

# U.S. Women's Open Championship 2017

Tuesday, July 11, 2017

## So Yeon Ryu

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the 2017 U.S. Women's Open. Very happy to welcome this morning the 2011 U.S. Women's Open Champion, So Yeon Ryu, who is playing in her 7th U.S. Women's Open this week.

So Yeon is currently the top ranked player in the world. Has two victories this year, the Wal-Mart Northwest Arkansas and AMA Inspiration and an incredible 9 top-10 finishes in 12 starts this season.

Could you talk a little bit about your game and how you're feeling throughout the season and certainly coming into this week.

SO YEON RYU: Yeah. Definitely I'm having a really great year this year. To be honest, last year was bit of a struggle with my game. I started to change my swing and I started to working with new coach and like this year I finally settle with my golf swing and my coach is not new coach anymore, I've been doing lot of incredible stuff with my coach, Cameron McCormick, my team help me out to perform well, then very luckily I was able to finish lot of Top-10 this year that I already had a two wins under my belt.

So, I feel really great to have a really successful season this year and I hope I'm going to have another Major tournament this week as well.

THE MODERATOR: Can you talk a little bit about the golf course and the conditions, I know you played a few rounds here, the conditions of the course this week?

SO YEON RYU: Couple months ago I played 18 holes with Inbee Park. It was really wet and cold. To be honest, it's a bit different.

Yesterday I also played another 18 and I think golf course is a bit long and rough is definitely long. Even the fairways, like kind of wide for a U.S. Women's Open but rough is thick enough and better not miss the fairway. Huge greens and greens really, really tough.

I think sometimes just middle of the green could be the best spot to putting. So, I think this week USGA required the players, we have to have all sort of different skill and everything have to be perfect.



THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much. We'll open it up to questions.

**Q. So Yeon, talk a little bit about how comfortable you're getting being No. 1 ranked woman in the world and also does it bring more pressure because of that top ranking?**

SO YEON RYU: Yeah, definitely since I become No. 1 player and I just got extra attention like compared to like when I wasn't No. 1.

So, definitely could be the pressure but, at the same time, it's sort of really fun because this is what I've been dreaming of and I'm living the dream right now and I think one of the biggest lesson I've ever learned from my psychologist, Dr. Cho, is just think about what you cannot control and what you can control.

You know, golf, as you know, I cannot control the result. I never know how I'm going to play. What I can control is how I'm going to practice and prepare for this tournament, how I'm going to prepare all the game plans.

So, right now I am not thinking about the result which is make me less pressure about the tournament and I really focus on how I'm going to prepare everything.

**Q. You are statistically the best ball-striker in the game. You talked about working with Cameron but you have also worked with Ian Baker-Finch on your putting. That has improved dramatically in the last year.**

**What have you and Ian been working on, how much confidence is that giving you on the greens?**

SO YEON RYU: When I first met Ian Baker-Finch I told him, "I'm the worse putter in the world, I'm putting really bad, I really need your help."

He was like actually, you know what, "So Yeon, your stroke is perfect. You don't need to think you as the worse putter in the world. Your putting stroke is awesome. You just need to trust yourself and enjoy your moment on the greens."

Then if I look back I was definitely a bit of afraid to getting on the green because even though after I hit a

really great shot, four foot birdie putt or 6-foot birdie putt, what if I'm going to miss it instead of having to make it.

The biggest difference between like before I'm working with Finch and right now, I think just my attitude is much more positive. Right now I'm more focused how I'm going to make it instead of what's going to happen when I miss it.

**Q. There was a lot in the buildup to this, U.S. Senators, women's rights groups were asking USGA to move the tournament. You yourself, did you have any trepidation playing at a course owned by Donald Trump after some of the comments he made about women?**

SO YEON RYU: First of all, I'm not American so I don't really know about politic stuff and I'm a professional golfer. I'm more think about how I'm going to play well at my stage instead of who is on the stage.

We are here to play golf, not hear to talk about the politics so I don't have any better answer about it.

**Q. To follow-up, Brittany Lincicome told the Chicago Tribune a couple weeks ago she hopes Donald Trump does not come to this tournament, she said, so it won't be a big debacle and she wants it to be you guys and not about him. Now, of course he's saying he may well be here on the weekend.**

**Do you hope, do you agree with Brittany that he should not come?**

SO YEON RYU: This is Trump's property. That's why this is so like big issue. But I know he's a huge fan of golf. This is one of the biggest tournaments in U.S. and I strongly say this is best tournament in U.S. and everybody wants to win this tournament and, well, he's President of U.S. as well so I think no matter his coming or not, the fact is not going to be changed.

THE MODERATOR: Last night we had dinner at with all the amateur players in the field. I met a young woman, SoWhi Kang. I'm sure for you Se Ri was a large influence in the game. She mentioned you as one of her influences.

What does that mean to you to now see players who you have had an impact on playing in the Women's Open as well?

SO YEON RYU: Since I joined the LPGA Tour everyone asks why Korean players are so great. Every time when I have this question first thing in my mind is

because I always had a really good role model, which is Se Ri Pak, or Jiyai Shin, Inbee Park.

At the same time it's really great to hear I could good be a good influence to Junior Golfers as well. It's really important to have your role model, to dream about your golf.

So I feel really great to be -- I could be one of the role model for all the Junior Golfers that hopefully I can be like great enough golfer to be good for the Junior Golfer.

**Q. Almost you not missed cut and how it's impressive how you play.**

SO YEON RYU: Can you say it again?

**Q. You play really steady golf and I just wonder how you maintain yourself like strongest skill or you know -- yes, what's -- what's the motivation how you keep it up?**

SO YEON RYU: First of all, since I started working with Cameron I moved my place to Dallas. Every time when I go back home after tournament I always like to review every tournament I played and Cameron and I always talk about what we can do better, and what we need to fix it.

Definitely those period of time make me think about my game even more than before. So I think that was really helpful to play really consistent this year and then I think the biggest reason I really enjoy this game, no matter if I play great or not, I always really enjoyed it.

When I play great I really enjoy this game because it's so much fun. When you keep making birdies, it's so exciting. At the same time, when you're not playing well, to be honest, it's difficult to deal with.

At the same time it's really fun to think about how I'm going to improve. I love this game. I feel very fortunate I play on the LPGA Tour. I would say enjoy, yeah.

**Q. One more question. Ai Miyazato announced retirement. Do you have any impression of her play or memory of her, would you mind sharing with us?**

SO YEON RYU: Yeah. I heard -- when I played the Volvik Championship I heard Ai was going to retire.

When I heard the story I was nearly cried but I -- I was really sad to hear she's going to retire because she's always the one make every player feel really happy. She's really, really friendly player.

She's not even -- she's not just great golfer, she's one of the greatest human beings in the world. I'm really

sad to lose her. I had dinner with her a couple weeks ago and we talk about what she's going to do after retire but I know it's really hard to lose good friend but, at the same time, she's going to start another chapter of her life so I really want to root for her on another life, then I know she's going to do some incredible thing to Japan golf and all like world golf as well.

Yeah, I'd like cheering for her.

THE MODERATOR: I think we have two more questions.

**Q. Last year at CordeValle the set-up wasn't really like a U.S. Open, very wide, kind of soft. Again, being the best ball-striker you play better on tough golf courses. Is this more like CordeValle or is this more like U.S. opens of the past?**

SO YEON RYU: It's definitely different as CordeValle which was last year than -- this green is tough enough to make any other tough set-up. It's definitely going to be tough Major tournament quality golf course.

**Q. What will be the most demanding aspect of the game this week?**

SO YEON RYU: I would say iron shot, no matter you're going to hit wedge or 5-wood in your hand, I think you have to pick best spot to putting. It's really tough to putt. At the same time if you are off the green it's really tough chip shot around the green.

I would say like iron shot, from the fairways most important.

THE MODERATOR: One more question on the right aisle.

**Q. So Yeon, when you won in 2011, most of us didn't know very much about you. Can you talk a little bit about how that week changed your life and also you've won an Open, what do you have to do to win another one?**

SO YEON RYU: Since Se Ri won the 1998 U.S. Open, it was always my dream back then to win. I didn't expect I was going to win the tournament. I'm so excited to play when Laura Davies, I'm so excited to play with Sophie Gustafson. Those first two were my fellow competitors at the 1st Round. I was excited to be in the U.S. Women's Open instead of dream about to win the tournament.

Yeah, I won the tournament and I grabbed the trophy. To be honest, I cannot even remember how I was feeling because it was like I was on a cloud. I couldn't remember anything. Because of that one win, I transferred the Tour from KPLGA to LPGA Tour.

When I play on the KLPGA Tour, also really great tour, but since I started to play on the LPGA Tour, I improved my game so much because we always traveling all around the U.S. and you're traveling a lot like around the world so I had plenty -- I was able to have a lot of experience at the linkside golf course or some sort of like really modern style. Since then I really feel like my golf has been improved. At the same time, I enjoyed this game even more than before.

So, winning the 2011 U.S. Women's Open definitely changed so many things in my life. That was one of the biggest turning point in my life.

Well, to be honest, when I played Junior Golf I was really a dedicated player. After I won the U.S. Women's Open I feel like all my dedication been paid off. That makes me so happy and definitely changed everything in my life and hopefully I can have another U.S. Women's Open victory. Let's see what's going to change.

THE MODERATOR: We'll look forward to watching this week. Did you have a follow-up?

**Q. I just to follow up on that, you've won one so what do you know about what it takes to win an Open that you have to do this week?**

SO YEON RYU: Patience. You never know what's going to happen. The one thing I really love about the play, the U.S. Women's Open is even when we play this exactly same course depends on setup.

Golf course feel like totally different. USGA is really well-known about using several different things like one day like 430-yard par 4 one day, 270-yard par 4 which is maybe drivable par 4.

One day you might have a chance to make like bogey or double bogey at the same hole. Next day you have a chance to make eagle or birdie. That's really exciting about the USGA course set-up. I would say patience.

THE MODERATOR: And we look forward to seeing that patience throughout the week. Thank you for joining us today and that you for joining us this week.