

U.S. Women's Open Championship 2017

Tuesday, July 11, 2017

Michelle Wie

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good morning. Welcome again to the 2017 U.S. Women's Open championship. Really pleased to welcome Michelle Wie to the media center today.

She is the 2014 U.S. Women's Open champion and also the 2003 U.S. Amateur Public Links Champion. It's hard to believe this is true, but you are playing in your 14th Women's Open. Can you talk about the scope of that, that this is number 14 for you?

MICHELLE WIE: It's crazy. I can't believe it's been 14 already. The USGA has been like family to me. I played in my USGA event back in 2000. That's a good part of my life, you know, 17 years. And it's always been so great to come back to USGA events, all the familiar faces. I get to see all the rules officials. It's been great, a great journey so far.

THE MODERATOR: I will say, in 2000, I was actually taller than you. You have been having a tremendous season. Coming in this week with Top-5 finishes in four of your last six starts. Talk about your game coming into the week.

MICHELLE WIE: I feel very excited. It's been a fun year so far. Always great to come into the U.S. Women's Open feeling good about your game, feeling confident. So I feel good about that.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it to questions.

Q. You have been hitting this year -- we call it a fade but in some instances it's about a 20-yard cut. Can you talk about how you got to that point and what that shot has done for you?

MICHELLE WIE: I call it the fade life. I kind of change my ball flight. David and I changed my ball flight in the middle of last season. Felt like I wanted to play with more consistency. Just try to become a more consistent player. Hopefully that fade has brought me to that.

The bigger fades are more of like when it's left-to-right wind, I still play the fade so it really rides it. I have to be aggressive in my lines.

Q. What was the (no microphone)? How will you



play it?

MICHELLE WIE: Good. I just hit it over the trees.

Q. Obviously you are having a great season this year and I'm just curious, are you also motivated by the fact that it's a Solheim Cup year?

MICHELLE WIE: For sure. Since this year started, I didn't rack up many points last year. I was far down on the list. That was one of my main goals to make the team. I knew I had to play good golf this year. I didn't want to leave it to a captain's pick. I'm trying my hardest to make it on the team.

Q. Having played in so many majors and having won one, how does that help you deal with the pressure and the environment that surrounds an event like this?

MICHELLE WIE: There's a lot of nerves coming into majors. There is a part where you get a little bit stressed. Just having the memory of having won the U.S. Open in 2014, hopefully that will help me a lot this week. It gives me confidence knowing that I have done it before. It makes me really excited.

The U.S. Open week has been my most important week of the year. I get excited about it. I try not to put so much pressure on myself as I most always do. I'm here to have fun and play some good golf.

Q. How did winning this championship change how you viewed your career and maybe life in general for you?

MICHELLE WIE: Yeah, I just think that it took me so long to get to that point and it was just kind of like a will-it-ever-kind-of-happen kind of thing. Obviously there was a lot of doubts and a lot of things that creep into your mind. Knowing that I have achieved that in 2014, it definitely makes me have a different perspective. It makes me believe that I can do it again. Makes me believe that I am good enough and kind of did validate a lot of things for me.

At the same time it's definitely motivating me. I know how great that felt. It was one of the proudest moments of my life. It's a high. I kind of want to get to that high again. Definitely been motivating for me.

Q. As you know, it's an uncomfortable topic but we have to talk about it. Donald Trump is a man who

bragged about sexually assaulting women. Now he's hosting the crown jewel of women's golf, the U.S. Women's Open. What do you think of that?

MICHELLE WIE: I take my role as a female role model very seriously. This week is about the golf. The U.S. Open is our national championship. It is one of my favorite weeks of the year. So this week, you know, I really want to focus on the golf part and I want to hopefully inspire a lot of young women and women in general hopefully with my game.

I think that the LPGA has done a great job of growing junior golf especially with LPGA girl's golf, PGA junior league. There's so many great places where junior golfers can grow now.

I think that the under 18 girls is the fastest growing part of the game and I get excited about that. I'm excited for this week and hopefully a lot of people will come out and support.

Q. It doesn't concern you?

MICHELLE WIE: I will not comment on any political part this week. This week is about the golf for me. I'm excited to compete in this championship and it's really purely about the golf.

Q. Speaking of which, I know I've seen you out on the golf course. Can you talk about the golf course and the condition that the course is in?

MICHELLE WIE: The condition of the golf course is pure. I think the layout is amazing. It's just pure conditions. It's what you expect from a U.S. Women's Open week. It's what you expect from a U.S. Open golf course and I'm excited to play it.

Q. You won 2014 U.S. Women's Open and you have a good memory. Can you talk about your putting now as compared to then?

MICHELLE WIE: My putting? The '14 U.S. Women's Open, there's a lot of good memories. It's like home. It's like family. Like I said before, the USGA is like family. I kind of treat them like it.

My putting it's definitely changed over the years. It's always ever changing, I feel like. I feel like I've kind of settled onto one thing hopefully. For today. For right now. I don't know.

Q. The second question is one month ago, Ai Miyazato announced her retirement. Could you talk about that retirement, a memory of her, or some impression of her play?

MICHELLE WIE: We talked last week about our first tournaments over here. I remember with her short haircut, when she first came over from Japan. There was a phase where we got paired together almost

every week. I remember at the ANA we were paired together almost every year. It's just been so much fun playing with her. She's a great competitor and such a nice person. And what she's done for the game of golf in Japan, it's inspiring.

I definitely teared up when we were talking about how Evian was going to be her last tournament. I was going to convince her to play some more, but I think she's pretty set on it.

Q. With the possibility President Trump coming here, are you sensing heightened security measures? Does the week feel different than a normal week?

MICHELLE WIE: I think the USGA does a great job of providing a safe environment for us. I think just with the heightened security is just it comes with the nature of such a big event. It doesn't feel any different than it would for an NFL game or NBA game. With the amount of crowds that we're expecting this week, I expect the USGA to do everything in their power to create a safe environment for us.

Q. We're at a time in the country, many athletes are being politically and socially active, what makes women golfers reluctant to take stands on issues?

MICHELLE WIE: I'm not here to talk about politics. I'm not here to do that.

This week for me, I already have -- I'm just here to focus on the golf. I'm hear to grow the game and bring more junior girls into the game. That is my goal this week is to play as well as I can, hopefully showcase my best game and to inspire more girls to join the game.

Q. I was just curious if you could talk a little bit about your mentality going into this U.S. Women's Open versus some previous U.S. Opens?

MICHELLE WIE: It always helps to be playing well, I guess, entering an Open. It's such an important tournament for me personally I put a lot of stress on myself, a lot of expectations on myself. So it does make it easier for me mentally to enter the week knowing that I'm playing good golf. The nerves are still there. The stress is always still there. My main goal this week is just to have fun.

Q. You had a great week at KPMG, but your close friend Danielle Kang ended up winning that week. Would you describe about what this win could mean for her career?

MICHELLE WIE: It's going to be huge. I think I just opened up the flood gates. I've always known that she had it in here. I know the feeling. I was talking to her earlier this year she was kind of down. First win in 144 events, you have your doubts about yourself you have

doubts if it will ever happen.

It reminded what I wasn't through, remind me of before my first win and I told her it was going to happen and it was so amazing to see that. I love it in when my friends win. It also inspires me and motivates me to do the same. It was really truly special to see her with her mom being there as well. It was such a fun day.

Q. You had a pretty well orchestrated handshake that we saw afterwards. Talk about how that came together.

MICHELLE WIE: That came together -- well, we got paired for the first time together in Arkansas and we were together and kind of freaking out in the car. We need a cool handshake. We knew the Solheim was this year. We were both trying to make the team. Okay, we need a cool handshake. We were looking up the handshakes online and came up with it.

Q. As you mentioned about Danielle, you've been the broken player who put herself back together not just once, not twice, but maybe a few times. Can you speak about the challenge of doing that, the frustrations you faced?

MICHELLE WIE: Yeah, it's -- I mean, it's -- there is no secret that in my career there's a lot of highs and a lot of lows.

It's definitely hard to put yourself back together. It's definitely not hard -- it's definitely hard the first time. Definitely doesn't make it easier the second time. The comfort that I find in that is knowing that I can, knowing that I have and just knowing that -- how low it's really gotten. Then I've pulled myself out of it. Knowing that I can, it just -- it makes me feel stronger. It makes me feel, you know, more confident that I can in the future. Hopefully I won't put myself back in that position. It is comforting knowing that no matter how bad I can get my friends and family will always be there for me. Be there to help put me back together.

Q. After you won the 2014 U.S. Women's Open, we thought maybe you would below the doors open in 2015 and wipe everybody out. You didn't win in 2015. How concerned or disappointed were you when it didn't happen immediately?

MICHELLE WIE: Yeah, I mean, after I won 2014, that's what I thought as well, too. I thought I was going to win 15 more events. You know, life doesn't happen that way. Life doesn't happen the way you plan it out. Unfortunately, I faced a lot of really big injuries since then.

That's just sometimes life doesn't make it easy for you. But like I said, I kind of piece myself back together. Definitely went through a hard year. This year, you

know, I feel good about it. I feel positives. And you just can't expect too many things from your life. You have to ride with the ups and downs. Life doesn't happen as predictable as you want it to. It's unpredictable and you have to roll with the punches. I feel good.

THE MODERATOR: We look forward to a week of highs this week for you. We wish you a great week here at the U.S. Women's Open.