

HSBC Women's World Championship

Tuesday, 28 February 2023

Republic of Singapore

Sentosa Golf Club

Jin Young Ko

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome Jin Young Ko, our defending champion into the media center here at the 2023 HSBC Women's World Championship.

Defending champion, how does it feel to be back here at Sentosa Golf Club where you won just a year ago?

JIN YOUNG KO: I'm always happy to be here in Singapore, and I have a very memorable visit last year to this golf course. So I can't wait to play, and also, this week is going to be like second tournament on this year, so yeah, I have 20 more events maybe. So I look forward.

THE MODERATOR: I know the weather wasn't great as part of your defending champion duties and you were doing a photo, launch moment with some of your fellow players. Brooke was saying she was having trouble putting flowers in your hair. What was that whole moment like?

JIN YOUNG KO: We didn't do that last year but we tried some new things I think, and I wanted to put like good flowers, myself, but then they said it's going to be like put the other players here. For Brooke, I wanted to put this flower, it's like sweet. I couldn't get the flowers but it was funny and.

THE MODERATOR: Back at this golf course, somewhere you've played well on a lot of different occasions. What do you like so much about this golf course and how much does it suit your game.

JIN YOUNG KO: This week is huge difference than last year. I heard in this year in Singapore, they have a lot of rains in this golf course and Singapore as well. I played this morning, nine holes, and I checked the course. The fairways are really wet and the greens are, too. It's going to be a different from last year, but the whole shape, the greens, everything is perfect, like last year. So yeah, but I love this golf holes because it's not easy. Some -- some course easier but some holes is really difficult. So we need to get patient on the golf course. Sometimes we need to hit the flags or get some birdie or eagles, so I love that.



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THE MODERATOR: I wanted to talk about the off-season before we talk about the Sunday that you had in Thailand. Obviously you went to Vietnam and got some practice in. What training were you doing when you are with in Vietnam?

JIN YOUNG KO: Usually after the season, I had some breaks, like one month or three weeks, but I then take like a break after -- after the season end last night year, and I went to Vietnam for winter. I spent time with my swing coach and trainer, over a month. I worked on my swing of course, and my physically and mentally was really tired and tough, so I had -- I find -- found I'm trying to find out where is the good meditate place, and I found it.

I have meditation right now every morning, every night. I hope get better person, and professional golfer as well. I'm training hard in meditate and practice golf.

THE MODERATOR: I saw you spent some time in Finland, really cool pictures of the Northern Lights. You took that trip, was it by yourself in I imagine the golf clubs stayed at home.

JIN YOUNG KO: Yes, Matilda, she's from Finland, so I said I wanted to see the northern lights, and then she said, oh, then you should go in Finland. So she asked manager, who owns hotel in Finland to see Northern Lights. So she connected with him and me, and then we may met a lot of times. Then I found that place and I booked flight, hotel and aura chase and huskies and snowmobiles, everything, and she booked some for me. I had a great time in Finland.

Yeah, it was cool. And one of my highlights in my life was to go and watch Northern Lights in my life and I make it. After the Northern Lights, I went to Paris at Christmas and I had a great time. I've been to the Louvre Museum and Eiffel Tower, so it was cool.

THE MODERATOR: What was it like to be able to put golf away? I know that's a big thing to leave your golf clubs at home. What was that like to leave them in the closet?

JIN YOUNG KO: After the season, I practiced quickly and with my swing coach but I thought I needed time

break before the 2023 season. So I moved everything, and I spent just ten days in Europe. So it was fine.

Q. How do you prepare -- do you get energy --

JIN YOUNG KO: It seems like time flies fast considering it's already been a year since I won this event last year. The course conditions have changed since last year. I don't think how I will attack will be different but with a lot of rain, I'm going to need to prepare well for this week.

There were some tough times last year, but because of those times, I learned that I needed to practice right away, what I needed to do, and what I needed to work on. It was an important year for me.

Every time I come to Singapore, there's so many great food options. There's never been a time I didn't want to play at this event. I always want to come here. After I won last year, this rich guy made me a fan club here in Singapore. 27 points are needed to make it to the LPGA Hall of Fame, and I think I'm about two-third there and have about one-third remaining. So with that, the fan club has 27 members and I had great time with my fans, 27 people, somewhere, I don't know where it is, though.

THE MODERATOR: Let's chat about Sunday. You walked off the golf course with an eight-under 64. It had been a minute since that kind of low score for you, and you told me it was the first time in a while you shot four rounds under par and four rounds in the 60s. How excited were you to see all of the hard work you put at Vietnam and the rest in the off-season payoff with such a good score?

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, I hit some really well on the last Sunday, on last Sunday. I just say, I don't want to explain how many times I put in, like, swing working, or like work out. I just want to show my score.

I don't have word to describe what went down on that last round. I feel that I've managed to show true moments and that's all that matters at the end of the day.

THE MODERATOR: Coming into this week off a round like that, how much confidence are you feeling in your title defense?

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, it's a little -- it's kind of, I have pressure but I don't want to feel it. If I want to make one more defense this week, then I will focus more on my swing on the course.

THE MODERATOR: What is it like for you to manage expectations, like you said, I know there's pressure on you but you've handled it with grace in my opinion. How do you manage the expectations that maybe you have for yourself or other people have for you?

JIN YOUNG KO: Just meditate. Yeah, all the players has high expectation and that makes difficult and tired. So I don't want to make high expectation myself. Just look the ball and just hit it and just walk and then hit again, that's it.

Q. How different is it going to be for you --

JIN YOUNG KO: If I play better than last year, I can be more directing the ball again. But I don't want to make me tired, and also, I just -- if I win many times, it can be -- but it doesn't matter to me.

THE MODERATOR: One more from me, I know you're a foodie, you love your food; what have you eaten so far and what are you most looking forward to eating?

JIN YOUNG KO: I been to someplace yesterday after I just got in the hotel and I checked in, which then my whole luggage put in my room, and then I come out with my friend and I had maybe 20 pieces of dim sum. The finish time was 2:30, and after lunch, I went to the gym and then I worked out, maybe one hour. Then after that, at 5:00 I went to Jumbo restaurant to crabs and I had chilly crabs and pepper crabs and all the side dishes. I had great food in five hours.

THE MODERATOR: Is there more food on your list.

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, someone told me the egg tart is famous in Singapore. So I'm going to find out where is a good place after this.

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