

HSBC Women's World Championship

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Republic of Singapore

Sentosa Golf Club

Danielle Kang

Quick Quotes

Q. You got out of the blocks with a really fast start today. How was the front nine? Talk about that.

DANIELLE KANG: I think it's just I got off to a really hot start. It was just getting so hot at one point. And unfortunately I think I just kind of checked out from golf for a little bit because I was more focused on trying to stay cool. And I haven't been in this kind of heat in a while.

And, yeah, I'm playing great, though. So I'm not really worried about what I did today or where I finished.

Q. Obviously you got off to a cracking start. Your front nine was flawless. What were you doing?

DANIELLE KANG: I was hitting the ball really well. I think my body got lazy towards the end. And I was striking it really well, giving myself a lot of opportunities.

And towards the end, I didn't give myself opportunities; instead, I was just giving myself par opportunities, which was hard, especially when the winds are gusting like all over the place.

It was very swirly today. I think the storm is rolling in. And it's just kind of -- you think it's down and then all of a sudden you get a gust of into, and then you keep having 50-, 60-footers.

And it was just tough to judge towards the end of the round today.

Q. But so strong, your finish. You're lying second. In fact, I think in every tournament you played this year, when you finished your first round, you've been in first or second place; is that right?

DANIELLE KANG: Am I in second today?

Q. I think you are. I think 5-under is leading.

DANIELLE KANG: Oh. Okay. Well, that's good.

Q. Yeah. So, I mean, that's pretty amazing. You're a



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little bit frustrated, and yet --

DANIELLE KANG: Yeah, the finish is very frustrating. I'm not going to be happy with my round. It doesn't matter how well you start. If you finish bogey, bogey, it's just not a good finish.

And it doesn't matter if I make a bogey on the first hole or the 18th hole, it's just how I make bogeys.

But I gave myself good chances. I hit some good shots. But I just misjudged the wind and misjudged the lie.

Towards the end I think the golf course kind of firmed up a bit, and then it started running out. I really couldn't focus. It was just -- I don't know what I'm doing out there sometimes.

Q. It's still extremely well played. Tell me what do you feel you did over the Christmas break to have such an incredibly strong start to the season? You've had the most amazing start to the year. What is it that clicked or what do you think the biggest difference is for you this year?

DANIELLE KANG: To be honest, I've been working at the UFC Performance Institute. And my entire team there has built me -- they're helping me build into another level of athlete. Like I wasn't banking on the fact that I was going to play better golf, but I wanted to surround myself with people that were stronger than me, older than me, and faster than me.

And they work harder in the gym, and how they fluctuate their body weight and what they can do with their bodies, like I wanted to be around that.

And I had a close tie to martial arts and all, but my mental coach, Micah, has really, really helped me being engaged in what I needed to and executing the shots in front of me. My strength coach, Duncan, I don't even know what kind of workouts we're doing, but it's nothing close to the golf course I've ever done. And I feel stronger in my -- I feel more consistent over the ball.

But I can't like understate the work that I've done with Butch and my coach Pat as well, my short game coach.

It's just putting in the effort and the time and knowing



what to do like on and off the golf course, I think that's helped me to be more stable and consistent. And really focusing on nutrition and fitness and how that all ties into the golf game has really helped me, I think, improve.

Q. And so everyone you're training with is at UFC?

DANIELLE KANG: Yeah. My strength coach, my mental coach, my physio, my nutritionist. Nic, my nutritionist, Nicole, has gone out of her way to figure out what's going to help me perform the best I can.

I got to talk to her after today because I don't know how shaky I got. And I just -- I mean, the heat kind of got to me. And I think that's my fault a bit more than, you know, what kind of food I can eat. And I didn't eat a lot on the golf course, and how the energy level can be helpful on the golf course and heat and not heat and et cetera.

So those do play into aspect. I'm kind of disappointed in how I finished is because I didn't feel like there was anything else but -- it wasn't really technique. I can't really blame anything. I just couldn't see the shot. I didn't feel that execution that I felt.

And unfortunately I did the best I can. I was super engaged. And that's all I can do. And I've been telling all the media since day one of this year that it's the process that I'm more focused about.

Like I'm happy with the way I'm playing, obviously, like I won, I'm finishing second and being in contention, like even today I knew that I was on top of the leaderboard, but making even six birdies out there or seven -- seven birdies out there, I believe, yeah, like giving myself that opportunity, it's a 72-hole game.

Q. And hanging around the institute, is there any fighters that you're kind of getting to know? And you're meeting very different people. Like have you gained any great insights from them?

DANIELLE KANG: Honestly, this fighter named Jiyeon Kim, like she just lost her fight, actually. I couldn't watch her fight on Saturday. But she lost in the decision. But I -- the people that work out in there, they inspire me to be better and be a better athlete.

It's because they do something that I've never done. And obviously it's different. Like fighting and golf is completely different. And I get that. But being in that kind of mindset, pushing your body to the next limit, that dedication is what really is inspiring to me to see.

And it helps me be motivated and dedicated to what I need to do. Because it's not just golfers. It's not just making one putt. It's about the process of it. And like sometimes you can do everything right, and you lose.

And I think that learning that, but have you done everything that you can? Like in every aspect of being an athlete, like after going to the Olympic Games, learning like how these athletes train, I think that it's kind of an oversight in golf.

And I actually didn't believe the idea of that was going to help my golf game more so than anything. I went in there with kind of an open mind to see what it could help me do.

Q. There's a self-confidence that you get from knowing you're strong, you've done as much as you can for every aspect of everything.

DANIELLE KANG: To be honest, I think it's the confidence in my team, knowing that they're going to help me be the best athlete that I can be. They don't specialize in golf. Don't get me wrong. Like Duncan, my trainer, doesn't even know golf. He's going to hate the fact that I said this, but he hates golf. Doesn't watch. And he doesn't think it's -- he doesn't even consider it like -- I don't even know. It's not a sport that he just watches, I guess, is the best way I can say it.

And he doesn't -- he kind of understands the fundamentals of it, right, but him teaching me how to use my body, how to utilize the muscles and how to stretch and be able to engage and fire, he understands the fundamentals of an athleticism. So learning that. Like he told me that I didn't even know how to crawl.

Q. And is that quite refreshing in a way that you're speaking to people who they're not thinking about your golf game at all, but to see you as a person --

DANIELLE KANG: I believe so. I think it's really refreshing. And I've done a lot of work off the golf course and on the golf course. My entire schedule has been like -- I've never been more consistent. I've never been more on drills and really happy doing what I'm doing.

It's definitely different. But I absolutely love like how much I have to be engaged and motivated. If it was today, I know that I'm sitting down, and I'm not happy with the way I've finished, but I've done everything I can today to play the best that I can play. And I'm able to walk away being like, all right, like tomorrow is another day.

It's because, yeah, people can say you're 5-under through nine, like you should be 8-under, well, yes, obviously my dream, but I did everything I could. I ate when I needed -- I ate when I needed to eat. I packed the foods. I did the supplements. I was engaged. I knew what I needed to take, electrolytes, water, dehydrated, and like use the sun, stay away from the sun, and then whilst doing that like being focused on the golf game.

Q. It sounds like they kind of instilled a new level of professionalism.

DANIELLE KANG: Yes. It's another level of professionalism. And there is no complaining or whining. Like I wasn't feeling good today towards the back nine. I don't know why. But I'm not going to say that's why I played bad. I didn't even tell my caddie, and usually I tell them everything.

I believe that I could have felt better. But my techniques were there. I didn't execute a couple of the shots that I should have. I was more focused on the result and the process of certain swings. I know that. And it might be -- I don't know. It's not an external factor, it's all up to me.

So you're right. It's like understanding the new level of like professionalism. It's kind of cool.

Q. I like it. Really interesting. So unlike most ladies, you've just been proudly boasting about a weight gain. Can you talk about that.

DANIELLE KANG: I gained almost 7 kilos, 6, 7 kilos. I was weigh about 55, 56 kilograms, and now I'm about 61. I'm really proud of that weight is because I haven't been able to gain weight in years. And that had to do with whether it's stress, cortisol and leveling out the way I feel internally and externally, eating what's right and at the timings.

It's just the level of professionalism and how they've trained me to be an athlete, like I feel better. And I feel like I could engage.

And I think those things, like people telling me that I'm old now, I'm 29, and people have asked when I'm going to retire, it's interesting because when I walk into the UFC Performance Institute, UFCPI, these people are moms. Some of them are mothers. And they're older than me, and they're stronger, they're faster. And those things, just so much dedication.

Q. What do you think, particularly the weight gain, on course has helped with? Is it your length? Is it --

DANIELLE KANG: I'm less tired. I sleep better. I think it's just underestimating of like I do travel alone. It's a tough sport to travel alone. I have to figure out the food. And I have to eat out all the time. Figuring out how to eat, when to eat, how to have it accessible.

No, I don't have a manager. No, I don't have somebody presenting me food. Good for some people that has private jets and private chefs, but I can't afford that. That's not the job, that aspect that I'm in.

So being able to -- how do I -- but with that being said,

there are other sports, like you know you can make it work. So I could always look at it like these people have it better, but it's figuring out how to have it for yourself.

Q. And sometimes it's about making decisions yourself and empower yourself.

DANIELLE KANG: Yeah. Exactly. Some people could be like why don't you fly on private jets? I'm like, that doesn't matter to me. But, like, yeah, I might be tired. I might be more tired, or whatever. But this is what is in front of me. And then I have to work with that, figuring out a solution on how to be better with what it's given, and whether it's food, on how to eat -- I mean, I have not been able to gain weight in a long time.

So I'm like really happy. I don't feel like as girly right now. And I know that. It's like it's not a feminine body. Like I used to be a little bit leaner. I'm a bit bulkier. But I'm going to embrace it. People are asking me when I'm going to retire. I'd rather be bulkier and stronger than be lean and look like --

Q. You're really strong and proud.

DANIELLE KANG: Yeah, I'm proud of it. And then they tell me like it's okay to gain fat. Sometimes I gain -- at one point, a couple weeks ago, I gained too much fat. But eating like fattier foods, well, then my body learns to burn fat. Like those are the things that we're working on. It's helped.

Q. Fascinating.

DANIELLE KANG: Yeah, it is fascinating. But I don't know if that's supposed to help the golf game, but...

Q. I think anything that takes your mind off, you know, and takes you into a different place is actually really helpful. Because I think otherwise you could do your head in thinking about --

DANIELLE KANG: Yeah. It's different.

Q. Yeah. Good.

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