

CPKC Women's Open

Wednesday, August 23, 2023

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Shaughnessy Golf & Country Club

Lydia Ko

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome back inside the media center here at the CPKC Women's Open. I am pleased to be joined by the three-time champ of this wonderful event, Lydia Ko.

Lydia, welcome back to the CPKC Women's Open and welcome back to Vancouver. How are you feeling going into this week and this event?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, I think we were meant to be here at Shaughnessy a couple years ago, and obviously with COVID and everything we're finally here, which is nice. I had heard a lot of great things about the golf club and I have very fond memories of being in Vancouver.

So, yeah, it's exciting to be here. Even from yesterday we had like a ton of people out watching and I think they're just as excited as we are. I think it's going to be a great week.

Q. It goes without saying that the Vancouver area has been kind to you and you've been kind to the Vancouver area. What does it mean to you to be back in a place so familiar to you and those winning ways all those years ago?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, I had actually never been to this side of Vancouver before. I guess when we played at Vancouver Club we stayed in the Coquitlam area and I didn't know that there was also another good golf course here a little closer to the airport.

I had my first LPGA win in Vancouver and I think it's where everything kind of started. Who knows, if I didn't win or play that event maybe I might have not got the opportunities along the way.

Yeah, it's always going to be a very special place for me. I said maybe like if I win like a fourth time I would be like an honorary Canadian by then.

Q. I feel like they'd be happy to have you. Just going into this event, preparing for a course like this, we've heard of the challenging conditions, how have you felt



as you have been able to take a look at the course over the last couple days?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, it's a very traditional style golf course. I saw in the pavement it said like 1911, so I'm guessing that's how long the golf course has been. So been around for a while, and that's what you expect in a golf course like this. Tree lined, you know, narrow fairways. Not super small greens, but they're sectioned off and lot of run-off. So even though the number might say 30 yards, you can't use all of that.

So it is tricky, and I think the front nine and back nine are a little different. They have their own different personality. But I think this might be the toughest Canadian Open venue that I've played at yet. I think it's going to be a lot of fun, and seems like a golf course that like will be good for a lot of players. Like because there is a lot of holes that are like draw, fade, so it's not just suited for one shot same I have same or length.

I think that's what's going to make it exciting. I'm sure it's going to be a very mix and exciting leaderboard on Sunday.

Q. Welcome back to Canada. Obviously you've had a lot of success at this tournament over the years. Just curious, in your career as a whole how important has this tournament been for you?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, very important. Like I said earlier, I actually got a sponsor invite to play here in 2012 and then I got a sponsor invite to play another event on a different tour that same week, and like imagine if I played the other one.

Like I don't know what would have been like the story that unfolds after that. I had won the U.S. Women's Am I think only a couple weeks prior to the Canadian Women's Open in 2012. I was on Cloud 9 winning probably one of the biggest or most prestigious Women's Amateur championships.

I was just excited coming off from that win, and being in Vancouver, playing alongside the best female golfers,



everything was happening so quickly in front of me that I was just trying to enjoy that moment. I remember just setting a goal of, hey, I'm just going to try and make the cut and see where I go from there.

I obviously played really well and finished -- played really well on that last day as well. I think it's kind of been that starting point, and I think sometimes it's really -- you might be like at the finish line and it's really hard to go take that one step over, and that might have been that trigger for me.

You know, I got win again in Edmonton the year after as well, so it's always going to be special. I think no matter how I play I always enjoy coming here. I think the Canadian fans have kind of taken me in, like behind all the Canadian players.

So it's just I've become very appreciative of all their support, too.

Q. Other athletes from Australia, New Zealand, have remarked that Canadian fans are kind of nice to them, maybe the because of the commonwealth of nations. You feel that?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, even in my pro-am everyone is clapping when I hit a fairway or hit a green or make a putt. Everyone is super supportive.

I don't know, like it might be that commonwealth common ground. I mean, love it so much here that at one point I think I was like Googling, do New Zealanders get any like privileges in getting permanent residency or visas in Canada. That's just how much I love it.

One of my favorite Koreans restaurants outside of Korea is also in Vancouver. I used to have a relationship with Lululemon. It's a place I have a lot of great memories, and I think a lot of people here just really appreciate seeing us and are like true golf fans -- and like not in a weird way.

You know, it's just great to be a part of that. No matter if we play in Vancouver or Ottawa, Regina, wherever, I think the location is like a secondary thing. It's just like Canadian people always have that Canadian welcome.

I mean, Brooke is a clear example. She's one of the nicest, most genuine human beings in the whole entire world. I said yesterday she's my favorite Canadian celebrity. So it's just -- I think this just shows what the country is like.

I feel like there is a lot -- I see a lot of New Zealand being here in Vancouver. So, yeah. Only good things.

Q. Welcome back. Is there a particular moment that comes to mind when you think back to 2012?

LYDIA KO: Yes. I think I was in the final round with Jiyai and Stacy Lewis, and Stacy, after the 15th hole I think the hole was kind of this way and then 16 was over this way. After the 15th hole as we were walking to 16 she said like, hey, you're playing really great. Finish strong.

I was like, oh, my God, Stacy Lewis just gave me this amazing advice. Everybody knows in golf, like anything can happen in three holes. For her to like say that and one of the best golfers in the world to like give me that advice and support me, I was like, wow, like I want to be alongside these players one day and I want to be a role model like her.

I think that's probably the most standout. Winning and everything was like awesome, but I just remember that to this day. Like along the way like Stacy will give me this great advice. She might not remember it. I don't know. She's always kind of been like that kind of person and that player.

I think that's probably my biggest standout memory from 2012. Yeah, I just remember it to this day because I was like wow, Stacy Lewis just said that to me. I think I was like more amped up after that.

Q. Right.

LYDIA KO: Yeah.

Q. You've obviously gone on to have a wonderful career since then. You seem to be struggling a bit this year. Where are you at with your game and what has held you back this year?

LYDIA KO: Yeah, you know, last year was probably I think one of the most consistent golf I had ever played. You know, I was No. 1 early in my career and at a point where I didn't -- I was like, I don't even know if I deserve to be No. 1. Even when I became No. 1 I was like, wow, there is so many good players. I don't know if I feel like No. 1.

But, no, I like on and off the golf course so many great things happened and it was a year that -- like even going into 2022, like I couldn't have written all those things in my diary of goals of what I wanted to achieve in the year.

I think there was a lot of expectations coming into this year, like whether that's external or internal, what kind of pressure I put on myself. I won my first event to start the season, and would've been great if I kind of kept going and

riding the high of all that.

But golf is not easy. I think the last couple months it's like interesting where I feel like I'm progressing but the results are not necessarily like showing that. Like the scores aren't like a perfect reflection of how I feel like I'm going.

But I do feel like I'm moving in the right direction. That's all you can do. I was talking with my coach and he said, hey, like did you feel like you were better this week than the week before? I was like, yeah. But it's weird to say yes but you missed the cut.

You can't really -- I don't think there is many other things that you say you got better but the results got worse, you know? So sometimes I think it is really hard to put all those things together. I feel like I'm working on the right things with my team. That's all I can do. I've had my own ups and downs when I wasn't playing as well in 2000 and like '18, '19, '17. Like I wasn't sure if I would ever win again.

Then winning in 2021 was like a -- it was like proving it to myself that I could be back there. Obviously when you're struggling it's really hard to see the good side of things. But my team has kind of kept me walking with my head high and I think we are moving in the right direction.

So I'm just trying to stay patient, and as long as I know I'm getting better and I'm doing my 100% to get better, then that's all I can do. That's what I'm going to continue to work on. Still have ten-ish events this year so just going to try and do a good job of playing this crazy game.

Q. I was curious, what do you think of The Rink hole at No. 17, the hockey themed hole? We were talking before about the Canadian fans. That's going to be the center of the action for fan interaction for you and the other players.

LYDIA KO: I think they had that similar setup on -- was it 17 last year, too?

THE MODERATOR: Yeah.

LYDIA KO: Yeah, so they had that there. At first I was like, why the heck are people slamming on the boards? I was like, that's not normal. But then they were like, oh, it's a hockey thing. Okay, maybe I should like watch the NHL a little bit.

Like realize, oh, this is like a very common thing. Yeah, yesterday I think the volunteers were like doing that, like you to practice. It's going to be like this on Thursday onwards. It's really cool. I'm learning more things about Canada like through those kind of experiences.

I realized a beaver is your national animal. You don't want to know what I first thought. I was like jokingly, hey, is a maple leaf an animal? Obviously it's not. Then I thought Blue Jays for Toronto.

But, no, I'm getting to learn a lot of these different things about these places that we go to. I think that's the perk of our job. As much as sometimes being on this time zone and being in a different time zone the week after might not be the easiest thing, but we get to experience different cultures. Even here Vancouver is different to Toronto and every city is different.

It's a really cool thing we get to experience as golfers. Yeah, I love it. I think CPKC Women's Open, alongside Golf Canada, has always done a great job with this event. And I'm sure this year is just going to be another follow up of their amazing hospitality and hosting us.

THE MODERATOR: I don't make the rules, but if I did, I would probably make you an honorary Canadian.

LYDIA KO: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for coming through, Lydia.

LYDIA KO: Thank you.

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