

PGA TOUR Media Conference

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Min Woo Lee

Press Conference

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Min, firstly, thanks for your time for chatting with us and the Australian media on the call this morning here. Let's just start by getting your reaction of your special temporary membership on the PGA TOUR, what it really means to you.

MIN WOO LEE: Obviously the bigger picture is to get a full card, but it's nice to tick that off. It kind of frees me up to not play in a time frame where you only have a few tournaments, seven specifically, not including the majors. So it's quite nice to have a bit of that freedom.

I can hopefully play well and have a few more tournaments to play in. It's a really nice thing. It was kind of like a monkey on the back, and you kind of want to get it done quick, but I had three missed cuts just before. I think I put a little bit too much pressure on myself. So it's nice to tick that off.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Sorry, we froze there for a second. I was asking about with what you said about some tough weeks before the PGA, what did that tie for 18 mean for you and your confidence going into the rest of the year?

MIN WOO LEE: I think the biggest thing I took away from last week was just the way I handled myself and played for the week. It's obviously tough, and it's sometimes how you handle yourself after a bad shot. Everyone's going to hit bad shots in a major, so it's nice to really get into that zone.

You just have to do it to understand it, and I feel like hopefully it can help over the next few weeks. Yeah, it was a time to really just step up and play some good golf because it's a major and you don't want to miss another cut. I missed three in a row, so it was nice to -- I mean, a little disappointing Sunday. I wish I played a little bit better, but it was also a really gritty round. It could have gone a lot worse, and the birdie on the last helped.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: We'll open it up to questions.

Q. Min, first of all, congrats on your top 20 in the PGA. My first question is now that you are a member of the PGA TOUR, how quickly will you have to think about things, logistics, all that sort of stuff, where you're

going to be living and everything?

MIN WOO LEE: I mean, I haven't really thought about that. I still need to play well to keep my card. It's nice to, I guess, have the freedom of getting more starts, but I've still got to play well.

I think, when I do get into the top 125 of that FedExCup list at the end of the year or for Europe the top 10 cards, I think that's when I'll start looking at stuff like that, but not thinking about it too much.

Q. Second of all, I'm sure you heard a lot about Michael Block last week and this week as well at Colonial, and you're paired with him. How exciting is that? And what did you make of his rapid rise to fame last week?

MIN WOO LEE: Oh, it's amazing. It's cool because I saw him the last couple -- well, the last PGA, and I haven't seen him in maybe six, seven years. We played -- when I was an amateur, I played with him just a random round in L.A., so it's kind of cool to see, I guess, both of us playing with each other, and we're playing together the first two rounds here at Colonial.

So it's a pretty cool feeling. It's nice to see a PGA pro do so well. It's nice. He's a really nice guy, and hopefully he can keep going.

Q. Just to follow up, what was that first meeting like in L.A.? What tournament was it, and what were the circumstances?

MIN WOO LEE: It was just a round. I don't even know what that golf course was. It was in L.A., but it was just a round with my agent and his friend and maybe himself -- and himself. It was just a friendly round, nothing serious, but it's crazy how we're playing with each other at a PGA TOUR event this week.

Q. Just wanted to start by asking, I guess you've spoken about how you were happy with the way that you sort of ground it out there in pretty tough conditions and you started getting closer to where you want to be. I guess, is consistency the next thing? Because you have some really good rounds, and there's just a few bogeys here and there that sort of

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

stop you from really hanging with the best guys all the way through to the end.

MIN WOO LEE: Yeah, I think obviously that's just how golf is. With my youngness, I think I will just learn from experience and get better. I don't have a perfect game right now. I still was nearly ranked like bottom ten of approach play, and I still ended up coming in 18th. If I can get that better, I know I can compete.

It's just an experience thing. I have the ability to play well, and I'm still trying to eliminate the bad stuff. I know it's all part of it, and it's going to be, I guess, hopefully a long journey, and hopefully I can just rise up the ranks just one by one. When the time's right, it will come.

Q. Obviously you mentioned that you'd had some sort of, I guess, not so great results sort of leading in. You came back to Australia, I believe, through a bit of a break. Like was that just to kind of reset and sort of get your focus back ahead of the PGA?

MIN WOO LEE: Yeah, I think Hilton Head and the Masters, I was a bit burnt out. I haven't been home in a couple months. So it was nice to go home, reset for a few weeks, and see my coach and then come out and play these events.

Yeah, but it was nice to just be home and hang out with my friends, especially in Melbourne, where we had the Golf Australia camp. It was quite nice to be around, I guess, younger amateurs and teach them a few things and do a Q&A with them and kind of get inspired myself because I was once in that position not too long ago.

Q. And you hit a few balls with some of the Demons boys, I think, Brayshaw and Stevie May, and that kind of thing. What was that like there?

MIN WOO LEE: I played with Steve, Petracca and Brayshaw, Angus. They're really good. Steve and Angus play around 5, so they can really play. Petracca is just kind of getting into it. But they love it, and we played Peninsula Kingswood. It was my first time there, and it's an amazing golf course.

No, it was good fun. We had a really good day and a lot of banter. Yeah, they're awesome guys. I get it for free, but it's nice to play with other guys. They pick my brain a little bit, and I pick theirs. It's quite nice just being in the athlete space and playing against elite players in different sports.

Q. And just one last one from me. You spoke about the conditions, I guess, on Saturday especially when it was pretty wet and wild. What was that like?

Obviously a grind, but pretty unfamiliar conditions in some ways?

MIN WOO LEE: Yeah, you don't really get too many days where it rains literally like the whole day. I think we had one or two holes where it didn't rain. It was just a grind. It was just a very slow grind. You knew it wasn't going to get better, so you just knew your body language had to be good. Your mental had to be good too. You just want it to end, but you just have to stay in there.

It was a really solid round. Could have played a little bit better, but it was also very -- I ended up shooting one over and didn't move. I was just still in the 10th position. So it was a very tough day, and it was good for the grit and the momentum, I guess.

Q. Just wondering, I know that Evan touched on this, but if you do get your full card for '24, do you see yourself playing both Tours a little bit, or will you mainly focus on America, do you think?

MIN WOO LEE: It just depends on the schedule. I really haven't thought about it, but I still love playing in Europe, and it suits my game. Obviously as a world -- trying to be a world class player, you want to come out here and play here and get your game as defined as it can and to the potential that you want it to be.

I mean, it just depends on the schedule. I'd love to play wherever I can, but yeah, I guess right now I'm trying to get my PGA TOUR card. If I get to play in Europe, that's a bonus too.

Q. And do you have any family out there with you this week? Minjee's place is not far away. I'm not really sure, you can't even be staying there.

MIN WOO LEE: It's about 45 minutes away. It's a bit too far. But mom's going to come over in the next couple days and be a mom to me and do some cooking and laundry.

Q. Last one from me. Can you talk a little bit about Colonial. It's a storied course with Hogan having played there and that kind of thing. Does it fit your eye so far?

MIN WOO LEE: Yeah, it's a nice course. I only played nine holes here today, but I played last year and missed by one. So I'm ready to get some revenge, and hopefully I can play well. But it is a nice course.

It's not -- I don't think it's the longest course, so it's quite positional. I hit a few 2-irons, which PLAYERS -- a lot of PLAYERS Championship was like. A lot of people know

that I like hitting that 2-iron. It's going to be a good week. Hopefully I can execute.

Q. You spoke last week about loving those bigger crowds and those bigger moments. That's great obviously when you get to those majors and you're performing well. How do you find you're going to bring that feeling when you're playing smaller events and with smaller crowds around to sort of keep yourself moving like that?

MIN WOO LEE: I think it's just little things. It's making a par putt, making a birdie putt, just a couple fist pumps, and you kind of have to get yourself going. It's definitely a thing I learned over the last couple years just because you can't get it all the time, but it is nice to obviously play well in majors and those big events.

Yeah, it's just one of those things where you learn to play in a smaller crowd, but I guess just have a nice, I don't know, just I'm still learning. I'm still learning trying to be the player that I want to be.

Those majors are really good to me, so I want to do that as a smaller event. They're still big. I still consider them big, coming from playing some Aussie Tour events when I was an amateur to playing Europe to out here. I mean, hopefully you can play well and get some crowds and do that.

But you've still got to go through the hard yards. Not everyone had big crowds when they just started. So it's nice to have a crowd even though I'm just starting out.

Q. And that approach play you mentioned last week, that's a big part of Colonial. It's a lot of approach play is where you're going to make your scoring. Have you done some work already this week and had Richie on the phone?

MIN WOO LEE: Yeah, I probably will just continue on what I did last week although it does say 71st out of 80 people. I talked to my stats guy, and it's actually not as bad as it looks. I didn't drive it particularly well, which made me hit approach shots that don't look pretty and don't look good on the stat sheet.

I think it's a little flawed there, where stats aren't everything, but yeah, definitely get a bit of work done over the next day in the Pro-Am and in some practice. Right now it's just a little bit of time to -- because majors are so draining, I just want to recover and rest. I'll do that by going to a hockey game, which is not very recovery like, but I've never been to a hockey game. So I'm excited to go.

Q. Min, David Micheluzzi was up there playing last week as the order of merit champion. I was wondering about the pathways that are coming through nowadays via our own Tour. Do you think that that's working quite well. Did you see much of him last week?

MIN WOO LEE: Yeah, we had a practice round at Byron, and I saw him last week. No, it's amazing. I think -- I guess it was about time that some of these smaller Tours got to have that pathway to get to these bigger Tours. As I have friends on the Aussie Tour, it is very tough to make it out there just because you played and you are successful in Australia doesn't mean you are going to be playing in Europe and America.

So it's nice to see those guys getting rewarded to go play in Europe and play these big events in America too. I think it's amazing.

Q. Min, just on Brooks Koepka, what do you make of his game overall, and how good is it to see one of the biggest stars in the game winning majors again?

MIN WOO LEE: He's a beast. I don't have much to do with him, but he's a machine. He's won five majors in the last few years. That's pretty incredible.

I think something about his mental attitude towards the game is something that I can learn from, and obviously his golf game is pretty solid. He doesn't take much smack, and he just gets on with his work. I think that's something that we can all learn from.

Yeah, all I can say is he's a beast. That's my wording of how his game is because that is pretty special. Not many people can -- yeah, I don't think there's many people that have won five majors and in such a short span. That's pretty incredible.

Q. Just to follow that up quickly, he obviously plays on LIV Golf. Now that you've played a couple of tournaments with LIV Golf in the field, does last week feel like the one where it went back to normal and sort of everyone stopped chatting about who plays on what Tour, and it was just a bunch of top players playing a major?

MIN WOO LEE: If you have Twitter, definitely not. There's so much talk about LIV, PGA, and all that. I'm quite sick of it. I don't really care. We're all still trying to -- it doesn't matter what Tour you're on. If we're playing the same tournament, you're trying to beat each other.

Like Bryson and Brooks, I'm pretty sure they're pretty good

mates now. Not good mates, but they still talk, and there's no beef between them two. Rory and Brooks talk all the time. So I think the media makes it a little worse than it is, but it's -- you just go out there. Some of them are my friends, and I just say hi and talk normal to them, and they're the same thing. They just have less tournaments, and they're playing some of these majors.

I think -- I don't know that I really have much to say about it. Everyone tries to beat each other when they're out in the tournament.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Min, thanks for your time. Good luck at the Charles Schwab this week.

MIN WOO LEE: Thank you. Cheers, guys.

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