

# U.S. Women's Open

Saturday, July 8, 2023

Pebble Beach, California, USA

Pebble Beach Golf Links

## Nasa Hataoka

### Flash Interview



**Q. We're here with Nasa Hataoka, 6-under 66, which is the low round of the championship thus far. Great playing out there. Can you talk us through your round?**

NASA HATAOKA: Well, compared to the first two days, it was a bit windier today. However, the temperatures were higher, thank goodness, so I think my body participated with the higher temperatures, and I was able to manage all my goals.

**Q. You made it look easy out there, but how hard is the stretch of holes from 8 through 18?**

NASA HATAOKA: Well, I would say that from around the 7th hole I started to feel the wind, and of course we were at the waterfront, so it was quite different.

Then of course I had some of the par saves, and so compared to my last two days, I think that from the back nine onwards, I did pretty well, and there were some birdies, too.

**Q. Your putting, it was so strong today. Have you been working on something special with your putting, and how has this season gone with the putter?**

NASA HATAOKA: Actually from about three weeks ago with the assistance of my coach, I was able to change my strategy. I would say that prior to that I felt that my strokes were not as good as they should have been, and I didn't think that the way the ball was tumbling around, that was not very stable beforehand.

But thanks to the work I started three weeks ago, I think I was able to manage very well today.

**Q. The chip-in on 16, how hard of a chip was that? Were you just trying to get it close or were you trying to make it?**

NASA HATAOKA: Well, I think the speed was there, and compared to yesterday, also, I was able to manage some of that chipping work.

**Q. I'm curious, why you think you've done so well in California? I know you won in San Diego and Los Angeles and you were obviously in a playoff at the Olympic Club two years ago in this event. What is it about California courses that fits your game do you think?**

NASA HATAOKA: Well, it could be just happenstance, perhaps good luck. But with some of the difficulties with the short putts, I think it was mainly my experience that enabled me to meet with it.

**Q. What did you learn about yourself in confidence maybe from Olympic Club from the Women's Open two years ago when you obviously played so well and came so close to winning? How did that change you and your game?**

NASA HATAOKA: Well, compared to two years ago, I think that I still have this very last day to look forward to, and although circumstances may be different, I think some of the elements are still the same as they were versus two years ago.

In other words, I have to go on all of those 18 holes, discuss with my caddie and work out what the best for me, and enjoy my day tomorrow.

**Q. You've come close so many times at the majors. What would it mean to you to win tomorrow?**

NASA HATAOKA: Well, certainly there was that experience from two years ago at the Olympic Club and then also the KPMG Playoffs when I did not win.

However, I have that experience from those past tournaments, and so I want to be true to myself, and I want to rely on the help that I receive from my staff and all the people around me and do my best.

**Q. How well do you know Hideki, and have you talked**



**to him about winning a major and what his experience was like?**

NASA HATAOKA: Well, when Mr. Matsuyama won the Masters, I was actually elated for him. I was in Hawai'i, and as a fellow Japanese player, I was encouraged by his victory.

I want to feel that same encouragement and try my best tomorrow so I can perform similarly as he did.

**Q. Speaking of your experience at Olympic Club, how will you use that tomorrow to better your chances of winning the championship?**

NASA HATAOKA: I think the quality of the green and the grass quality is similar, and there are quite a bit of uphill areas as well as a great deal of bounce here, and so I am hoping that I can keep in mind while I'm playing tomorrow everything that I've learned through my putting practice and to be able to be victorious over the next 18 holes tomorrow.

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