

U.S. Women's Open

Saturday, December 12, 2020

Houston, Texas, USA

Champions Golf Club

Lydia Ko

Flash Interview

Q. Talk us through your round a bit.

LYDIA KO: It was pretty tough, especially at the start. I think going into the day I knew that it was a different wind direction to the other days, so I knew that the holes would play quite differently. But with the first few holes being all into the wind and it raining last from yesterday afternoon overnight I think definitely made the course a lot softer, hence made it a lot longer.

But everyone's playing in pretty much the same course conditions, as the tee time spans are pretty tight, so it's just trying to grind my way out there and obviously I feel like I could have shot a lower score, but at the same time I think it could have been a lot worse, so I'll take what I have today.

Q. It looked like the greens had sped up and were really rolling out, can you just talk about how the greens are changed through out the course of the week, if they have?

LYDIA KO: I think that they have been pretty consistent. I really struggled with my green speed, the control on the first day and I was like, man, I can't putt this way because it's just, there's too much grinding out there. Obviously with the Cypress Course the greens are quite big and even though you would like to be pretty close with your first putt a lot of the times but sometimes you're going to have those longer putts, so it's really important to kind of dial in the green speed and distance control. But I feel like I've been doing that a lot better the last couple of days, so I've been trying to putt a little bit more downhill putts and just stay patient. Sometimes you feel, you keep kind of going on the par train and you're like, okay, like when is this, when is there going to be like a good turn around. But, no, around a course like this and especially at majors, par's sometimes not a bad score.

Q. What's the biggest area of improvement you would want to improve on before tomorrow?

LYDIA KO: Hopefully I hit a few more fairways, I think



that's super important. I think -- but it's been really tough today with the rain yesterday here on the fairways and you've got mud balls and I was talking to Les and we had someone one shot on No. 2 and it's like, Do I need to aim like on the next tee box for it to like move? Because it's really hard, because it's not like there's an exact science -- or maybe there is, I just don't know that I guess equation on how to factor mud balls.

But everyone's got the same thing, so there's just a lot of things to judge. But I think patience is going to be a big key with us playing a little earlier tomorrow it's going to be pretty cold, so just keeping it on the fairway definitely is going to make it easier to hold the greens.

Q. What do you think it will take tomorrow and do you think you can be aggressive at all out here?

LYDIA KO: I think definitely coming from behind you're playing with a little bit more of an aggressive strategy compared to somebody that's probably trying to protect the lead or run off with the lead. But she seems like she's doing an incredible job and she's also a major champion, so she's been out there being out there like a smiling Cinderella, so I'm sure at points it's going to feel like it's going to be tough to catch her, but I just got to go out there, focus on my game and play the best golf I can and what happens outside of that is, I just got to accept what comes my way.

Q. How happy are you with your consistency in the majors this year?

LYDIA KO: Probably going into the majors I always say I want to be in contention in as many times as possible and I think this is probably the best stretch I've had in the majors outside of probably in 2016. But I think the more times you put yourself in that position and in those kind of pressure conditions I think the more you get used to it and things go your way you could be the one that's hosting the trophy at the end of the Sunday. But I think it is really important, not only in majors, but in other events, to just keep playing consistently and if you keep putting yourself in that position, I feel like at some point if it is your time it's going to fall your way.

Q. What impresses you the most about her game?



LYDIA KO: She, I feel like it's either a great poker face or she's that smiling assassin. I feel like I smile quite a lot out there, but like I'm like pretty grumpy compared to her. But, no, I think she's stayed pretty calm and you saw her at the British Open, I'm sure, going into that Sunday there were, there might have been doubts, because not many people have heard of her compared to some other players. But she showed them who is boss and she's clearly doing that right now.

So, yeah, I think that we're all just trying to focus on our game, but, yeah, definitely her demeanor and how calm and cool, calm and collected she's been is definitely an impressive part.

Q. You mentioned the cold being a factor. I'm just wondering how that changes like what you do before you even hit the range and how you warm-up and like if there are any things you'll do differently on the course to kind of combat that?

LYDIA KO: I wore a lot of layers today. No, I have -- a former prime minister in New Zealand gave a nickname called "onion" because I played with him once and I kept stripping off my layers and he was like, Man, you're like an onion, like taking a layer off, taking a layer off. I think you just have to stay as warm as possible, but still be able to swing freely, obviously because there's a lot of rotation, you don't want to feel like you're really restricted. When it's super cold I'll have a hand warmer or something just to keep the hands from getting tense and feeling cold.

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