

U.S. Girls' Junior Championship

Saturday, July 18, 2026

Durham, North Carolina, USA

Old Chatham Golf Club

Clairey Lin

Press Conference

Q. Clairey Lin, 77th USGA Girls' Junior champion. How does that sound?

CLAIREY LIN: Amazing. Still haven't processed it yet, but it's pretty cool.

Q. You talked about it in your ceremony, imagining winning a championship like this your whole life. Can you talk more about that? How do you process that feeling now that it's real?

CLAIREY LIN: The processing is still in work, but yeah, like I said, I've dreamed of it my entire life. I've always wanted to be on the big stage and inspire some people and work hard and see it pay off, and to be able to do that today is amazing.

Q. With your win this week, you're now exempt into the Women's Open next year. Talk about what that means to you.

CLAIREY LIN: It means so much. My first major, my first pro event. It will be amazing to tee it up with the pros and learn from them and play on an even bigger stage.

Q. Talk about your match today. What did it kind of take to get it done?

CLAIREY LIN: It was tiring for sure the entire way. I think it was just persevering more than anything, like not let anything get to me, not let the bad shots take too big a toll on anything mental, keep moving and know that it's a 36-hole match and anything can happen.

Q. On the front nine of the first match, you kind of caught fire there with consecutive birdies. You kind of built the lead and hung onto it for the rest of the day. What's your approach when you're playing with a lead like that with someone obviously tripping on your heels?

CLAIREY LIN: I try not to think about it that much. I never



try to think much of my leads because I find that, when I start thinking about it, I change my game plan in a way that I don't want to.

I thought back to when I played stroke play and I wasn't playing against anyone, I did amazing. So I thought to myself why not do the same thing? I guess just making the turn keeping my game plan, keeping my mentality of just being myself.

Q. Earlier this week you talked about the importance of believing in yourself. Can you talk about the inner psyche as you're out there in a match and how you believe in yourself time and time again?

CLAIREY LIN: I think it's not a black and white thing to believe in yourself. You can't automatically like be fully confident, and you can't automatically just become fully like not confident. Keeping that in mind, like I had -- I had good -- I had a good -- I was in a good spot mentally coming into match play and knowing that like it can't really get to that bad of a point.

So just trying to like just stay in it is the biggest thing.

Q. Moving forward, can you talk about your favorite memory, number one memory from your time here this week?

CLAIREY LIN: Probably -- oh, man, that's difficult. First of all, it's been a long week, and it's because -- also because there's been so many amazing things that have happened.

What if I can't pick?

Q. That's fine.

CLAIREY LIN: I can't pick. There's too many.

Q. As you walk away with the trophy, how do you look to build on your experience here moving forward into future events? Obviously Women's Am next week, but other events that you're playing in.

CLAIREY LIN: With more experience mainly. I think experience is the biggest thing that I gained from this week. Being out there, playing six matches, playing two rounds of stroke play on a USGA level course has taught

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me so much.

I think just taking that, both physical experience and mental experience, into my future tournaments.

Q. This is the first time in USGA history we've had back-to-back champions from Canada in any championship. Talk about that a little bit.

CLAIREY LIN: It's pretty cool. I remember seeing when Aphrodite won last year, I was really stoked for her, and I was really happy that Canada had its first U.S. Girls', I think, and coming in this week, of course, I knew I wanted to do it again.

For it to actually be the first time that two Canadians have won back to back in a USGA Championship is pretty cool. I'm glad I get to be a part of that.

Q. You really seem to have a grasp of this course. You went 6-under the first day, 7-under, and then your match play was just really strong. Do you think it particularly suited your game, or does that go back to behind the scenes work that maybe we didn't see?

CLAIREY LIN: I think it suited my game pretty well. I had a pretty good putting streak the entire week, and these greens were so pure that I feel like, if I get my ball started on the right line, it will likely go in.

Yeah, I think I just putted really well this week, and that's been the key.

Q. And then in terms of figuring the course out, the 1st hole, the par-5, you really figured that hole out. You had six birdies on it, I think, an eagle, a par. Can you just talk to me about that hole and why you were scoring so well on it?

CLAIREY LIN: I think partially it suits my eye a lot. I like the par-5.

I also think that it being the starting hole, I always want to get off to a good start and like fresh, when I'm not tired, when I'm not exhausted from a long day. I've always wanted to start my day well, and the 1st hole is the perfect way to do it.

Q. You're taking a medal, a trophy, a USGA Championship victory all home to California. Can you just tell me the first thing you're going to do celebrating with family and friends?

CLAIREY LIN: I think I'm going to have a really good chat with my sister. I haven't seen her in a long time. Have a

good meal with my family again because I also haven't seen my mom and my sister in a long time.

My home club has been super supportive of me this entire week. So probably share the moment with them.

Lots of family and friends. Lots of friends back home who also played this tournament, sharing it with them as well.

So kind of just getting home and letting it all sink in with the people who supported me.

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