

Women's Olympic Golf Competition

Monday, 2 August 2021
Saitama City, Saitama, Japan
Kasumigaseki Country Club

Inbee Park

Jin Young Ko

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started. As a returning gold medalist, how exciting is it to be back in the Olympic games?

INBEE PARK: It is, I'm very excited to be here and obviously representing the country for twice in a row is the biggest honor for me. Here in Tokyo in five years after Rio it is truly a dream come true for me. Just as it is that I am competing is a big honor but at the same time if I could put our flag in the highest point, that will be even better experience. So hopefully the experience I had in Rio will help get through this week and obviously with the hot weather and the humid conditions, you have be conditioning yourself really well, so really focusing on that.

THE MODERATOR: The Korean team is a very difficult team to make, talk about your pride in being here for the Olympics.

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, it was difficult to make Korean team because a lot of good players, a lot of good players in Korea. So, but I'm excited to be here. This week is my first time for the Olympics, so I can't wait to play this week and I'm looking for a great week.

Q. I know you said in the past quite a few times that 2016 was the most stress you've ever felt on the golf course. Do you think week will be the same and if so why?

INBEE PARK: I say it is not the same. I mean, 2016 was far most pressure-filled I've ever felt in my life. I don't know if I could do that once again. So if I felt it once again this year, I don't think I would be able to play. It is definitely much better and much more relaxing this year because of my condition, my conditions are not as bad as in 2016 where I had to deal with the injury, where I had to deal with a lot of pressure, but this year is a bit different, a little bit. Obviously the atmosphere is a little bit different, we don't



have much spectators or anything like that to have and just, I have no injury this year and I have been playing the season well. So it's a little bit different to 2016, but the same result would be nice, right? (Laughing).

Q. At the first, when you in the immigration at the airport you took a long time and could you tell us your condition at this moment and please also tell us your schedule tomorrow.

INBEE PARK: Yes, in the immigration process we took a long time and also from airport to the hotel it also takes, it also took a long time. They are making me a little tired, but the supporters and the staff prepared a good food and so I slept well. Not only myself, also other staff, we stayed well.

For tomorrow's schedule, my main will be nine and the 18. I had thought about that, but for me I think the rest is more important for me. So tomorrow I will be mainly exercise in the nine.

JIN YOUNG KO: Same as Inbee. We were with the, at the immigration for a long time and during that time I talked with people, so the time was not long and we managed to tell jokes and they will be my good memories. When we're back to hotel, the staff prepared some kimchi and so it's make me very good condition. Tomorrow I will be also catch the nine hole.

Q. Inbee, when you think back to Rio, could you talk a little bit more about the pressure you were facing, where was it coming from and why was it so intense?

INBEE PARK: Well, I think because it was a little bit different because I was representing the country and I was going through the injury. It's just not like a normal tournament where I don't feel well so I'll just pull out and I'll just play well in the next event, it's just not that kind of an experience. It's once in a four-year opportunity and I did want to play well and I didn't want to withdraw from the tournament because of the injury. So I really, I was just trying really hard to fight the injury, but obviously with the injury a lot of people got worried. My family, my staff and probably the whole of the Korea was probably worrying that I am not in the best condition. So I think that was kind

of the pressure that kind of I was dealing with and to overcome that was really, really hard. I've been in a lot of situations where I felt a lot of pressure before, but it's just some kind of pressure I've never felt before and very stressful moments. But I think that maybe that kind of pressure and that kind of feel gave me a power to overcome a lot of the stuff and being able to win gold was amazing.

Q. Where do you keep that gold medal anyway?

INBEE PARK: In my home.

Q. Do you show it to anybody?

INBEE PARK: Well, whoever visits my house definitely takes a look at it.

Q. From your perspective and I know you weren't in the Olympics, but being in Korea at the time, I wonder if you could comment on what Inbee was going through. Could you sense the kind of pressure she's talking about? Can you sense what it was from home in Korea? Were you impressed with her?

JIN YOUNG KO: Yeah, when I was in 2016 I was watching the TV on her and then she got a gold medal and I was thinking, I really want to play Olympics for 2020. But I wasn't thinking I could play Olympics because I played KLPGA Tour in 2016, so I, this week is like my like dream. Also, I'm really proud of being on the same team with Inbee and good players and, yeah, I'm happy to play with Inbee, I'm proud of Korea team.

Q. In this kind of difficult situation do you prepare for and enjoy these Olympics?

INBEE PARK: Actually, I couldn't, actually it's harder to enjoy this because compared with other matches, Olympics is more harder. Compared with the Rio Olympic games this time I have no injury, so I can play with the normal condition and we have also other younger players from Korea, so I hope we can make our Korean flags in the top of the victory ceremony.

Q. This time Korean team is four members, could you enjoy this Olympics as a team play?

JIN YOUNG KO: Actually, it's harder to enjoy this because we are the country's representatives in the Olympic games. So we were four members, we are four members, so it's like a team play. We can help each other, support each other and me and Hyo-Joo Kim is the same age and we are good friends and we will help each other. These Olympic games made me pressure, but we hope all our

four members can get a good result in these games.

Q. Did you manage to watch much of the men's competition over the last four days and if so could you learn anything from it, given that it's likely to be much firmer and faster this week. And a quick secondary, have either of you ever been in a seven-way playoff before?

INBEE PARK: Yes, I did watch men's golf last week and also I watched a little bit of Sunday as well when I got here. When I watched golf on TV last week, everything was just stopping really quick and the men was hitting a lot of short irons into the greens, so I thought the course was probably playing short and probably very soft. I went out there yesterday and the course was actually a little bit, a lot firmer than I thought and a lot longer than I thought. So the course was playing a lot tougher than I thought. And I was surprised because when we were teeing off the first tee we were on the same tee box as the men. So on the first hole I had 200 yards to the pin. So the course is long and it's definitely a lot tougher. I mean, the rough is up and hitting -- I mean, the men were hitting short irons into the greens, so they could attack a lot of the pins, but we are hitting a little bit longer clubs into the greens, so some pins are going to be very, very tough to get to. The greens are going to get firm with this weather and I don't know if we're going to get rain or not, but I think it's going to play pretty tough with the rough as well.

Q. For this is your first time here to the golf course?

INBEE PARK: Yes.

Q. Yesterday when you exercised on this course did you feel any difference in the course and the green?

INBEE PARK: The course compared with Rio Olympics, the long, it's longer in the front and the green is a little firm. For the tee box I needed to adjust, but totally the course and the green, the condition was well. So later I think I needed to adjust for the tee box.

Q. Could you honestly talk about the feeling of this Olympics? This is your first time to participate in Olympics.

JIN YOUNG KO: Yes, this is my first time, so I got many interviews from media. I hope I can do my best and the results will show. Actually, we wait for, we took more than one years because the of the COVID 19 and it's very good I can overcome from this harder situation.

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