

The Evian Championship

Tuesday July 23, 2019

Jessica Korda

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome back to the media center here at the Evian Resort Golf Club for the 2019 Evian Championship. I am with Jessica Korda, No. 15 on the Rolex Rankings, five-time winner on the LPGA, making her eighth start at this event with the best finish T8, 2018; 11th start of the 2019 season.

Welcome back to Evian, Jess.

JESSICA KORDA: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: How are you enjoying your time in France?

JESSICA KORDA: I mean, it's obviously beautiful. I think the move to this time of year is going to be really positive. Obviously a lot warmer than we're used to.

But, yeah, we landed yesterday afternoon and just tried to stay up as long as possible and try and sleep through the night and play a practice round just to see the couple changes they've made.

Pro-am tomorrow, and off we go.

THE MODERATOR: What has your major preparation been like? You played with Nelly in the Dow tournament last week and then came over for back-to-back majors in Europe. How does that change your strategy for this week?

JESSICA KORDA: Conserve as much as possible. It's going to be a warm week. Last week was a warm week. I guess next week should be a lot warmer than we're used to seeing. Definitely didn't pack for that.

Yeah, so just confidence as much energy as possible.

THE MODERATOR: This season you haven't finished outside of the top 21.

JESSICA KORDA: Good for me. (Laughter.)

THE MODERATOR: How would you sum up your season and your game entering Evian?

JESSICA KORDA: Definitely there is still some shots that I'm not necessarily happy about that I hit, but I'm progressing in the right direction. Each week I try and put myself up at the top, and some weeks are better

obviously than others.

Yeah, I mean, obviously I had a slow start to the year. Was late coming in; certain swing changes because of my shoulder and wrist. So just still trying to figure it out a little bit.

Moving in the right direction, so I'm happy.

THE MODERATOR: How has this schedule impacted your major preparation? You touched upon that, but this is the first time the LPGA has played back-to-back majors probably since the 1960s. What were you thinking about on the flight over? What have you been thinking about?

JESSICA KORDA: Like I said, I need to conserve energy. I know what I feel like after majors and how much time I like to take off. It's more mentally challenging I think than physically. More physically here obviously. This is one of the hillier golf courses that we do play, and it's going to be warm.

So it's going to be a mixture of trying to take it as easy as possible. Maybe more room service and less going out and mingling with other players. Just, yeah, trying to keep it really simple this week and next.

THE MODERATOR: How special is the Evian Championship for you, and what would it mean to win your first major here?

JESSICA KORDA: I mean, it's awesome. It's got great history. I think we've really built up to event to something really, really cool. Even the celebration on 18 is something that you definitely want. You want to see that U.S. flag coming down. We saw it for Stanford last year, which was really cool.

Just like the last couple years, I mean, the atmosphere here is amazing. And like I said, them moving it to this time year I think it'll be even better. We won't have to be worried about the weather as much and hopefully play four great rounds out here.

THE MODERATOR: Any wagers with Nelly this week?

JESSICA KORDA: No, no wagers. Last week was good enough. We're staying about two inches apart

from each other this week and next week we're going to share a house, so we've got plenty of time together. We don't need anymore wagers.

THE MODERATOR: Open up to questions.

Q. You've really improved your performance in the majors dramatically the last two years. Been really consistent and played well. What do you figure out?

JESSICA KORDA: Nothing. (Laughter.) I've just been trying to apply the same things I'm applying to regular events, play the same amount of practice rounds. I do the same amount of practice. I don't try to add anything more like I used to. I used to do a lot more at majors than I would at regular events.

Honestly, I just changed nothing. Just tried to hit the fairways and hit the greens and make some putts if possible, which hasn't been happening. (Laughter.)

Still good enough to finish high up at the majors. Yeah, honestly just feel a little bit more relaxed. I think coming out - and I wouldn't even say it's how many years I've been on tour or how many majors I've played - it more just how I apply myself.

Q. So what are your thoughts specifically on 18 being a par-5? Do you prefer it that way? What will your strategy be?

JESSICA KORDA: Hallelujah. I love 18 as a par-5. Played it here in 2011. I think it's a great finishing hole. You're not trying to -- bogeys won't be winning, which is what I love. It'll be interesting. If you're a shot back, you're trying to make eagle, hang the fairway is still a huge goal. I haven't played it yet as a par-5, but will tomorrow.

Yeah, it's going to be really trying to hit that fairway and kind of risk/reward type of deal. That green is not easy. There is a lot of hazards. Those bunkers, it's not a gimme out of any of those bunkers depending on where those pins are.

I think it's going to be a really good finishing hole, and I'm really happy that it's back to that versus a par-4, where if you didn't hit the fairway -- you don't want to see bad finishing holes, especially with the leader. You just don't want to see that. Not good for golf, it's not good for anyone. This is definitely the right move. Very happy.

Q. And then you talked a little bit briefly about you and your sister last week. What you did learn about playing together and will we see that potentially in Scotland?

JESSICA KORDA: You know, that's not up to me. If it

was I would play every single day with her. We had so much fun. We kind of figured out after the first fourball kind of what we needed to do a little bit better.

We didn't argue at all, which was awesome. We had a lot of fun. There was a lot of laughs. Even if I made a mistake or she did, it's fine. I don't think we made a bogey in fourball.

We were close a couple times, but if I was out, she had my back. If she was out, I had her back. We didn't feel any extra pressure, which I feel sometimes if you're with somebody that you're not that comfortable with you might have that extra pressure not to let them down.

I think with a sister that's just not the case. Just the comfort and being able to go out there and hit it. I would hit first off the tee. If I was in play, she would send it as well.

It was just a lot of fun. There wasn't a whole lot of thinking. More in alternate shot because she's so good into the greens, and obviously her stats speak for themselves this year. That was something we paid attention to.

With my putting, we just did really, really well. So it's something that obviously we're going to hope for for Solheim, but at the same time it's not our call.

Q. What did you learn? You said you learned something after fourball.

JESSICA KORDA: That's secrets. That's the good stuff.

Q. Could you possibly contrast how you were then with your sister and how you were years and years ago when you were both learning to play at the same time? Did you have arguments then?

JESSICA KORDA: I only caddied for her one time when she was maybe ten years old, and I ripped a club out of her hand and walked away with threw the other one at her and told her she's not hitting it. Obviously that's not the case anymore. (Laughter.)

It's just good because I know exactly how far she hits it; she knows exactly how far I hit it. If we're in between clubs we can talk about it. It's a comfort that not a lot of players would have. I don't think a lot of people know the other person's game as well as we know each other.

In terms of back then, we didn't actually play any competitive golf. We were never in the same age group. So coming out here was the first time we actually ever competed against each other unless it

was a short game match.

Q. Getting back to gambling, is there a bet on who wins a major first?

JESSICA KORDA: Nope. No, but I think we'll both celebrate it as if it's our own.

Q. You're a player who likes to take time off and not wear yourself out. Been that way your whole life with the way your dad did your schedule. Tell me about the dynamic of going into the back-to-back majors and playing the week before. Was that a big decision? I know you said you're trying to conserve energy, but also just for your health, for your body.

JESSICA KORDA: Yeah, so I played three weeks in a row after -- or I think it was before KPMG.

That's a good question. Grand Rapids. So I played Grand Rapids, KPMG, Walmart, so that was my first three in a row this year and I felt really good.

So after that, I made the decision that I was going to play Dow, which we were signed up for but still waiting to see how I was going to feel.

And, you know, obviously coming here we have played this golf course before so I knew I didn't need to play 18, 18, 18 or grind it out or anything like that. That if I got here in time, I could adjust quickly and be ready for the golf course, just seeing how it's playing versus the other years.

I think with the weather too there will be less guessing than with years prior where it would be raining sideways or blowing you over and you're guessing basically.

Q. Sometimes when you come here you go to the Czech Republic and see family. Because of the schedule, has that changed? I heard you talking outside. Is that your...

JESSICA KORDA: No, no. It's actually a rules official.

Q. It wasn't English. I knew that much.

JESSICA KORDA: No, it wasn't. This is kind of throwing me for a loop this year. Going to try and go home after Solheim. Not sure how I'll shut my schedule down after that. We still have a pretty strong end of the year coming up.

So post Solheim Cup I'll make a decision, but I am planning on going -- I call it back home -- going to my grandparents. My cousin is actually at my house right now in Florida. She's watching my dog.

She is there with her fiance, and I'll see her after the

British for a couple days and send her back to the Czech Republic and see her after Solheim.

Q. So not coming over to Europe maybe for the British?

JESSICA KORDA: No, no one is. My grandparents usually would but they have nobody to watch the dogs. It's a totally different priority these days. Dogs over everything. I understand it.

THE MODERATOR: How often does your dog get to travel with you on tour?

JESSICA KORDA: Every week. He's the best. He's really changed my whole perspective on how I basically do a lot of things out on tour. Afternoon tee times, the time just seems to pass so quickly. It's kind of like I guess having a kid at least you can put to bed whenever you want.

He's honestly great. Like in the mornings I just get ready a little bit faster and actually having those walks outside is more refreshing. I just love having him. He's definitely helped a lot. A lot more planning than I'm used to, but at the same time everything I do is specifically timed out and I have to get it done in that time just so he's not sitting at home or daycare or whatever I figure to take him.

Q. What's the dog's name?

JESSICA KORDA: Charlie, the man. (Laughter.)

THE MODERATOR: All right, any last questions for Jess?

JESSICA KORDA: Ended on a good one. Oh, one more.

Q. Has Charlie made friends with any of your particular rivals?

JESSICA KORDA: Zoe is his girlfriend, Morgan's dog. I think that's kind of all we met really. Charlie and Zoe just hit it off. They go to daycare together too. They're the best of friends. We have more dogs on tour than kids as of this year; next year maybe a different story.

THE MODERATOR: Any last questions for Jessica? Thank you so much and great luck this week.

JESSICA KORDA: Thank you. Ending it on dog questions, I love it.