

U.S. Women's Open

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Erin Hills, Wisconsin, USA

Erin Hills GC

Asterisk Talley

Jude Lee

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome back to the interview area. I am here with two of our 26 amateurs in the field, Asterisk Talley and Jude Lee. They are both members of the National Development Program, Asterisk in her second year on the U.S. National Junior team, and Jude is both a member of the team and one of our grant recipients. Thanks for being here, guys.

Asterisk, this is your first USGA championship of the year, but last year you were a finalist in both the U.S. Women's Amateur, Girls' Junior, you won the Four-Ball, and you were tied for low am at the Women's Open.

What is it about USGA events that seems to bring out the best in you?

ASTERISK TALLEY: They're just such fun events. It's great to be here all the time and be surrounded by such great players and other great volunteers and other people. I think it just really motivates me to play well when other great players are in the field and when these are such top events, and think it just motivates us to play well and to have a good team.

Q. Jude, you made it into the field through qualifying. It's one of the hardest things to do is qualify for a Women's Open, 36-hole qualifier. Talk about that day and what you felt like at the end of it.

JUDE LEE: It was just a long grueling day obviously, 36 holes, but just the one-day qualifying event and just the grind of it, I just tried to stay in the present during that time, and after that day I just kind of looked back and was like, oh, wow, that was a pretty cool day.

Q. Talk about your experience with the national team so far. What have you learned from the coaches?

JUDE LEE: I think just having the national team and having a group of friends who I just see on the golf course all the time and just having that extra layer of sport, it just



really means the world.

Just seeing how much USGA has done for the game of golf, especially amateur golf, is just, like -- brings a greater amount of appreciation, and I'm just so grateful to have them.

Q. Asterisk, a lot of people learned your name, who you were last year at the Women's Open. What did you prove to yourself playing on that big a stage, a lot of broadcast exposure, but still being able to play so well at a young age?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, just definitely knowing that I could handle a big stage like. Just knowing that I can play with all these big players and with everyone just watching me at all times. Just knowing that I could keep my composure and stay calm throughout the whole week and just being able to play well.

Q. Some people have said this course feels a little linksey to them. You're actually going to come with us with the team to the British Am in a few weeks. Talk about what that's going to be like.

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, this is going to be good preparation for it, and it's going to be a lot of fun. Really excited to go overseas and have some fun in the British Am.

Q. For both players, can you talk about your impressions of this course? Does it compare to anything you've played before? And what do you think the rain is going to do to it as you go forward in the week here?

ASTERISK TALLEY: It's definitely going to soften it up a little bit which is going to help with the kind of hills that are around here. It might help your ball stay in some good positions.

But it's a tough walk for the players especially because the holes are pretty spread out and it's super hilly out here, so just getting to control it around the greens is going to be crucial and getting to hit the fairway is definitely going to be



very important.

JUDE LEE: Yes, definitely it's a great test of golf. You have to be on top of every shot and you have to think around the course really well. I think even though the rain might soften it up a little bit, it's not a course that's going to let up a lot for us.

Q. What sort of unique challenge does the length of this course present, and how does it affect your strategy throughout the week?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, I mean, already every part of your game is going to be tested, but now those long irons come into play, and if you get out of position it's definitely going to be really tough and you're going to be hitting woods out of the fescue.

It's going to be really hard to try and salvage a par or even a bogey out of those positions, so I think just trying to get yourself in the right position being over that shot only is going to be really crucial, and just having every single part of your game on your "A" game is going to be really important.

JUDE LEE: Especially with the length, I think it really highlights how you can chip and putt around the greens and I think that's really important. And just like missing in the right spots like she said is going to be very important this week.

Q. Jude, how long did you have to wait at the qualifier to realize that you were in the field, and what was your immediate reaction after that? And for Asterisk, what advice do you have for her about handling this stage?

JUDE LEE: What's funny is I had to wait for around three, four groups. What was really funny was I was actually waiting for my other teammate, Anna Fang, from the U.S. NDP.

She was like one of the only ones who could potentially force a playoff, and I think just as I was waiting for her, it was very nerve-racking couple of minutes, but in the end it was just a bunch of joy.

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, the only advice I would give to Jude and to any other player in the field is just to really block out the noise of other people and of the crowd and everything.

I think that's something that these big stages present, is just kind of outside forces kind of putting -- affecting your mindset of the course or your game, and I just think blocking out the noise of other people, other players on the

course, just not really thinking about what they're doing and kind of focusing on your game and focusing on the course and that's all you have to do and just play your game.

Q. This could be different for both of you, but for each, what's the most challenging hole out here and why?

ASTERISK TALLEY: All of them (smiling). I don't know. What do you think?

JUDE LEE: 9 for sure.

ASTERISK TALLEY: I feel like anything with a green that's kind of crazy or any bigger part of the green is pretty hard.

I'd say 8 and 9 are pretty hard finishing holes. Yeah, probably one of those. They're all pretty hard, but I'd say probably 8 and 9 the greens are super hard and they're pretty lengthy.

Q. What do you guys think about where this course sits, not the actual course but just this area? What have you experienced out here so far, and does this remind you of any other place you've ever been?

ASTERISK TALLEY: I think when I went to England last year it kind of presents the same kind of vibe of it. I mean, they're both kind of linksey and I feel like the only trouble on these kind of courses is the fescue. Other than the fairway and a couple water situations.

But I think it's kind of the same feeling of like you have to hit the fairways and greens on every course, but if you get out of position by the green, you have to really set up your short game, and if you get out of position in the fairway, it's just how can I get to the next spot to set myself up for a good shot.

JUDE LEE: Yeah, for me it's like my first time seeing a course like this, but I think just the linksey style of it and all the blind shots, a lot of different shots around the greens, there's just so many options. I think that's just what makes the U.S. Open the U.S. Open, just having a bunch of options and trying your best to figure out what's the best one.

Q. Asterisk, what has allowed you to handle moments like this in terms of moments like this -- I mean, in terms of junior experiences it seems like teens in the U.S. Women's Open aren't necessarily the novelty they once were, but you handled it quite well.

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, I think just not really worrying about things outside of my game or outside of the course. Just try and focus on getting my game ready for this week



and then trying to play my best, and I can worry about all of that later is what I feel like.

Just trying to go to the range, get ready for today, and then tomorrow it'll be a whole different story, and then finishing out the week and then looking back on what I did and seeing what I can learn.

Q. I'm curious, how many times do your coaches tell you to take one shot at a time?

ASTERISK TALLEY: I mean, I've been told that my whole life from any coach I've ever had. It's like pretty much the most important thing in golf. If you get out of position, you're not worrying about how am I going to get to the green. It's more like how can I get into position and then I can worry about hitting the green.

So then it's just like, what can I do to put myself in the next position for the next shot, but you're always worried about that single shot that you're on and how I can execute how I want to.

JUDE LEE: Yeah, just staying in the present is really big, just like Asterisk said. Golf is a game played between the ears, and just staying in the present, not getting ahead of yourself and not thinking about the past. That's crucial.

Q. How hard is that?

JUDE LEE: It's not as easy as it's preached to us. But I guess just having a routine, like Sandra Palmer told us yesterday at the Am dinner, like having a routine is crucial, and I think everyone has a different way of getting into that and clicking into their zone, and just whoever finds that the most is the best player.

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, I get told a lot that it must be pretty hard to think about that, and I do think it's pretty difficult. A lot of people think it's hard to forget the past of what you just did on a hole or something, but I think it's hard to not think about the future of what I'm going to do because that's how what you just did affects.

If I made a bogey on the last hole I'm thinking about how I can make up for it, but that's probably what's the hardest is not trying to go for everything after making a bogey or something because you're trying so hard to make up for it, but really you just need to keep making pars and the birdies will come.

Q. I'm curious for both of you what the week before this is like. Are you guys just in class on a Friday just counting down the hours being like, I have to go play the U.S. Open in a few days? How do those nerves

work?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, it's pretty hard just sitting in a classroom until you have to leave for the U.S. Open. But it's pretty boring the week before, and then you are kind of just waiting until the flight comes and you're coming to play this course.

I just think you're trying to grind it out before this and you're trying to not think about it too much until you come. You're just -- the same practice is always just keeping that routine and then coming to this and still keeping that same routine.

JUDE LEE: For me it was just super hectic. This is actually my finals week, so I kind of just took all my final ahead of time and did all my AP tests. I don't really have time to think about the future. It helped me stay in the present for sure.

Q. Do you know how you did?

JUDE LEE: Not yet.

Q. Tiff Joh described your rounds looking like you're just playing out in Chowchilla with your buddies. I think she may have used the word homies. Does it feel that way for you when you're at Lancaster last year or Augusta National? Are you trying to low key like you're at home playing with buddies?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah, just trying to stay calm throughout everything. I think just kind of picturing like I'm just at home is something that kind of helps. I don't really do that on the course, but it just kind of has the same feel as I'm just playing another round of golf and this is just the same tournament at always.

Q. For both of you, which golfers do you look up to, and given how connected everybody is, what golfers look up to you?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Oh, definitely we all probably look up to Nelly and everything, and we just look up to the players that are the best and are the strongest in this field and just what can we learn from those players and what can we get out of watching and looking up to those players.

I think just the full-circle moment of girls being out here this week trying to watch us and be like us, it's just really cool just to see they have the same feeling as us in the field is really cool.

JUDE LEE: Yeah, definitely, players like Rose and Nelly and people who are super friendly towards us, I think that's just huge in growing the next generation. Like we grew up



watching them and were inspired by them, and hopefully we can do the same for the next generation.

Q. Do you guys know who Yani Tseng is? What do you know about her and her career?

JUDE LEE: She was incredible. That's what I know.

ASTERISK TALLEY: Yeah. She's a GOAT for sure. Just a legend.

Q. Has there ever been a part of the game that has just really befuddled you that hasn't come easy? I think there's a lot of us in here who are older than you, and we see your success and we're amazed at it and how it looks so easy; but has any part of the game been really confusing at any point in your life?

ASTERISK TALLEY: Always the mental part of the game is super hard to deal with, especially on tournaments like this. You can get easily discouraged if you do something wrong. But it's really hard to look past that or trying to forget about things that you did wrong. Just trying to figure out how I can deal with those things on the course, especially on things like this where everyone is watching you and everyone is kind of judging how you play and how you bounce back from things like that.

So just trying to control your mindset and trying to have a good mindset throughout the whole round and kind of forgetting your mistakes and trying to improve yourself.

JUDE LEE: Yeah, definitely using Yani Tseng as an example, it's not about what happens to you, it's how hard you bounce back from that. I think what's really befuddling is how easily golf can come to you sometimes but how hard it can be sometimes, and that can change in a matter of hours. I just really think, like, the ongoing mystery of the mental game, like Asterisk said. That's the one part of the game.

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