

# 2015 US Women's Open Championship

Tuesday, July 7  
Press Conference

## Cristie Kerr

An Interview With:  
CRISTIE KERR

MIKE TROSTEL: Good morning, everyone, and welcome into the media center. My name is Mike Trostel, and it's my pleasure to introduce Cristie Kerr to my left. Cristie is the 2007 U.S. Women's Open champion at Pine Needles. This year playing in your 20th U.S. Women's Open. That's a lot of Women's Opens. Can you talk about 20 Opens, that's a lot.

CRISTIE KERR: It is. And I actually wasn't aware that it was 20. I actually thought it was more. Pretty amazing. Yeah, I've had a great career and I feel like I'm kind of just in the middle part of my career. Hopefully I can get to 30.

MIKE TROSTEL: And 17-time winner on the LPGA Tour, most recently at the KIA Classic a little bit earlier this year. It was your first win as a mother. What did that mean to you? Did it add any sort of perspective, since you've had your son?

CRISTIE KERR: It did. You know, I came close a lot last year, and I think I was thinking about it a lot, you know, winning as a mom, winning as a mom. And then you forget you've already won 16 tournaments. But it feels different. So it was incredible to share that with my husband, Eric, and my son, Mason, and our friends and family that were there. Yeah, being a mom definitely gives you a different perspective. The highs, while they're always high, are not so high, and the lows are not so low. So it's been a blast so far.

MIKE TROSTEL: This year playing very well, five top 10 finishes this year, including a tie for 9th. How do you feel your game is shaping up?

CRISTIE KERR: I feel great. I feel like my game is really coming along. And I feel like -- my coach, Michael, is here with me this week, and I have just hit it great when he's been around. So I think that I'm going to have a good chance, I've just got to keep my head on straight and just play smart, not try to get too aggressive on this golf course where you can't. This golf course, you can be aggressive in certain spots, but



you have to know where they are. So I feel pretty good about my game, and I've got my Marxman putter back in my bag, it's the one I won the LPGA Championship with, so I feel good about my game on the greens.

**Q. I wonder if you'd just give us your overall impression of the golf course, what you think of it. I know most people feel like it's a pretty long golf course. What is that going to mean as the week goes on?**

CRISTIE KERR: I think this is a spectacular golf course. I look back on the last four or five Opens that we've had, and this is my favorite that I've had in the last three to five years. Very classic, old school golf course. It's playing long, because it's a little soft from the rain. I actually like that. I don't really particularly like a golf course which is so short and too easy. I think that this is a great golf course for a U.S. Open. The greens are big enough, not really big, very tilty. You have to be smart with your caddie and with yourself about where you leave shots into the greens, or if you miss a shot you better have the right club in your hands because you need to have a chance to get up and down for par. So I think this is a great golf course, and as the week goes on, could firm up, could play a little bit shorter, but you could get storms here this time of the year, as well. I really like this course. I played it in an outing a year ago and also a couple of weeks ago. So I think it's a great test.

**Q. As a former Open champion, you know the mental and physical grind to win a tournament like this. Talk about what it's going to take on this particular course, that kind of grind?**

CRISTIE KERR: Yeah, any Open is a grind. They tend to want to set it up difficult. This golf course is a little bit hilly, it's not overly hilly, which I think over -- I would tend to think most of the field is playing every day here, Monday to Sunday, as far as playing practice rounds every day. You have to be careful not to over-prepare, because I've certainly been guilty of that in the past, where you can play three 18-hole practice rounds and think that helps you out and it just makes you tired. So I've got a good plan with my practice this week not to over-prepare. And you just have to manage yourself really well. You've got to try to take breaks in between shots, because it is a grind. You have to try to get the right amount of rest and try to get away from golf off the golf course, as well, because it's a big stage and

it's for the U.S. Open trophy. It's a physical grind, a mental grind. And at the end of the week, whoever can stay the freshest and has their game in control is inevitably the one that wins.

**Q. You said it's important to get away from the game when you're not on the course. What does that mean for you? What do you do when you're not on the course, when you're done with No. 18?**

CRISTIE KERR: You know, going back to your house and cooking with your family and playing with your baby. I mean, that's what it means to me, just having family time. Just trying to not make it so important, so like this is the biggest tournament of the year. You try to treat it like any other week. And you have to try, like I said, to get away from the game. I wanted to take Mason and my family over to the little dairy farm so he can see the cows and the goats and the sheep, just kind of try to do some fun local stuff. He got to -- the house that we're staying in is near some fields and my family got to take him, when I was practicing yesterday, to go pet some of the donkeys. They were plowing the field, so that was kind of cool.

**Q. Could you talk specifically, Cristie, about the greens, and what you think the role of somebody's short game here might be? If the course is playing long it's going to come into play?**

CRISTIE KERR: Definitely. I mean, short game is huge in any Open, but I think especially this one because it's a very old school course with very tilted greens. It's a great course because it's right in front of you and it's tough. It's not tricked up. You know they're going to put the pins in some difficult spots. If you miss a shot, like I said, being mentally smart, knowing ahead of time if you miss a shot which side you have to miss it on to not -- basically to try to eliminate mental errors because making birdies in an Open is amazing, but saving shots are equally as important. So I think that with the greens the way they are, there are some larger greens, but most of them are kind of medium to small on the scale of size. And a lot of slope, whether it's front to back or right-to-left, there's runoffs on the greens and there's a lot of heavy rough around the greens. Playing as long as it is, when you have 5-irons, hybrids, and, for instance, having a 5-wood or 3-wood even into No. 9 and 18, you have to get up and down because you're not going to hit the green every time with a 3-wood. I think short game is super important here.

MIKE TROSTEL: With that, Cristie Kerr, best of luck this week.

**Q. Just a question about No. 10. That's the -- slopes down real far. Are you going to play that -- what are you going to play there? Driver? And**

**then are you going to try to be long so you don't have to fool with that bank running down?**

CRISTIE KERR: Yeah, I mean I think most people are hitting driver off that tee. And, yeah, I mean, I think -- again, it depends on the pin position. But I think the most difficult up-and-down could be short of the green because it seems like if you're going to miss it short, they're going to putt it just over the false front. I don't know, I mean, over the green is not that easy, either. I guess you're just going to have to wait and see.

**Q. Realistically, if you could take a score and sit in the clubhouse all four days and just let everyone try to catch it, what score would you take to sit in the clubhouse for the week?**

CRISTIE KERR: It's so hard, right, because Monday to Thursday the course is going to play so differently. Yesterday the greens were really soft and the fairways were soft. So if we were playing on Thursday to Sunday the way the course was yesterday, I mean, I think there would be some pretty low scores, even with the length of the golf course. The golf course is just so pure and the greens are so pure, and there are some pins that if you hit a good shot into the greens will funnel down to the pins. I thought there might be some lower scores. But it's really -- on a golf course that we've never played a Women's Open on, it's hard to predict how they're going to get the golf course playing. Because at the drop of a hat, as we've seen, they can do whatever they want to the course, the USGA. We're just going to have to wait and see. I'm in the afternoon on Thursday, so it would be good to get a judge of how the scores are in the morning. I like late-early for the first two days in an Open because you get a sense of how the course is playing and you can get your game plan together with the pins and see what's going on and your caddie can go out there and do some recon. So I like where we're at. But score, to answer your question, it's hard to predict that.

**Q. (Inaudible.)**

CRISTIE KERR: 10-under.

**Q. Winning the U.S. Open means a big jump in the rankings. And next year you're going to have the International Crown and the Olympics, where I believe four people are going to qualify. How important is that to you and do you think about that now?**

CRISTIE KERR: I've been thinking about it for the last however many years it was announced. It's very important to me. I can't really think of any higher honor than to play for your country in the Olympics, and to make that team and to stay in the Olympic Village with all the other athletes, I just think it would be so cool. But at the same time, golf is -- it's a sport where you've only got yourself to rely on. So at the same time, you

can't try to put so much pressure on yourself to do that, you just have to break it down to playing well every day, which means focusing on every shot you have and break it down to the smallest goals and then hopefully the results will take care of themselves.

**Q. Are Open courses generally being set up more difficult now than they were when you won yours?**

CRISTIE KERR: Pine Needles was tough, was set up really tough. The course played -- the fairways weren't overly firm, but the greens were firmer and super fast. And that was a Donald Ross design, so I think they're set up tough every year. I don't think they're set up tougher -- they might be a little bit longer now, but I think they're set up tough every year.

MIKE TROSTEL: With that, Cristie Kerr, best of luck this week.

CRISTIE KERR: Thank you guys.