

# Women's Olympic Golf Competition

Tuesday, 3 August 2021  
Saitama City, Saitama, Japan  
Kasumigaseki Country Club

## Lexi Thompson Danielle Kang Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started. Lexi, hole-in-one yesterday, that has to be a good way to start off your practice here at as club.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, thank you. I played about 16 holes yesterday and it was the course was absolutely amazing, great shape for us great layout. A good way to start a practice round with a hole-in-one. So we'll see, hopefully keep it going.

THE MODERATOR: Danielle, you're making your Olympics debut. What does it mean to be here representing the USA?

DANIELLE KANG: To be able to represent your country, especially at the Olympics is probably the highest honor that we could achieve. Being able to be part of the Olympic games for me actually let me know that I did something right. It's the ultimate approval that, as an athlete, I've done something right. So I'm really honored to be here, really thankful and there's not a lot of words to be put in for me as someone that grew up absolutely putting the games itself as a pedestal.

THE MODERATOR: Take some questions.

**Q. It's hot outside. Like really hot. Have you played in temperatures like this before, if so where, how do you stay cool, I can't handle it. (Laughing).**

LEXI THOMPSON: It's definitely a bit hot. I'm from Florida so I'm used to the heat. I just came from 95 degree weather in Florida this past week, so I would say I've been pretty used to it, but it's definitely hot out there, you just have to make sure you stay hydrated and making sure that you're getting the right nutrients out there, making sure you're energized.

DANIELLE KANG: We played in Singapore and Thailand,



we used to play in Malaysia back in the day, those are all really hot places. Florida is humid heat, so she's probably used to the humidity. I'm from Vegas, it's pretty dry heat out there. All in all I actually love the heat, so I actually keep warm during the heat and I drink hot tee on the golf course. I don't like contrasting hot and cold, then I feel like I'm hotter. I feel more of the heat. So I try and feel a bit neutralizing internal and external and just breathe through it.

**Q. Based on your experience, it's good to be in team colors, a team bag, everything is so representing country oriented. And then when you get to the tee tomorrow it's almost like another tournament. How do you move from kind of one spirit or feeling to the next and how do you distinguish when you're on the golf course that this is not just another tournament?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, of course, well first off it's the Olympics, it's not just another event. We're out here with the best of the best of the athletes of all these different sports, it's like Danielle said it's the highest honor you can possibly have to represent your country. Growing up I wasn't able to say that I wanted to be an Olympian because golf wasn't in the Olympics until like -- well, 1904 was the last year. So it's a pretty big deal for just the game of golf. I think it just shows how much the game has grown. But, yeah, there's no -- unfortunately there's no team aspect of the Olympics for golf, but at the same time weather all representing our country, we're all rooting for our country. I always say every time I tee it up I'm not only playing for myself but I'm representing the United States of America. But waking up and putting my country's colors on, there's nothing like it. So we're going to go out there and represent as best as we can.

**Q. Can you give me an idea of what it's like, I know you played in at Pinehurst in 2014 and I know you played in Rio. What are the benefits to the women's game, if any at all, playing the week after the men in such a high-profile event?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I'm guessing you're asking me.

**Q. Yeah, sorry.**



LEXI THOMPSON: It's okay.

I think we all got to see the guys play this past week, I got to watch a little bit on TV. I was flying over when they were finishing up the last round, so we got to get a feel for it watching them and then we get as much insight as we can from on TV, I guess, but it's great. The course is in amazing shape. There's not anything out of place. The guys didn't tear it up or anything. There was only 60 players so it's not like it was a full field. But it's just a great honor just to be her and it's a blessing to be able to tee it up and play in the Olympic games.

**Q. One thing that the guys struggled with was figuring out, is this course like any course they typically play. Comparing it. Is this course remind you of anything on the LPGA Tour and what would it be?**

DANIELLE KANG: Not really. Every golf course we play is different. Every single week that we tee it up has different grass. We got to figure out the Stimp on the greens, what kind of how the greens are reacting, how the ball's rolling, we got to figure out the breaks. That's different per week. So I think calibrating every week is just a part of our job. I did watch the guys play, but I think it's going to play really different from how the guys played for us. The golf course is playing really long, I don't really see a lot of wedge shots spinning back that I watched on TV. We're hitting a lot of like full rescues -- that's speaking for myself, Lexi hits it 80 yards by me -- so seeing a lot of rescues and 5-woods into par-3s and 4-irons. So we're going to have to see how the scores turn out, but it's going to be different, it's a new challenge and excited to be here.

**Q. We saw something Sunday that we didn't see in Rio, where we had just clear cut 1, 2, 3 finishers, gold, silver, bronze. We go on to the next week -- which is really rare in golf without having ties somewhere. So what do you think the pressure would be like, no matter the medal, if you wound up like we had Sunday, like a seven way playoff for the bronze or if you had like a four-way playoff for the silver. Can you imagine what that would be like?**

DANIELLE KANG: To be honest with you, this is my first Olympic debut and unfortunately -- I watched a documentary that Michael Phelps did, it's called the Weight of Gold and it shows how if you don't win gold you're not really remembered. If you finish gold, silver, or bronze, if you finish fourth you're not going to be remembered. And for a lot of other different sports it's a depending upon an eighth of a second and for us it might be one shot. Especially with bronze when CT Pan won the bronze out of seven-people playoff. But with all that said the pressure is

on for everybody. Everyone's out here representing their country and it is the highest honor. So when I was at the village I noticed that everybody that's here from all around the world is so proud to be here to represent who they are. Putting the medal aside, I just think that every athlete that has showed up, that has represented their country, that is here, that worked so hard, some people Olympics is the pinnacle for their sport, for our sport as well. But we're fortunate enough to be able to compete for a higher purses week-in and week-out and we have next thing, which is the British Open and all that. But for them it's, this is it and they have to wait another four years. So with all that said, I just wanted everyone to be proud to become an Olympian. A medal is a medal, but can't really, I can't really put the focus so much on who is going to win a medal and who is not. I just want people to be proud.

**Q. Along those lines, and I would open it up to either one of you, if you look at so many other Olympic sports whether it's track or volleyball, whatever, you kind of have an idea who is supposed to win the gold, who is supposed to medal and there's actually upsets if someone doesn't. Golf, we have no bloody idea how this thing is going to turn out. In that respect does that almost make it the hardest sport to medal in, just given the depth and parity and the nature of the sport itself?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, I mean I don't think in any sport you can really assume that somebody's going to win. Yeah, there's athletes that are on their top of their game and that you could think that, but you never know if it's somebody's week or day, every single day. Same thing as golf. You see super low scores every single day and sometimes it's just their week. So you can never really assume that, we're all just doing our best, we put in a lot of hard work and dedication to be here in this moment. So, yeah, we just take one shot at a time and if we're blessed enough that it works out for us, great. If not, we're going to continue to work at it.

DANIELLE KANG: I think like with that said, I don't think there's anything that's saying like you're supposed to win, this person's supposed to medal. I think that's the pressure that a lot of people can't handle. Because, I mean, I'm sure that Lexi has hit thousands of golf balls, millions of golf balls. I putted millions at the same time, 3-footers, but can't guarantee it's going to go in. I'm supposed to make it, but everybody, every athlete that's here still has to execute what they practiced and perform and showcase.

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