

Meijer LPGA Classic

Sunday, June 20, 2021

Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

Blythefield Country Club

Nelly Korda

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Nelly, the 2021 Meijer LPGA Classic champion, your fifth LPGA Tour title. How does this one feel?

NELLY KORDA: Feels good. Actually really enjoyed today. Honestly, there has been times where on Sundays I really like haven't enjoyed it, like the stress kind of ate me and I didn't stay in the moment and enjoy playing golf on a Sunday in a final group.

But today I really enjoyed it and it was actually a really good battle between Leona and I. She definitely kept me on my toes.

Q. I was going to say, the competition looked fierce. You guys provided great entertainment on CBS this afternoon. What was it like competing head-to-head against her and just to have that battle back and forth throughout the whole 18?

NELLY KORDA: It was fun. As I said, she kept me on my toes. She played really well. She's a really solid player, and hopefully everyone was entertained. I was pretty entertained. A little stressed out, too, actually.

Q. There were a few times earlier in the front nine (indiscernible) How did you block that mentally, especially after 16, too, when you bogeyed and she birdied to lock back in mentally with a few holes left and to put your foot down and finish off?

NELLY KORDA: Honestly, I didn't start the day off well. I was not hitting fairways. I just -- the holes that I dominated on were the par-5s, I was scrambling for par. I told myself to stay in it, enjoy the moment, have fun. Talked to my caddie about anything just to kind of keep on going.

Hit a shot at a time. That's what he kept saying. Shot at a time and see if I could get an opportunity here and there, and I did. I made an eagle and then I made a pretty good birdie on that par-3. Unfortunately I three-putted the next hole, but that's golf. You're going to make mistakes.

Bounced back on 18.

Q. I know you said there are a lot of times you would like kind of let the stress overwhelm you on a Sunday like this. How did going into this playing free and having fun help you come out on top?

NELLY KORDA: You know, it's like an everyday kind of struggle. It's like one day you're with it, one day you're not. Some days you get more aggravated, some days you're okay with the mistakes. Today fortunately I was okay with the mistakes.

I knew there was still a lot of golf out there and I knew if I hit the fairway I had a good opportunity at birdie.

Q. So bounced back from missing the cut at the U.S. Open, to come out here and set a tournament record, you seemed to be surprised when they told you you had the lowest score in tournament history. Were you surprised by that?

NELLY KORDA: Definitely, yeah. If you told me at the U.S. Open that I was going to shoot 25-under I would be like, Yeah, right.

But I did a good bit of work back home. My dad was at every practice, a little boot camp with my dad. He actually is in Prague right now doing a little boot camp with my brother before Wimbledon.

So he's flying back and forth. I just worked on the right stuff and didn't really put too much pressure on myself this week, which I did at U.S. Open. I guess that was the key. Maybe I should learn from that again.

Q. Earlier in the week you and Sophia had the opportunity to walk through the course and you mentioned how much fun you had with her when she came to visit in Florida and walking around in your practice round with her, to get this win in her hometown after spending time with her, have you thought about how cool that is?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, it was really cool. She was at a



softball tournament and she texted my sister when I was on at 18, and she said she ran through the third fairway just to get to the green to watch me win, so that was really cool to see her and for her to be there.

Q. In terms of the Olympic team, pretty much a certainty now. (Indiscernible.)

NELLY KORDA: I still have a big event before that, so KPMG is next week. That's a major. That's what I'm focusing on. Wherever it takes me, I'll go.

Q. You talked about the nerves a little bit. (Indiscernible). Touch on that a little bit. I know when you saw that shot nearly go in the bunker had to...

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, definitely, right as I hit it I was like, Oh, no. I didn't have a good lie. Honestly one foot was in the bunker and I had to grip down on the shaft, so I hit it good and I got myself into birdie opportunity. This is actually the first time I've made a putt to win, so that felt nice, too.

Q. So you talked about you can feel the presence of the fans out there. Talk about the impact of them positively and negatively, for instance on the 16th. You couldn't see the green. You hit it up there. The fans down low with you, they cheered. Fans up top, silence. How that impacted you.

NELLY KORDA: Honestly, I love the fans. I missed that so much throughout the past year and a half. On 17 they were really giving me a lot of confidence. They were screaming my name, telling me, Let's go. When you get a crowd like that that's on your side it feels good and puts a smile on your face and kind of eases you.

As well as the opposite. When you have a lot of people watching you could get a little nervous, so it was a little bit of both.

Q. You shared yesterday how much Bubba's perspective resonated with you. Were there any moments in particular that his words helped you process?

NELLY KORDA: I just think today -- I just enjoyed myself honestly. I just kept telling myself, If I make a mistake, it's golf. Come on, it's golf. Like just keep on going. It's golf. That kind of like eased me up.

And I just had fun with my caddie. I was laughing out there a good bit, which on Sundays when I'm in the final group I forget to smile and laugh and I'm so zoned in on hitting these perfect shots and making sure I execute everything

perfectly that when something is off just a little bit I get so angry at myself and so hard on myself.

Today I was like, Okay, we take it how it is and just enjoy the moment.

Q. How do you see this new mentality helping you at KPMG next week?

NELLY KORDA: As I said, every week is a little different, so hopefully I carry it into next week.

Q. With the win, Meijer will be donating \$25,000 in your honor to a food bank of your choice. You've selected Kids Food Basket in Grand Rapids. First off, why staying in the Grand Rapids area instead of your home town, and what made Kids Food Basket the choice?

NELLY KORDA: I just felt like I wanted to stay in Grand Rapids. And also I love kids. I've always wanted to do something for unprivileged kids, and that's the first thing that popped into my head.

I felt like it was a good decision.

Q. Last one I have for you: You are the first two-time winner on the LPGA Tour this season. Just how difficult is it to find the winner's circle and how much more enjoyable are you finding it after some of that new perspective?

NELLY KORDA: Competition is getting fiercer every year. You see Patty won her first tournament and she's a major champion and she is pretty much a rookie. So the rookies out here are playing well. Leona is playing well. Everyone. Doesn't matter what nationality, Europeans are playing well, Americans are getting fierce.

I just think the girls are just starting to dominate. You go into a week back in the day I think you would say, oh, five or ten people could win. Now you look at the field and you're like, Anyone can take home the victory.

THE MODERATOR: Anything else anybody? Thank you for your coverage this week. Nelly, congratulations on the win. Nice travels.

NELLY KORDA: Bye.

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