

# U.S. Women's Open Championship 2016

Wednesday, July 6, 2016

## Lexi Thompson

### Press Conference

**MODERATOR:** It's my pleasure to welcome Lexi Thompson into the media center. Lexi is playing in her 10th U.S. Women's Open this year. She has two top-10 finishes in the championship, including a 7th place finish in 2014 at Pinehurst. Lexi, it's hard to believe it's already been ten Women's Opens here at age 21. Pretty remarkable. What are some of your memories from playing at Pine Needles at age 12? When did you switch from I'm just happy to be here to I think I can win?

**LEXI THOMPSON:** Yeah, so many memories from that first U.S. Women's Open, actually. It didn't ring a bell to me that this is my 10th one. It's always nice to remember.

Pine Needles, just being with people that I've always watched on TV, and being in awe of them, and signing all of the autographs, taking people with everybody. I missed the cut by a ton, but I stayed there and said I'm going to sign every autograph for every person here. But that year was the day I realized that I wanted to play out on this Tour.

**MODERATOR:** Was there a switch when you started to feel at some point not just happy to be here, but actually competing and thinking about holding the trophy?

**LEXI THOMPSON:** I would say probably a few years after that, because I needed to gain a lot more experience, a lot more yardage off the tee. I was aiming for the mowed strip going to the fairway on the first few years. After the first year, I definitely gained some distance and experience, which helped me out tremendously. I would probably say when I was probably 14, I realized that I could play out there. I just had to put in the work and get a lot better.

**MODERATOR:** This year a very solid start to the year, one win, eight top-10s. How are you feeling about the state of game as you head into this week at CordeValle?

**LEXI THOMPSON:** I feel great where my game is at. It's been a great year so far. I've had a lot of consistent finishes, and the two wins in Thailand and Japan there. So coming into this week, I feel good about my game.



This course is a great layout. I can hit a lot of drivers, so we'll see.

**MODERATOR:** This summer, not just the regular schedule of tournaments and majors, but also the Olympics this year. And right now you're the top American in the field. How would you feel to represent your country next month in Rio?

**LEXI THOMPSON:** It would be a dream come true to be able to represent my country. It always is. Anytime there's an event that I can represent my country, it's my number one goal. But once I found out golf was back in the Olympics, that was my all-time goal. Growing up, I couldn't say that I wanted to be an Olympian, so now that I could it's a dream come true. To be there in Rio, it would be quite the honor.

**MODERATOR:** About CordeValle, I know you walked the other day with the head instructor, Jon Horner, what do you think about the course and what kind of in sight did he give you on playing the course?

**LEXI THOMPSON:** It's an amazing golf course. The fairways are a little softer right now, but the greens are definitely firming up. The course is playing longer, that's for sure. It gets pretty windy out there on certain days.

I learned a lot with Jon Horner. He walked around with me the first day when I played a full 18. He was giving me lines off the tee. And ridges on the greens, you have to leave yourself on the right side of the hole and not short side yourself. A lot of information to learn out there.

**MODERATOR:** Are there a few holes that you think could prove crucial on the championship, throughout the 72 holes or coming down the stretch on Sunday?

**LEXI THOMPSON:** I honestly think every hole -- I mean, every hole is very important, especially in a major championship. But the finishing hole is really a good one, if you get it down there far enough. If it comes down to the last hole, you could go for the green or you could layup and still try to make a birdie that way. But it's a challenging golf course. It will require birdies when possible. It's risk-reward holes. I'm looking forward to this week.

**Q. We had yet another man drop out of the Olympics this morning, Camilo Villegas just announced he's not going to go. Can we assume from your statements, A, that you are definitely in; and can you speak to why all these men are dropping like flies and really none of the women, with the exception of Lee-Anne none of the women have?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I actually didn't know about that until you just said it. I am definitely going. Any time I can represent my country, I will be there. Especially the Olympics, because it only happens every four years. But I can't really speak on behalf of everybody that's dropping out. I know there are some concerns, but I'm leaving it up to the Olympic Committee and my management team to keep us safe and get us ready for that week.

**Q. Again, along the lines of the Olympics, as you said, it's something that you've aspired to. What is it that you're so looking forward to, is it just the opening ceremonies, the chance to represent the country, when you think personally, what's so important to it about you?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, obviously a chance to be able to represent my country. But like I said, growing up, I couldn't say that I want to be an Olympian. Now it's been since 1904 since golf was in the Olympics. To have it back in the Olympics, it just shows how much the game is growing as a sport. I would never turn down an opportunity to represent my country.

**Q. Who will go with you to Rio, your parents, your brothers? Who's going to be there?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I believe my parents and probably my manager.

**Q. Are you taking any extra precautions, just because of things that have been going on there in recent weeks?**

LEXI THOMPSON: I mean, I plan on wearing long sleeves and pants, probably. But I'm sure the Olympic Committee will have us very well prepared, especially having golf being outside. They'll have us well prepared for that week and take control.

**Q. You're going to go world class event to a world class event this summer. Can you characterize what The Open is like and how different that is to other events that you play throughout the year?**

LEXI THOMPSON: The U.S. Women's Open? Well, it's the No. 1 major that I always look forward to every year. Being an American, it's our own championship. But the USGA does such a great job with the layout and the hospitality for us. And the people that we bring along with us.

We always have amazing venues, and we always look forward to the week.

**Q. Could you give us your thoughts on the pairing with Brooke Henderson and Lydia Ko, and what do you think of each player?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Oh, it's a great pairing. I think I played with Lydia every week at some point. We always make a joke of it.

Brooke Henderson has been playing amazing golf, and I think we all saw that coming. She's just an overall great player, no weakness, really, in her game, at all. And Lydia the same. It's great to watch them both on the golf course and their attitudes and just their demeanors on the golf course. They're aggressive players, and just consistent overall. You can't really even find a weakness in their game, and that's why they're so good.

**Q. With Lydia being No. 1, and you desiring to be No. 1, do you look at her game and say, okay, to get there, here's what I need to do, based on what you're seeing from her?**

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, of course. I mean, I think every time I play with Lydia, I learn something about her game, whether it's just how she hit a chip shot or how she hit a shot into the green. Watching her game is definitely interesting, you learn a lot about why she's No. 1. I look at things I need to work in any game, because, when I play with her, I see some shots she gets up and down that I need to work on or putts that she makes. We learn off each other a lot.

MODERATOR: Lexi Thompson, 2:03 off the 10th tee on Thursday. Best of luck this week.

LEXI THOMPSON: Thank you.