I know they had a new super here for what, four months, four weeks, whatever it's been. Golf course is absolutely immaculate. Winds are very consistent, which I appreciate, because it's east-northeast all damn day.

It provides some beautiful challenges and there is a lot of -- a touch of Pete Dye where you sit there and you're like, how in the world am I going to be able to hit that fairway or that green, like on No. 9. You get there and you're like, there is so much room.

So just a little bit of that mind game that's being played as well. At the end of the day, I mean, got 18 tee boxes, 18 greens, give me a tee time, let's go.

**Q. Right on. Curious, were surprised a couple of the late scores were really low yesterday in the afternoon. Did the afternoon play any different yesterday to today?**

CHRISTINA KIM: No. It was harder yesterday. It was probably blowing a good six miles an hour consistently stronger yesterday afternoon.

I don't know what Frida done did yesterday. That was a pretty amazing score that she shot. Incredible player. Seminole. She's gotten a lot of practice in at Golden Ocala over the years actually.

No, it's just these girls are damn good.

**Q. Yeah and lastly, you mentioned that this is your first tournament. What made you decide that Hawai'i would be the place you would start your season?**

CHRISTINA KIM: Like you said, I've been here a number of times. Handful of reasons. It was the first event I've gotten into. I've had to do qualifiers for the last couple events, so this was the first tournament that I was entered and got in to play.

You know, I mean, I've got ties to the island. I wear Oahu Golf apparel. Been wearing them over five years. Tim Hazelgrove, CEO and founder, he's on the bag this week. You'll see him out there sporting his eight inch Mohawk. We got hats we're giving out to people all during the tournament.

It's just such a special place. There really is nowhere like Hawai'i. It's beautiful. The vibe is incredible. The people are amazing. We're in paradise. Why wouldn't you want to be here?

**Q. Two questions about Ocala.**

CHRISTINA KIM: Where is it?

**Q. I know where it is. I was in Gainesville.**

CHRISTINA KIM: Right on. Nice.

**Q. Are you into horses, and any cool celebrity sightings?**

CHRISTINA KIM: So I'm not a horse girl. Full disclosure. Like I said, I'm much more into my whiskey and Doc Martens.

I've been to the World Equestrian Center and it's staggering the size of it. It's absolutely incredible.

In terms of celebrities, we've got some pretty awesome people that are members at Golden Ocala. You know, Michael Collins, America's caddie if you want to call him that, ESPN's caddie. He's a really good friend of mine. He lives in Gainesville and has a membership there as well, and we'll go out there and shoot the crap, just go out and play a few holes, whatever.

I don't think about people as celebrities.

**Q. No Travolta yet?**

CHRISTINA KIM: I haven't come across him. If I have, I haven't noticed. I care about the people, who they are, and not what they are.

**Q. I only ask because there are a few there.**

CHRISTINA KIM: There are. I've probably walked right by someone and not even realized it.

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