

U.S. Women's Open

Saturday, June 5, 2021

San Francisco, California, USA

The Olympic Club

Lexi Thompson

Flash Interview

Q. 66, your lowest career round in a U.S. Women's Open. Talk us through what was working well today.

LEXI THOMPSON: Honestly, I just thought my patience of being out there. I struck it well all day, made a few good putts out there. And I guess probably just picking up the missed fairways or missed greens when I did, getting up-and-down or just getting it as far as I could out of that rough. So it's all about patience out on this golf course because there's going to be bad shots made and you're going to miss some fairways, so you just have to get bogey at worst and get off the hole and go on to the next.

Q. You actually had the first bogey-free round of the week. How were you able to avoid those numbers, especially out of the rough?

LEXI THOMPSON: It's tough. The rough is super thick. They say that there's a first cut, but the first cut's about four inches. But it's just, it's a great golf course. That's how major championships should be. They should be longer, rough up thick and it's held up to its standards of being out there. So I played solid today and I'm just going to try to take it into tomorrow and just focus on one shot at a time.

Q. You look as happy and comfortable and really relaxed as you have perhaps in years. What's gotten us to this point?

LEXI THOMPSON: Honestly, I've been working with John Denney. I worked with him in 2016 and 2017 and now I'm working with him again. But, honestly, I mean, I've -- haven't really struggled but haven't played to my standards and what I need and I just realized that I needed to change my mindset. It was only hurting me. Obviously I needed to work on some technical things in my game and everything, but the mental side, I think, was really getting to me. I was just taking it way too seriously and thinking that Lexi depended on my score. So it's really hard for me to not think that, but I just got into a state, I'm going to hit bad shots, and it is what it is. I can manage to get up-and-down or do what I can.



Q. That's not a switch that you flip. How have you gone about doing that?

LEXI THOMPSON: No, it definitely isn't. Easier said than done to, oh, just be happier. But it's just, it takes a lot of hard work. I've been calling John Denney a few times a week and just really focusing on the good in my life and just the blessings. Just to be out here is a blessing, honestly. And just everything good and then all the fans and everything, so really just embracing all of that. I think I got, I mean, COVID didn't help with no fans out here, but I just, I love playing in front of people and just seeing those little kids and hearing the chants, it just, it brings me happiness and a reason to play golf again.

Q. Expanding on what you just said. Is, gratitude seems to be an underlying theme in a lot of your comments this week. So is that something John has worked with you to change your perspective so that instead of being so hard on yourself and seeing what you don't do perfectly, you look at the bigger picture?

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, exactly what you said. It's a lot about gratitude with John. Very spiritual and just gratitude, just being grateful for everything in my life and being grateful that I have the opportunity to be able to play a golf course like this or any golf course, in general, honestly, and just being out here. I mean, whether I play good or bad it's still an amazing experience.

Q. Was there a hole this week that you could think back on where this positive approach that could have gone the other direction and you turned it around?

LEXI THOMPSON: I mean, I've hit a few bad tee shots, I guess, like the one, I forget what hole it was, but any shot that got a bad bounce that went in the rough or the certain lies that you just have to pitch it out at, I mean, normally I would be, like, oh, my gosh, this is awful, this is a terrible lie, like, I got to wedge it out now. And it's gotten to where it's like, okay, I can pitch it out, wedge it up, give myself a par opportunity, and if I make bogey, I'll move on to the next hole and give myself a birdie opportunity on the next. So I can't pinpoint a hole, but there's definitely holes out there that I could of.

Q. As different as majors are from regular events Thursday Friday Saturday, how different are majors on



Sunday in the final round and how much of an advantage is it that you've been through that a lot compared to the other players near the top of the board?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, it helps just to have that experience. But, for me, it's no different mindset going into tomorrow. Same mindset of just playing my game and focusing on one shot at a time and wherever that takes me, it does. I've been working extremely hard on my game and the mental side, but seeing just the progress in my game, I'm just going to take that and run with it and keep on improving and keep on working on my game to see that improvement.

Q. Is it harder, though, to kind of control your emotions on Sunday?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, I would say it's definitely a little bit more intense than any other tournament on a Sunday, leading, yes. But, you know, like I said before, I love playing in front of the fans and everything, so, yeah, it's hard to control, but it's doable.

Q. I know yesterday you didn't putt quite as well as you would have liked and I noticed you were out there on the practice green with your dad in the afternoon trying to find something. What exactly was it that you found out there yesterday?

LEXI THOMPSON: That golf is a crazy game (laughing). No, it's just, it's an up-and-down thing. I knew if I gave myself birdie opportunities and just really just trusted my stroke, went out there and just committed to my line with my caddie and my read, you just got to free up and stroke it and you're either going to make it or miss it, so.

Q. Great round today. There's a lot of amateurs played in this week and we obviously have some doing really well, but a lot of them that struggled, what would you say to them to kind of encourage them moving forward in their career?

LEXI THOMPSON: I got to play with a lot of amateurs in my practice rounds here and it's amazing because, I mean, I knew that experience. I was, my first one was at 12. So it's just great to see the games and just the confidence that they have and the talent that they have as well and I'm always open if they have any questions for me to learn off everything. But words of advice, the ones that have struggled -- obviously the ones that are doing good, keep it up, doing what they are, but the ones that struggled, just take the experience and really just embrace it. Take everything as a learning experience, whether they missed the cut or made it, learn from the players that you got

paired up with and just really embrace the experience, the fans, and if this is what you want to do. I always say when I played in tour events as an amateur I realized this is where I want to be.

Q. Did you in past U.S. Women's Opens, did you have kind of an attitude, not problem, but did you have to, did you feel like you had to address your attitude for a U.S. Open specifically because of all the frustrations that it brings upon you? Because there are many players who talk about being beaten before they ever take their first swing because they're so freaked out by the experience?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well it's tough, golf is a game that could do that to you because it's something that you can never perfect and it changes day-to-day. That's something not just because it was the Women's Open, but, yes, of course I wanted to change it because this was a very big event, but it was just gotten to a point for me that I knew I needed to change something to be in a better mindset and with working on that I was like, okay, well, then if I play bad, then I know I need to work on my game. So taking each factor out as I go, but it's something that I knew I needed to change coming into this week and I have about four or five events in a row, so...

Q. How does it feel to have put yourself in this position again in a major and have this opportunity?

LEXI THOMPSON: It feels great. Like I said, I have been working extremely hard in my off weeks that I do get, I've been working very hard, so it's good to see the hard work paying off. But I have one more day ahead so just going to take it one shot at a time, it's going to be a long day and see where it goes.

Q. In an event that had bizarre echos of what happened to you at ANA a few years back, Jon Rahm, as he was walking off the green with a six-stroke lead today, was told he had tested positive for COVID and was DQ'd. What do you make of that and is that sort of the low-level anxiety that you guys all live with that these tests could go, you could be asymptomatic and test positive and that's that.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, I had just heard about this and it is so unfortunate. I mean, I wish him nothing but the best and just healthy -- hopefully he doesn't have any symptoms -- and, but it's just so unfortunate. But it's something that we can't control and I don't know, I mean, obviously it's unfortunate that he was leading by that much and it happened, but I just hope that he's healthy, and that's the most important thing, and that he kills it the next time he tees up.

