

Women's Olympic Golf Competition

Monday, 5 August 2024

Paris, France

Le Golf National

Shannon Tan

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the first press conference of the week for the women's golf competition. I'm delighted to be joined by Singapore's first Olympic golfer, she is also the youngest player in the field this week, Shannon tan.

Shannon, hearing that back, how much is it an honour to be Singapore's first golfer is?

SHANNON TAN: It definitely is an honour. I think first of all, represent your country on the biggest stage of definitely is a big honour and representing your country on your shirt and on your back, like that's just the thing that could ever happen.

THE MODERATOR: What's the reaction been like back home to you playing?

SHANNON TAN: It's been good. Like you just know a lot of people back home are supporting you, like friends, family, everyone in general, be more aware about golf, and I think I've golf at the biggest stage in the Olympics definitely brings more awareness back home in Singapore. That definitely is good.

THE MODERATOR: You've been here since the Opening Ceremony. Tell us about your Olympic experience so far.

SHANNON TAN: So I got here the day before the opening and I attended the Opening Ceremony which was quite cool, and raising your country's flag and having people from back home come down and like support Singapore and your country, it was just an amazing experience seeing so many other athletes from other different sports, as well, totally different. I feel like this week's golf tournament, there's also a lot of other sports going around at the same time is quite cool to see because you don't normally see athletes from other sports at a golf event. That's what's cool about the Olympics.

THE MODERATOR: And you're staying in the Olympic



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Village. How cool has it been there?

SHANNON TAN: It's been really cool. I saw a lot of athletes from different sports, and it's quite cool like you get to meet people from other sports from your same country as well that you don't really see a lot, and there's a lot of athletes from the same country representing your sport at the same time. It's quite cool as well.

Q. What was it like, you are here representing Singapore, how would you compare that with the World Amateur Team?

SHANNON TAN: I would say right now, like you're playing against the best golfers in the world, like you have Nelly Korda No. 1 and major winners and tour winners playing this week.

Playing in the team amateur in 2018 representing Singapore, it was a great amateur, and that stage, it was definitely a good experience for me back then. I was 14. But I think a lot of the players I'm seeing this week have also played in that same amateur team championship. So it's nice to see how far that we've all come from then to now.

Q. Was that the first time you've represented Singapore in world competition?

SHANNON TAN: Probably, yes. 2018 at Carlton House in Ireland was the first one.

Q. What would you say are the differences between Singapore and Lubbock, Texas? What did you get there and what did you think when you first got on campus?

SHANNON TAN: I would say one of the biggest things about college, it's like you've got NCAA Division I where you see the other good colleges -- Stanford, all other good players. I would say it's a really good competitive environment and the college events that we get to play, about 10, 11, 12 events a season. So I would say that was quite good.

Q. Let's get back to Lubbock for a minute. Do you have a favourite restaurant?

SHANNON TAN: Appleby's. I like the fish and chips at Appleby's.

Q. I didn't think we were going there. Were you ever in school with Ludvig?

SHANNON TAN: Yes, so it was my freshman year. It was his senior year. So we spent a year together.

Q. He talked about going to a lot of places with ribeye steaks and he loves them now. Have you ever had one of those ribeye steaks?

SHANNON TAN: I think I did at like some Texas place but not really a steak person to be honest. I'm more like a fish-and-chips person.

Q. Lastly, and we'll get back to golf, I promise. Do you have cowboy boots?

SHANNON TAN: I do. My coach bought us all cowboy boots.

Q. Do you wear them?

SHANNON TAN: But I do not wear it. Like I feel like it's really tough to match it with stuff.

Q. Let me recommend some Wrangler's. I will work on that later. How often did you play the golf course? Did you go out yesterday when they were still playing?

SHANNON TAN: I tried to watch the golf in person but to be honest, the atmosphere was really good and like the crowds were really good, and I'm not the tallest person. I tried to get on heels but I still can't really see a thing. So I just watched it on TV.

Q. Have you played the course yet?

SHANNON TAN: Yeah, I played the course on last Sunday, Monday, when you could play in the course. The course is in pure condition. The rough was a bit thick to be honest but the course was pure.

Q. What do you think will be the biggest challenge on the golf course?

SHANNON TAN: Probably the rough. Like the rough was about seven inches thing. But I think just keep it on the fairway and green and you'll be all good.

Q. Are you tired of talking to me? I'm done.

I have one. What did you think about watching the men play Le Golf National this week?

SHANNON TAN: Honestly the men are incredible but I feel like watching Scottie go out there, tying the course record, yeah, it was great to watch, and anything like that the games are a bit different compared to the women's game. They all hit it way further and out of the rough, as well, it's probably easier for them out of the rough considering how much stronger they are physically. So hitting out of the rough with a 7-iron is probably a lot easier for them.

But at the same time, it's good to watch like how Tommy almost won but in the end made a putt for last on the par and got his Silver Medal. So it was quite nice to watch them.

Q. Just in general, when did this Olympic kind of dream kind of become true to you? When did it finally feel real that you were an Olympian? Was it when you qualified or when you got here in Paris?

SHANNON TAN: I would say when I officially knew that I was in, it was quite -- it took awhile to sink in. I think the moment I arrived, just walking into the Village and like looking around, it was like, wow, am I actually here. It was quite surreal.

Q. And who would you say is the most famous person you've seen so far?

SHANNON TAN: To be honest I think they are all famous. Like Ludvig, Scottie, yeah. I mean, I saw Ludvig on Tuesday and yeah, considering how we spent a year together at Texas Tech, and had a lot like in common, and it was good to see him again out here on the professional, Olympic stage, the biggest stage of golf, and great to see how we both came out of college and are on this stage right now.

THE MODERATOR: Just a couple more from me to finish.

Who is going to be out supporting you this week?

SHANNON TAN: I know a couple people from back home in Singapore that will be out here supporting me. I've also got a couple friends from my golf club back in Australia, I was in high school there for two years. I know a couple people at home who can't come who are going to watch it on TV for all four days.

THE MODERATOR: Your parents here?

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

SHANNON TAN: They are here but they don't watch me play on the course. I think it's just been a thing like they never watch me play on the course but like I saw that they are always supporting me from wherever they are at.

THE MODERATOR: And just finally then, Singapore has just the one Gold Medal in the swimming. What would it do for your career and for your country if you were to get a medal this week.

SHANNON TAN: It would definitely be great but at the same time Scottie's goals for this week were just to have fun and he was probably the only player that said to have fun, where everyone else said to come back with a medal or come back with the Gold Medal.

I think I'm going to look up to that and just probably aim to have fun like what Scottie did but at the same time it would also be great for golf like back home.

Q. Why don't your parents watch you play golf? Does it make you nervous?

SHANNON TAN: I think they have like never really been a good luck charm to me since I was young, like when I was a kid. So never wanted to risk it. They never watch me play. I mean, like they have been out at a couple events but they would never be on the course. They would just be in the clubhouse. Yeah, I think it's just a thing from when I was young and they weren't exactly a good luck charm on the course physically.

Q. What was the first golf tournament you went to?

SHANNON TAN: First ever, I was probably five or six years old, was like a nine-hole tournament back in Singapore.

First international event, probably like Callaway World Junior in San Diego.

Q. Did you ever attend, like as a fan?

SHANNON TAN: For me, the HSBC, probably that was my first ever golf event that I've watched.

Q. Do you remember who won? It wasn't the year Paula Creamer made that big, long putt, was it?

SHANNON TAN: No, not that year. That was 2014 when she made that putt. I think I was like six years old. I couldn't really remember much to be honest.

Q. Sometimes when you get countries that don't have

a long history in golf but have great players come through, do you have a golfing hero in Singapore, and who is your golf idol as a kid?

SHANNON TAN: Like golf idol in general? Georgia Hall. Like she is the one person -- like I look up to a lot of the others but I think me and Georgia has got a couple similarities, like her dad got her into golf. Like it's just nice to see how she didn't really come from much and like how she's also like -- she takes tough conditions like it's not tough at all, and she's a great person.

Yeah, she's really nice. I look up to her for like who she is as a person but at the same time, I look up to Rose Zhang as well. Both played college at the same time. We played together at regionals in my freshman year, and she ended up turning professional the next month and won on her LPGA debut. I think it's cool to see how we both sort of grow up at the same time and the same generation and how we both came from college golf to professional golf.

Q. How old were you when you first beat your dad in golf?

SHANNON TAN: Probably nine years old. But he's off like a 10 handicap. He's all right as a golfer.

Q. Did he accept that okay when you beat him?

SHANNON TAN: He honestly did. He just couldn't wait for me to beat him. That means I'm getting better.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

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