

MEDIA CALL WITH STACY LEWIS

Tuesday, June 3, 2014

KELLY THESIER: Good morning, everyone. This is Kelly Thesier with the LPGA communications department. We are very pleased to have all of you joining us today and to be joined by our new No. 1 player in the Rolex Rankings, Stacy Lewis. Stacy had a great win this past week at the ShopRite LPGA Classic after a pretty busy week, to say the least in terms of her travel all over the place and helping us with our big announcement for the new KPMG Women's PGA Championship. I know all of you guys are very excited to talk to Stacy about her new ranking and everything that's been going on recently, so I'm going to turn it over to Stacy to give a few quick comments just about the win and what it means to be back at the No. 1 spot again.

STACY LEWIS: Well, first of all, the win was what I was looking for going into the week, so it was great to just to get that win and then the ranking was just an added bonus. Obviously I knew all the scenarios, I knew what would happen. But, you know, like I always say, I want to win trophies and I was just happy to do that on Sunday. You know, it feels good to be back at No. 1. I only got four weeks there last year, so I'm looking forward to hopefully spending a little bit more time there.

KELLY THESIER: We're going to open it up to questions now from the media, so I'm going to turn it over to the operator and she will give you instructions on how to ask your question.

Q. Last time I saw you you were in Studio 8H at the Saturday Night Live gigs there and then you headed right down to the ShopRite. How long did it take you to get your feet back on the ground after the announcement and get back to focusing on golf?

STACY LEWIS: You know, it was really pretty quick. I had a nice little helicopter ride back to Atlantic City, it only took us about 35 minutes. I was kind of almost relieved that that announcement was over with just because we had been talking about it for so long and I knew it was coming, so it was almost a relief that it was over. You know, I got back and I practiced. I actually practiced for a couple hours on Thursday and then slept for 11 hours Thursday night, and Friday morning I was ready to go. So it really was pretty quick and it was almost more of a relief more than anything that all that extra stuff was over with.

Q. One followup, can you just talk about the place the LPGA is in right now compared to where it was two or three years ago?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I mean, I don't think you could even compare it. I feel like we're a completely different tour than we were a few years ago going from 23 events to 32 when a lot of people really were writing us off. So we were able to, because of

our international tour, able to kind of ride out that downtime with all the events we had in Asia. That really kind of helped save our tour. I mean, now we're in a great place where sponsors are calling us and they want to ask how can we be a part of this. Like the announcement last week, we're raising the bar, you know. We're having to say no to people because we have bigger offers for tournaments. So it's hard to even compare now to where we were a few years ago.

Q. Having been at the top spot for four weeks last year, how much do you feel like that prepares you for being in this spot now?

STACY LEWIS: Well, I think all that's happened over the last year is going to help me. The win, it happened so quickly last year. I won two tournaments back to back and kind of jumped up there to No. 1 and it was going into Kraft and going into a lot of big events and it was just crazy. I was running around doing a bunch of media and didn't really get to sit back and enjoy it and say, wow, I really am No. 1 in the world. So that's kind of what I took out of that, is that I need to enjoy it more, I need to say no to a few things and make my life a little bit easier. I'm just more prepared now to handle everything. Every week is busy for me now. Every week is doing extra things, kind of running around, but I know now how to handle it better and how my -- what I need to do with my golf game to prepare. Now I know I don't need to kill myself on a Monday and Tuesday, I can prepare the way I need to prepare and still win golf tournaments.

Q. I saw a quote from Inbee Park where she said it's a little bit of a relief not to have the big heavy crown on my head. When you think of that quote, maybe how it affected her, how do you view having that heavy crown on your head?

STACY LEWIS: You know, I don't feel like -- I don't feel like I played -- I don't feel like I played bad golf last year when I lost the ranking, Inbee just played some amazing golf. I think we're in a little bit different scenario. I think when everybody's kind of chasing you, when I was chasing Inbee down, you kind of start putting more pressure on yourself and just those expectation, everybody expects you to challenge when, you know, golf has its ebbs and flows. You're going to play well some weeks, you're not going to play well other weeks. So I don't see it as pressure. I want to be in this position, I want to be No. 1 in the world and I want to raise the bar. I want to show people, you know, how good we are out here. By me playing good golf, it forces everyone else to play some good golf, too.

Q. Can you for a moment reflect on how far you've come from The Woodlands to where you are now?

STACY LEWIS: Well, it's crazy to think of really in high school I wasn't a top junior player, I wasn't a top player on my high school team and wasn't heavily recruited out of college, so it's really amazing how far I've come. I played all over Houston, I played the Houston Junior Golf tour. I mean, for a long time I didn't do the big

national circuit like everybody else. It's really amazing to think back and really in a short time how far I've come.

Q. Hey, Stacy, how are you doing. Bob Holt from the Arkansas Democratic Gazette. I know you're (indiscernible) and you're coming back here. Do you hear those around the country or even around the world? What's it like representing Arkansas on the tour?

STACY LEWIS: It's pretty amazing. Arkansas fans, you just find them all over the place. I've been playing in Australia and seen people with Arkansas hats and shirts on. In Dubai I've seen them. It's just amazing how the Arkansas fans travel. It's just cool, you know. After the win this past week on Twitter people are going crazy with the Woo Pig Sooley stuff, so it's especially neat just to be able to put Arkansas on the map. Being only there to come out of school so far, it's cool to be someone for those kids to look up to and to help them hopefully get out here pretty soon.

Q. And I know the Walmart tour up here in Northwest Arkansas is a couple tournaments away, I assume you're playing that again, wondering what your thoughts are on that?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I will definitely be there. It has a special place for me. I was around the first year that tournament and actually got a trophy out of it, but to come back there and play is pretty amazing. I don't think any other player on tour has the following at an event like I do there. The players always make fun of me because they always know where I am throughout the golf course by the cheers and the hog calls and all that kind of stuff. But I love it. I love being able to come back and see family and friends, and having that support is, I mean, it's really important. You don't get to be No. 1 in the world by yourself, so it's just really cool to have that support.

Q. You were talking a few minutes ago about how much the tour has grown the last couple years. How much pride do you take in your role in that happening?

STACY LEWIS: You know, I take a lot. I look at there's five or six events where my sponsors are now a part of and it's special to me. I take a lot of pride in that. I enjoy the business side of the tour, I enjoy kind of seeing what goes on behind the ropes. As a top player, I think we have a responsibility to help grow the Tour and to help spread the message of, one, how good we are, but see also how it can help those companies in the business world, too. It's just been, I don't know, it's fun to see how I progressed as a person into this role.

Q. Stacy, congratulations. If I can follow up a little bit on what you just said, can you talk about the evolution of becoming an athlete who's representing more than just yourself? I know on tour there's that feeling, but when you're the No. 1 player you become so prominent, there is sort of all this outside, if you will, pressure that you kind of have to tune out. Can you talk about how

you've adjusted to that and just emotionally how you go out there and you know you're representing more than just yourself?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, you know, I think back to when I first got to college, I was very shy. I didn't speak unless I was spoken to is what my coaches would say. It's not really my personality to be the person up in the microphone speaking a lot and giving speeches and being a face like that. It's not necessarily me but it's something I've had to learn how to do. I've had to learn how to give speeches, learn how to be that person in front of the camera and it's definitely been an adjustment. I've definitely learned the hard way a few times, you know. Nobody's perfect, and that's I think one of my greatest qualities, that I learn from everything, whether it's good or whether it's bad. I think everything that happens to you you can learn from and that's something that I think's helped me get to where I am. It's helped me become the person that I am. But I wouldn't say that this role in this position is something that I'm necessarily comfortable with, but I'm getting there.

Q. I talked to Meg Mallon recently about the success of the American players this year and just asked her if she thought there was some motivation, the disappointment that you guys had at the Solheim Cup, that individually you all took something out of that. She thought that there was. I wonder if you can maybe comment on that for yourself and maybe generally with some of the fellow Americans?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I think there's definitely motivation. I know there's motivation for me because we just flat out got outplayed. There was a lot of stuff that went on but if you look at the numbers, I think it was a little bit of a wake-up call for everybody. Losing two Solheims in a row, that's never happened. So I felt like, going into the Solheim Cup I really felt like American golf was in a good place because I felt like people were playing some good golf. You keep telling people that and telling them, so it's nice now to finally have the results. I'm not asked those questions anymore. Now it's talking about the positive side of the Americans resurgence. I knew it was coming. I knew there's so much young talent, Lexi and Jess, they need to get into those situations, get in the final groups more. Even Lizette, too. Get in those pressure-filled situations, it helps you. You've got to learn how to win tournaments, it doesn't just happen right away.

Q. And lastly, you talk about the buildup of the American talent. For it to happen the way it's happened this season with as much, I think, intensity as there's going to be on this U.S. Women's Open for a lot of different reasons with the Pinehurst experiment if you will, what do you think it means to have so much American momentum and an American No. 1 going into the tournament I think that gets the most attention from Americans?

STACY LEWIS: Well, I don't think we could ask for better timing. I don't think you could script it any better going into the U.S. Open. No. 1 American and you've got

eight in the top 15 or 16 in the world, seven winners. You can't script it any better. We know we're starting to ride this momentum with the announcement last week and more sponsors coming on board. The Open, it's going to be a great opportunity to showcase our sport. There's going to be challenges, we all know that, but at the end of the day, playing like that right behind the guys, they're going to be talking about us playing while the men are playing and people are going to be talking about us. That's what we needed for so long and you really couldn't script it any better.

Q. I wanted to ask you in your dealings with the behind the scenes and the business side of the tour, what do you think it would mean for the LPGA to have an American ranked No. 1 for a significant amount of time?

STACY LEWIS: Well, you know, it's never happened, so I mean I guess it will be new territory. We've never really had that extended amount of time. You know, I don't think -- I don't think one player -- with the way the tour is now, I don't think one player can do it. I think it's going to be more the combination of everybody playing well. We've got four or five of us in the Top 10. That, I think, is more of a big deal even more than having a No. 1 player for a long time but it certainly wouldn't hurt. I've got some work to do for that first.

Q. And if I could ask one followup question actually about your golf game, can you take us through AimPoint Express and how that -- I know you've been doing AimPoint for a long time, but how has the Express part changed anything for you this year?

STACY LEWIS: Well, I was a little skeptical in the beginning but I learned it in Phoenix from Mark Sweeney. He was the one who initially taught me the whole AimPoint deal. What AimPoint Express has really helped with is longer putts and putts that are breaking a lot, to just be more specific there picking out those points. But basically what it is is going -- you'll see kind of when you see people do it, they'll walk kind of in the middle of their putt and they're really feeling with their feet what the slope is there, whether it's a one, two, three, four, whatever that is. If it's a three, it's fairly steep, so that's when we go back behind the ball, hold up three fingers and that gives you -- you line up the one side of your fingers like on the pin basically, the center of the hole, and then the outside of your fingers, that's where you're going to aim. So it really just -- it helps you be more specific and pick out more points, which is that's what AimPoint has done for me all along, just trust things more. I think it showed last week. I made some more longer putts, especially on those tricky greens.

Q. Did you feel kind of silly at first holding up fingers?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I did. I was very skeptical of it because you get the percentage actually for -- you know, you're actually getting the number in the opposite direction of the old way, so it was kind of strange. It was hard for me to kind of comprehend at first. Yeah, you do feel a little goofy with the fingers but it's so simple.

You know, kids are picking it up so fast, and it's something that my mom even (inaudible.) She saw me doing it, she saw me holding up three fingers or four fingers and kind of said to my dad and said oh, this one's going to break a lot. It's very simple and that's just golf. Golf, you want to try to simplify it. Everybody tries to get so complicated with it and anything you can do to make it more simple I'm all about.

Q. I guess (inaudible) there must be something to it?

STACY LEWIS: More people are starting to see it. And the old way with the book and the charts and all that, I think it's hard for some people to grasp, you have to really be a numbers person. This way, you know, 10 and 12 year old kids are picking it up really quick. I think it's something that's going to stick around here for a while.

Q. Stacy, what is this like for your family again for you to be back on the top of the world?

STACY LEWIS: It's great. My family has been so supportive, and like I said, you don't get to where you are by yourself. I have a great, great team of people behind me and my parents, they've been huge all along the way, helping me learn. They're the ones that are -- you need people that call you out when you don't do stuff right. Everybody wants to kind of pat you on the back and cheer you up. They're the ones that kind of call you out and say you need to do this better. They've been the people that have really helped me grow as a person and been so supportive. You don't get here without them, but at the same time they still treat me as Stacy. They don't treat me like anybody else. My sisters still treat me the same. My little nephew, he has no clue what's going on, so it's fun to just have that support but at the same time they still treat me like the same person.

Q. What has Carol Mann meant to you?

STACY LEWIS: Carol's been great. I've been fortunate that I've been around a lot of pretty -- a lot of Hall of Famers really that I've been able to be around and have some guidance and some advice. I usually get text messages from her after wins and good rounds and things like that. It's really cool to have that support and to have people like that in your corner that can help you when you need some advice.

Q. I know it's a moot point but what will it mean to you to have an LPGA stop in the Houston area?

STACY LEWIS: Obviously we were there I think in 2009 and for me it's another hometown event, but it's really a place I think we need to be. All the great golf courses in the Houston area and there's a lot of business there, so I think there's a lot of opportunities for us in the Houston area and hopefully we're there in the next few years.

Q. Stacy, with this No. 1 ranking, does that add a lot of pressure to you or do you just sort of embrace it?

STACY LEWIS: You know, I think this time I'm going to try to embrace it. I don't want to -- I don't want to say there's pressure. I put enough pressure on myself already so I don't need to worry about -- I'm not going to worry about the rankings. If I stay there for four weeks or 20 weeks or 50 weeks, whatever it is, anytime you spend at No. 1 in the world it's going to be great. So I'm just going to go out there and get right back to work this week and try and win a golf tournament. If I keep playing consistently and playing like I am, I feel like I'm going to be there for a long time, but at the same time you can't control what anybody else is doing. I can't control what Inbee does, I can't control what Suzann or Lydia or any of those girls do. So I've just got to keep taking care of myself.

One thing I would like to do is I have mini goals. I have these goals that aren't related to score or performance or finish in a tournament. They're things that just kind of keep me on track where it's nothing related to anybody else, it doesn't matter whether I achieve that goal or not, it doesn't matter what Suzann does. I'm going to keep with those goals and that's what I need to do.

Q. It doesn't sound like you're changing your approach?

STACY LEWIS: No, not at all. I mean, I don't think -- I think I'm doing too many good things to get to this point to change anything. You don't get to No. 1 in the world and completely change your golf swing or do anything crazy like that. I just have to keep doing what I'm doing.

Q. Hey, Stacy, you and Bob already kind of talked about Arkansas and the tournament obviously coming up in a few weeks. Obviously you're coming back to an area where you spent a couple years. Have you thought about what that would mean to you if you were to come back to that No. 1 ranking and just the progression of how everything's gone the last few years?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, I mean, anytime I get back to Arkansas is so special for me just to see over the years, you know, how more and more people are coming out to the (inaudible,) more people are recognizing me. It's just really cool to see how things have progressed from when I was playing as an amateur in college to now every year I've come back kind of being in a better position. If I'm No. 1 in the world coming to Arkansas obviously it would be huge for the tournament, but it would be fun more than anything just to get back to see my coaches and some of the girls on the team and just hang out with them. I don't know, that's really what -- that's my favorite part of what I get to do in Arkansas is helping those girls and helping them become better players.

Q. I know that the last time you became No. 1 you learned a few things from

watching Yani. I'm curious, obviously Inbee hasn't won this year, do you have any insight on watching Inbee and maybe anything you learned from her what to do, what not to do?

STACY LEWIS: You know, I think I learned a lot watching Inbee winning those majors last year. The way she -- everybody was talking about it, she answered all the questions, did everything, but on the golf course she was the same person. She didn't change her routine, she didn't change the way she prepared, she just went out there and played golf and let the results speak for themselves. Just the calmness and kind of the way she went about things last summer, I took a lot from that.

KELLY THESIER: Any last questions for Stacy? Otherwise we can let her go. Well, thank you, everyone, for joining us today. Stacy, thank you very much for your time and for doing this. I know everybody on this call appreciates it and best of luck this week in Canada.

STACY LEWIS: You've got it. Thanks, everybody.