

U.S. Women's Open

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Houston, Texas, USA

Champions Golf Club

Katherine Kirk

Quick Quotes

Q. First of all, does it feel strange to be playing a major in December?

KATHERINE KIRK: Very strange. Usually we put the clubs away this time of year and we're just home enjoying family and enjoying some down time.

So, yeah, it's a different mindset for sure, but at the same time, we're just thankful to be playing the 75th U.S. Women's Open. So a lot of people worked hard to get us here and we're thankful for that.

Q. How have you prepared for this championship?

KATHERINE KIRK: Pretty similarly to any other year, really. I always like to play before majors, so I played last week up in Dallas. The Majors are always the ultimate test, and I think U.S. Opens are, yeah, no different, and you got to be having all parts of your game firing and be ready for everything and fast greens certainly, long holes, tough conditions.

I mean, yeah, nothing too unusual, just the ultimate test of golf and you got to be sharp.

Q. Besides the time of year, you're also playing two courses, which is totally different for this major. Can you talk about the mental and the mindset that you're going to have to have to play two different courses, and then also the differences in these two courses.

KATHERINE KIRK: Yeah, very unusual to have two. I think other than maybe the Victorian Open that we played at the start of the year, I've never played two courses for any tournament.

So, yeah, that certainly makes preparation a little bit more challenging. But at the same time, we're used to getting course strategies done Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and hopefully, yeah, you can figure it out early enough and go out and execute when Thursday rolls around.

But these courses are different. I would say Jackrabbit's



probably a bit shorter. Maybe a little tighter off the tee in some holes. Greens are smaller. So I don't know which one's really going to yield more birdies. I think maybe Jackrabbit, if you can, yeah, dial it in with your approach shots.

But certainly, yeah, both phenomenal golf courses, and you can see why the USGA has hosted events here before and why the Ryder Cup's been here too.

Q. What do you think your chances are this week? You ask anybody and they obviously they want to win, but everything that's led up to this point and where your game stands right now.

KATHERINE KIRK: U.S. Opens I've always struggled with for I don't know what reason. But I think that being 38 I got a lot more patience than I had before. I've had a good year. I've had four top-10s.

So if there ever was a year I was going to play well, I would hope this is the year. And I think the rough out here is a little more generous, so I've never been perhaps the straightest driver of the ball, which is probably why I've struggled at U.S. Opens and got myself in a bit more trouble.

So with that being said, I would hope this week would be a good week. But there's so many good players these days and depth in women's golf just gets better and better every year. And, yeah, you have to have the firing on all cylinders to have a chance. It can't just be a good ball striking week. You got to match it with great short game.

Q. You have experience in playing in the Women's Open. Do you think that is going to be something that will help the winner here or can anyone win this?

KATHERINE KIRK: I think typically the more experienced player probably has a little advantage, but ultimately it's who just feels confident that week and who gets a good game plan early on. A lot of that stuff's kind of out of your control. Some weeks you have it; some weeks you don't.

I wish there was a secret like that we could say we know when we're going to play well and when we're not going to play well, but golf's not like that. It's just a goofy game, and you try and ride the highs as long as you can and get out of



the lows as fast as you can.

Q. If you had to pick one phase of the game that's going to help someone win this championship, is it driving the ball, short game? Putting obviously is always key.

KATHERINE KIRK: It's a combo week. I think, yeah, length is going to be important, but also speed control on the greens, because there are some massive greens out here. I think the longest one is 63 yards.

So, yeah, your lag putting has to be spot on, and I think mentally you just have to be so patient. Any time you play U.S. Opens you almost got to say, Okay, I want to par all the par-3s and 4s and just take my birdies on the par-5s.

And if you can sneak in other birdies, then that's a bonus. But this week, yeah, it's a long week, it's a marathon. Everyone says that, and it's spot on.

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