

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
December 7, 2022



MAVERICK McNEALY
LEXI THOMPSON

MARK WILLIAMS: We would like to welcome Lexi Thompson and Maverick McNealy to the QBE Shootout into the media interview room. Thanks for joining us. You've had a chance to play in the pro-am and had a look at the golf course. I know you were here just recently, Lexi. Has it changed much in the two or three weeks since you played here last time?

LEXI THOMPSON: The distance changed, just a little bit longer. But, I mean, the course was in great shape a few weeks ago. Greens are maybe a little bit faster right now, but just a little bit added yardage. But it's always in great shape every time I come here whether it's for CME or for this week.

MARK WILLIAMS: How much of a challenge will that be with that added distance?

LEXI THOMPSON: It's definitely a challenge, but I enjoy it. I grew up with two older brothers so I always like hitting driver and longer irons, so it'll definitely be a test.

MARK WILLIAMS: Mav, I think it's your first look at this course, isn't it? What are your thoughts seeing it for the first time?

MAVERICK McNEALY: It is. There's a huge premium on driving it well. There's some kind of tight holes out there. Serious big difference between in the fairway and a couple steps off. Greens are kind of crowned, so it was difficult today. Every pin was in the middle of the greens, which is crowned, so every ball's running away. First look at it playing in the pro-am, I'll get another look at it tomorrow, but greens are great.

MARK WILLIAMS: You've had a bit of a break, I guess. What have you been doing in your spare time before ramping up for this?

MAVERICK McNEALY: Well, this is kind of sponsor outing season. I had AWS in Vegas, had Cisco in Hawaii, KPMG in L.A. and just got off a redeye coming here, so it's been busy. But I was really excited to get here, game feels great and I didn't take much time off, just been itching to play.

MARK WILLIAMS: Have you guys played together before or know much about each other's games or is this the first time you've --

LEXI THOMPSON: I know he's good.

MAVERICK McNEALY: I know she's won 10 times.



MARK WILLIAMS: So you've obviously seen each other play, but what do you sort of notice or like about each other's games? Lexi, you go first, what have you observed about Mav that you really appreciate?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, I mean, I know that he's just an amazing player, long off the tee and has played some great golf this year especially. But I'm always just honored to be here to be able to play with the guys. And to be paired up with him, I know he's a nice guy and we want to have a good time, but at the same time also play some really good golf and I'm sure he'll help me out a lot out there, so it will be nice.

MARK WILLIAMS: Mav, what do you admire about Lexi's game?

MAVERICK McNEALY: I know for a fact we're both really competitive --

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah.

MAVERICK McNEALY: -- and we're not showing up here as an exhibition. I want to give us as many good looks from the fairway as possible and just hit it right at the flag. Really excited.

MARK WILLIAMS: You've had experience with these formats before, these three different formats. What format do you like best and then I'll ask Mav like is there a favorite for you as well?

LEXI THOMPSON: I would say the favorite for me is probably scramble because I can just go from his drive and give myself a shorter iron in.

Sorry, there's a bug in here.

So it gives me a few more opportunities, especially with a few shorter irons in from his drives, but I can still be able to hit my drives off the tee and keep loose and keep on going throughout the round.

Least favorite's probably when I have to play my own ball out just because I'm playing from the front of the fairways. But it's great formats and it's just an amazing week in general.

MAVERICK McNEALY: I'm really looking forward to alternate shot, I think there's a really fun flow of playing every other shot. I think if I get some tee shots in play, it plays to the strengths of our game. For me it's driving and putting and she's an incredible approach player, so I think that would be a really good day for us.

Q. Lexi you've been part of the Olympic teams, Solheim Cup teams. Mav, you've played a lot in college as well on teams. What do you like about the team aspect of like an environment like this compared to playing solo as a regular event?



LEXI THOMPSON: It's very different, but I love it, I enjoy the team aspect of golf. We don't get the opportunity very often so to be able to play in Solheim Cups or Olympic teams, it's great to just have a teammate by my side and supporting me. It's not just so on you every single shot, you're playing for your country or you're playing for your teammate beside you or your team in general. So there's a whole different format to it and I think it brings out a whole different competitive side of your game.

MAVERICK McNEALY: Yeah, I played ice hockey, I played a bunch of team sports growing up. It's just different when you get to share the success with someone and play for someone else. That's honestly the thing I miss most about playing professional golf is that it's a very individual sport. You have your caddie there all the time, you have your team back home that helps you every step of the way, but in the end it's really your shot and nobody else's golf ball matters and that's a little different this week.

Q. Lexi, this is your sixth or seventh time here. What first attracted you to coming here and playing with a mixed pairing with a guy, especially in a team format with a male player?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, growing up with two older brothers, I played as well, so it was definitely exciting for me. And no other girls being in it, it was a huge honor to be able to be invited to play in this and give a challenge to my game.

I wanted to play from all the way back with the guys, back tees with the guys. I was like, I don't want to play forward, let's just give myself a challenge, I get to hit driver on every single hole which I absolutely love. I don't get that opportunity very much when I play, so I love bombing it off the tee and hitting mid to longer irons.

It's a little bit of a challenge, but I enjoy it. And just being around the guys, I don't know them too well but growing up with my older brothers that played professionally as well so I know a few of them, but to be around them, it's a lot more fun.

Q. You were the only one, now there's obviously two, but how were you accepted and treated when you've been out here as the only woman?

LEXI THOMPSON: It's been great. The times that I've been out here, everybody's been very welcoming and I've had a good time. Every pairing that I've gotten and everybody that I've teamed up with, I've had an amazing experience. Definitely no complaints. And it's always an experience I'll remember each and every year and it's always an event that I look forward to.

Q. Would you like to see more women, maybe half and half men and women's pairings the whole way through, just more women in the tournament overall?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, I think that's happening. Has that come out?



Yeah, that is something we want to see in general. I think we want to see more team events. Golf being such an individual sport, we want more team events but definitely mixed women's and men's. I think it will be great for the game of golf. I think team events bring a lot bigger fan base. I think people absolutely love watching us play and fist pump and just be there for each other. So having mixed men's and women's I think will bring a lot more fans out to support us.

MAVERICK McNEALY: I totally agree, I think any chance you can get the best golfers in the world period together and competing, that's a great thing on both sides. I think it would be awesome. If that happens I think it would be a great idea. I don't know if it's confirmed, but I would really enjoy that, I would love to play if they let me.

MARK WILLIAMS: Appreciate you guys coming in. Thanks for the time.

