

KPMG Women's PGA Championship

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

Frisco, Texas, USA

Fields Ranch East

Lydia Ko

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Lydia Ko joins us now at the 2025 KPMG Women's PGA championship. Lydia, welcome to Fields Ranch East at PGA Frisco. What are your thoughts on the East Course so far?

LYDIA KO: In all honesty, I'd actually heard a lot of mixed reviews before coming here, but it's never the true experience, and you don't really know until you're actually here.

Yesterday I played the back nine, and today was the first time I saw the whole golf course. It's really nice. I think the front nine and back nine has very different characteristics. It kind of felt like two different golf courses in ways. I kind of prefer these windier conditions today over yesterday.

But it's been a great experience so far. The whole setup they have here is really awesome, from the hotel to the practice facility. So I think it's going to be a great week and very convenient for all of us.

Q. I know fellow Kiwi Ryan Fox has had a lot of success recently. What do you make of his success, and how awesome has it been to see him break through with these wins recently?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, it was super cool when he had his first win at Myrtle Beach and then winning two times out of four and having a 50 percent winning rate is pretty crazy, especially in this sport.

Yeah, he's been playing really well. I think the first win got him into the PGA Championship, and then the second one got him into the U.S. Open.

It's been really cool to follow him. I've known him for a really long time from junior golf days, so to see a fellow Kiwi doing really well, especially at the biggest stage in our sport has been awesome to follow.

I hope that there are many more juniors that are aspiring future Ryan Fox or myself. It would be cool to see more down the road more of the New Zealand flag on the leaderboards.

Q. Had you given any idea or thought to 2028 and possibly a mixed team event, to play with him?

LYDIA KO: I think in Paris we were both like, oh, this is probably our last Olympics; I said Paris was probably going to be my last one.

I think it's a really fun format to have that mixed team event. I don't think I'll be competing in that one, but it's a great way to integrate the sport. No, it's fun. As much as the stroke play component is what we normally play, it's good to change it up a little bit.

I think golf has been back in the Olympics long enough now that I think we can change it up. I'm excited to see it, and I think it gives opportunities for people that may have not medaled individually, to kind of go for a team event.

Yeah, it's super exciting. Whether I play in it or not is not really the big thing, but I think it's great for our sport.

Q. I'm wondering, when you're playing a course like this that people don't know a lot about and you're trying to prepare for a major, do you watch any video from the 2023 Senior PGA that was played here?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, this is a fairly new golf course, so there's not a lot of information out there. I think some people heard I prepared for the U.S. Women's Open by watching YouTube golf. There wasn't much of that here, so I didn't get that kind of preparation coming in.

Steve Stricker, I think, shot 20-something under par to win, which seems like a very low number out here. I feel like this kind of golf course, it's dictated a lot by what time of the year you play. It's not that firm and fast yet, and I think there may be a little bit of rain in the forecast.

So I think the course is probably going to play a lot longer than maybe how the senior men played it a couple years



ago.

We've got the world's best here, and I wouldn't be surprised if there are a few low numbers. But it's a major championship; I don't think we're all expecting to shoot 5-, 6-under every day. There might be the occasional low one, and it's going to test us in every element.

I think this golf course is great because it kind of fits all types of players. Obviously if you're a little longer, I think you can carry some of the bunkers that's more in the middle of the fairway. Other than that, I think it's not really that favorable towards one type of player, and that obviously makes it more interesting because it opens up the leaderboard a bit more.

Q. Is there a stretch of holes that you think might be instrumental, whether it's the ability to birdie a couple holes or potentially rugged stretch of holes?

LYDIA KO: I think the front nine has a little bit more of character, I think in general, than the back nine. The back nine I think you could end up making a lot of pars, and in ways you could lose your focus.

So I said I think it's going to be really important to come down the stretch being really focused. I think, especially when things are on the line, it's easy to kind of switch off because it's such a long week.

The front nine, I think is going to be key. There's some more elevation into greens, and the greens kind of sit a little bit differently than just more straightforward shots. I think playing the front nine really smart is really good, and the back nine, just playing steady golf and just giving yourself a lot of opportunities.

But it's a mix because there's three par-5s on the front nine, and I think one on the back. So it might seem like the harder nine, but there is obviously going to be more shots where you're going to hit shorter clubs in.

Q. People that live somewhere are used to the conditions, but when you don't live somewhere, I was wondering your thoughts on the heat. Does it seem hot? Does it seem okay? What are your thoughts on the heat this week?

LYDIA KO: Yesterday was hot, but I also live in Florida, which can get really hot. I just didn't know that Dallas got hot and humid. I thought it was very dry. So it was a little surprising yesterday.

Yeah, it's the same. I think the great thing about it is it's not like 55 in the morning and it goes up to 90. It's like

comfortable, like 70-something during the morning, and then it's obviously really hot in the afternoon.

I saw the forecast, and I think it's meant to be pretty breezy, which is like -- it feels like somebody turned the heater on. I came out of the clubhouse, and I said, who turned the heater on? The breeze is definitely much nicer than without it yesterday.

It's going to be the same conditions, you play once in the morning, once in the afternoon, and that sets you up for the weekend, so I think that's going to play very fair.

I won Singapore in the heat, so I think I can survive.

Q. This is the home of the PGA of America where we are, and they're going to have a lot of tournaments here, a lot of majors, probably more KPMG tournaments will be here. Just your thoughts on playing a place that you played before as opposed to just going to a major site that you've never seen before and never held a major?

LYDIA KO: I don't know how many years I need to be playing more to be back here again, but I think the great thing about a lot of our -- like our U.S. Open and KPMG especially, we're going to these kind of historical places where traditionally maybe the men have gone and played, places like an Erin Hills, where they've held a lot of other USGA events.

This is great with the PGA of America's headquarters here, and to my knowledge, I think Gil Hanse and the team, they designed this course to host championships. It's designed with a purpose, and obviously the more frequently you go to these kind of sites, you kind of get more familiar with it.

At the same time, you need to play for a really long time to go to these returning sites. Places like Hazeltine, I played a while ago, but it's nice to come back to these courses that we played at, but at the same time, it's nice to kind of have -- kind of face a new golf course too.

I think there's pros and cons to both. This site is definitely going to be around for a very long time, the men's and the women's side.

Q. I know I asked you about this at the U.S. Women's Open, but you're starting to get even closer to Annika's all-time leading money earner record in LPGA history. Could you speak to how cool it would be to pass her and how cool it would be to do that in a shorter amount of time?

LYDIA KO: In ways it's unfair because she's won

70-something times and I've only won -- I'm proud of my 23, and I'm hoping to have a few more by the time I'm done. We are just playing in a very different era.

I think I've said multiple times in woman's golf and women's sports in general, we're just on such a high, I think it's very fortunate in this generation to be able to ride it.

We're very grateful to these kind of key partners like KPMG and many others that are supporting us and believe in what women's golf can be. I feel like we're still in the process of the big end goal.

I think as a player now obviously, I'm very grateful for the opportunities I have, and even having the biggest possible winner's check at the CME Group Tour Championship.

I'm very lucky to be born in this era, so it's kind of hard in the sense of being even compared to Annika, who has done much more than me. I think that's why it's our duty as players or just the whole organization to be able to keep growing it and give more opportunities for the future generations and the kids that are coming out here to watch us play.

Q. You've won in a myriad of states, but I'm just wondering if you could speak to Texas golf. You've talked about the heat, you've talked about the golf course, but just Texas as a whole and the way this state plays, if you could speak to that.

LYDIA KO: In all honesty, I've not really played well in the state of Texas, but this is my favorite course in Texas yet (laughter). I said this building is the nicest building I've seen in Texas too.

I think there is always time for a change, and I think if you go down the hole of saying, okay, I've only won in California or I've only won in Florida, you're kind of putting pressure and doubt in your own mind. Yeah, there's always opportunity for wins.

At the same time, there's 156 players, and as long as you're competing, you have that chance to be out here. I think that's the great thing about this golf course, is even if you were local to the area, I don't think you're that familiar to this golf course. It's a pretty level playing field.

I think it doesn't matter if you've seen the golf course 100 times or once. If you're playing good and hitting good quality golf shots, I think that's what matters most at the end of the day.

I feel like I've done good work with my coaches, and hopefully I'm going to do that and just give myself a good

run at it.

I feel like KPMG Women's PGA championship is one that I feel like I could/should win with the type of golf courses we play. I saw Meg Mallon and Beth Daniel yesterday and said, hopefully I can join you at the champions dinner someday and have a dinner menu curated by me.

Yeah, it's a group party that I would love to be a part of. But I know that even our normal events, it's hard to win, and a major is just to a whole new level. It would be pretty cool to be a Women's PGA champion.

Q. You mentioned this is a tournament that you feel like you could/should win. If you were to win, in the context of your career, what would that mean to you?

LYDIA KO: It would be pretty awesome. I was talking to my caddie about this, and I was like, I shouldn't have won the British Open. That's where I probably had not the best record going into St Andrews last year, especially coming off the week at Olympics a couple weeks prior.

So if I made the impossible possible, I feel like as long as I'm playing good golf and I'm smart and I'm committed out there, hopefully I can give myself opportunities. Whether this is the one or maybe future sites, I'm not really sure, but I do really like it out here.

I feel like I'm enjoying playing a lot more these days than before, and it just puts me in a better mindset where I'm not frustrated and stressed out as much.

When things are on the line, things can change. There were a lot of emotions at the U.S. Open last year, but I think it just purely because it means a lot to all of us players, you just never know until that pressure and that moment comes.

I think that's the reason why we play for those kind of key moments. Hopefully I'll be able to put myself in contention in those times a bit more frequently in the future.

Q. You mentioned The Open and the Olympics. I'm curious, there's been a lot of talk about Rory winning the Masters and having a get-your-dream comedown, like a malaise. For someone who's achieved many dreams, how did you find the after affect of achieving that, and then how did you reposition yourself to find a new mountain to climb?

LYDIA KO: I think I thought my life or maybe the way I thought about myself would change when I got in the Hall of Fame and did a lot of the things I wanted to do before it actually happened, and I'm sure Rory is thinking the same

in similar parts, where everybody was like, oh, Masters is the one he was missing. Like what if? And then he did it.

And as much as I'm sure he's so happy and relieved, he's just as good the day before, like before he won it.

It's just -- I think that's what I kind of came to peace with. I think sometimes when it's right there in front of you and see all these statistics, you feel like you should do more. I think that some of the things we've already gotten, we take for granted. I think that's what I realized most, and that's what made me realize I've still got to go out there and practice and put in the time to play well the week after.

That's the thing about golf. Our season is so long that there's really not much time to just kind of relax. Even the off-season goes by so fast. There's not much time to honestly sit down on that thought.

I'm pretty sure he wanted to win the U.S. Open when he teed it up. It's the same. We're greedy in that sense, like nothing will fulfill us fully until we're done. I think that's -- I don't think that's a bad way of putting it. I think that's the reason why we play. That's why he's at his level because of his competitiveness.

Q. They say you can learn a lot about somebody by playing golf with them. What did you learn about Craig Kessler today?

LYDIA KO: It was my first time meeting Craig today. I had only heard a lot of lovely things about him. I'm not just saying that because he's our new commissioner. It was from former players to people that worked with him at other companies. Everybody said a lot of great things, and I think he was exactly that.

It was just great to pick his brain and even ask him why he wanted to go for the commissioner role because it's not an easy job. For him to have this passion and this excitement to see where he can take our Tour, I think it's great to have a leader like that. It was, I think, a great first meeting.

I'm sure he's busy with still wrapping things up with the PGA of America and transitioning into our role as well, but it's exciting. I think it's a great time for golf. It's great to have somebody like him that's enthusiastic and really wants to see where -- like how far we can go.

Q. Does he have game?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, he played really good, especially the back nine. He played really well. We finished at the top of the leaderboard by the end of like our round. I don't know if somebody played better. So we're good, yeah.

We don't want him to be too good, right? He can't be playing too much golf. No, he's great. He just seems like he has a lot of good energy, and I think that's really important in any person.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

