

Meijer LPGA Classic

Sunday, June 19, 2022

Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

Blythefield Country Club

Jennifer Kupcho

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, what a day.

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Here with Meijer LPGA Classic for Simply Give champion, Jennifer Kupcho. Just walk me through the last two holes in the playoff. Obviously nerves were flowing. Take me through what was going through your head.

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I mean, I obviously hit it in that bunker during regulation. Didn't quite catch it good enough. But what my caddie said to me right before I tee'd off was, we made birdie from the rough two times this week, so give yourself some room on the bunker.

And I hit it straight at the bunker. It did go over obviously both times, but I think I had a little adrenaline.

Just to be able to then get up and hit the next shot, the first time I didn't have a very good yardage so really had to hit a controlled shot under pressure, and that was pretty cool.

Q. It was kind of a whirlwind of a day from you, period, full stop. Had an eagle, three birdies on the card, a double, two bogeys. Take me through what was going through your mind after that double and after that bogey. I know you're a pretty fiery player, so I'm sure there was some anger there.

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, honestly, when I got to 15 you said I looked at our standard bearer and I told myself, if I can get to 20 I'll win. That would've been true obviously. So that was kind of my goal after I got to that point.

I got to 19 and really just tried to keep going. Didn't really give myself very many shots coming down the stretch, but that was kind of the turning point, being able to tell myself, hey, you're not out of this. You're 15-under, like it's only five shots away. Let's go.

Q. In the past would that have been what Jennifer

thought?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Definitely not. I mean, I saw it at ShopRite a couple careers ago -- or maybe -- yeah, two years ago where I made double on I think it was 8 and I kind of just thought I was out of it the whole time.

I ended up not being out of it, but that's definitely what I would thought in the past.

Q. Do you think that's changed just because of the win you got at The Chevron Championship? You a little bit more relaxed. You know you can make them when you need to?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: I think so. I think I'm just more relaxed in general. Going into today's round I didn't feel nervous on the first tee. Felt like I was made to be there, so it definitely has given me confidence for sure.

Q. The shot into 18 in the playoff, was that as good a shot you hit all week? And once putt didn't go, how did you regather yourself then?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yes, I think was the best shot I hit all week. I definitely hit some very similar shots with longer clubs into par-5s, but, yeah, I mean I missed the putt. I almost missed the putt in regulation, the same putt.

That comes with a lot of nerves and a lot of shaking.

Q. When that last tap-in went in, obviously Leona had a very short putt. When your ball hit the bottom of the cup, did you think, that's the shot that might have won me the Meijer, or were you mentally preparing yourself for another playoff hole?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: I thought she was going to make it. When she hit it by the hole and I still had to putt from the fringe I thought to myself, that's not a gimme because I was just shaking and missed essentially a same-length putt.

But then once I made the tap-in, I mean, I was already looking it the rules official to go to the next hole, which was



No. 4. I thought she was in.

Q. It did lip out. Was that relief? Was it excitement? What was sort of your reaction there?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Honestly it was just shock. I think she went to Duke, I went to Wake Forest. Playing with her so much, she doesn't miss putts.

Yeah, I was really just shocked.

Q. Second win on tour. This was a pretty nerve-racking performance. Just kind of walk us through the feeling of picking up your second win on the LPGA Tour and how special it is.

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I think this one is even better than the first personally. I had such a big lead going into the final round at Chevron, so to come out of this one with, I mean, top-ranked players all over the place, the leaderboard was packed, within strokes, so it really was very close and I feel very proud of myself for coming out of it.

Q. If you do leaderboard watch, how do you kind of keep yourself in the moment of I just have to hit another golf shot rather than, oh, this is what so and so is doing? Was it difficult for you to do that? Is that pretty easy for you?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: I actually didn't look at leaderboard on the back nine. I saw on 18 that -- no, not 18, 8 -- that Nelly was not -- or was tied for first or not in first or something.

So I knew from that point that someone was ahead of her, so I just knew I had to go for it. When I got on the back nine I didn't know until I walked on to 18 green and the announcer said I was tied for the lead. I was like, oh, I'm tied for the lead. Cool.

So...

Q. One three-putted, right? Or short missed birdie putt?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, missed birdie putt.

Q. How do you grind through days when the putts just aren't falling?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Honestly, it's just that is what it is. I don't think anyone out here expects every putt to go in, especially not 15-footers.

You look at the make percentage and it's not that high, so I didn't really think much of it.

Q. (Indiscernible). To win on Father's Day, what does that mean?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: It's really special. I'm definitely excited to call him and talk to him after the round. I thought to myself this morning that I should call him, but I kept telling myself, no, like we'll call him of the round with the trophy in our hand, and I'm excited I can do that now, so...

Q. When you make the double early in the round, you know the scoring is always traditionally really, really low. I mean, is that tough to fight through?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, definitely. I think just telling myself that I'm not out of it, and honestly I'm -- I've always been a back-nine player and I really am a back-nine player. If you go back and look at my career as an am I don't do well as a start and then I come back and go super low on the back.

So I kept telling myself that.

Q. What club did you have in on the playoff hole?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Both 8-irons.

Q. It's a leaderboard full of world-class players. At the end of the week you're holding that trophy because why? What was the difference?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: I mean, I outplayed them I guess. I hate to say that because they all are great players, but I controlled what I can control and that was my game.

Q. You got your first win earlier this season at The Chevron Championship. First major win, LPGA Tour win. It had been a minute. I know you were pretty hungry for that first win. They say the second win is a harder. I know obviously the Chevron will always be special, but how special is this win compared to the first?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, it's really special. I think I kind of found myself in a funk all over the place since Chevron just trying to get my game back, get my head back where it needs to be.

So to come out here and play really great and to win, it's pretty cool.

Q. How were you able to manage the expectations? There had to be a ton of them.



JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I mean, it's all on myself. I think I'm just really competitive. Obviously people want me to win, but I just try to keep it on myself.

Q. And then final question: Obviously with the trophy goes a donation to a hunger charity of your choice. How excited are you to be able to contribute to this community in that way?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, I'm really excited. I think it's really great. One of my sponsors also does, Protiviti does an Eye on Hunger thing that also donates meals based on major birdies. I'm really excited to continue contributing to that, both Protiviti and this, it's really special for me.

Q. I know you said you weren't really looking at the leaderboard, but did you notice those crowds out here this week?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Oh, yeah.

Q. How much does that fire you up?

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Yeah, it's really exciting. The crowds out here are huge. They always are at this tournament for some reason. I think Grand Rapids just does a really great job of bringing awareness to the LPGA.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Jennifer.

JENNIFER KUPCHO: Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports