

U.S. Women's Open Championship 2016

Sunday, July 10, 2016

Brittany Lang

Press Conference

MODERATOR: It's a pleasure to welcome the 2016 U.S. Women's Open champion, Brittany Lang, into the media center.

Brittany, with rounds of 68, 75, 68 and 71, for a 72-hole total of 282, 6-under par, for a second career victory and first major championship victory. First, congratulations on winning the trophy.

BRITTANY LANG: Thank you.

Q. Let's go through the round a little bit today. Started with a birdie on 1, so obviously a great start for you.

BRITTANY LANG: Yeah, I knew I needed to get off to a hot start, hit a great drive and a great iron and had about a 12-footer dead straight down the hill and put a nice roll on that. It was nice to get off to a good start like that.

MODERATOR: And then came back with another birdie on the fifth hole.

BRITTANY LANG: Yeah, hit 3-wood off the tee there. Little bit more of an aggressive play to get it up there. And didn't have very far in, so I got to hit a lob wedge and hit a lob wedge to probably about ten feet.

MODERATOR: Then made another birdie on 13.

BRITTANY LANG: 13, oh, yeah that was a great birdie. That was downwind. I hit a driver all the way up to the edge and then had 116 to the hole. And just hit a gap wedge to about, probably like 13, 14 feet, maybe, and that was probably one of the best strokes of the tournament. That putt was going nowhere but in the hole.

MODERATOR: And then a beautiful birdie on the par-3, 16th.

BRITTANY LANG: That was pretty cool. I was fortunate that one went in. I hit a gap wedge past the bunkers long, and I had probably about a 30-footer with a little left-to-right break, and I was fortunate that one went in.

MODERATOR: You bogeyed 17 coming down the



stretch, knowing that Anna was already in the house at 6-under par, what were you trying to do on the 18th hole? What was your mindset there.

BRITTANY LANG: So I hadn't seen the leaderboard. I had no clue what was going on. And that was a very dumb mistake on 17. I hit two beautiful shots and I had a putt that was not very difficult and I just hit it too hard. I thought the wind might hold it up a little bit. That was really, really, really dumb to run that putt by like that. I had no clue where I was, so I was just trying to get a birdie look on 18. I was definitely feeling some nerves.

MODERATOR: Then you come back, par the first playoff hole. And then on 17, didn't hit a great second shot but a nice chip. And you then had a putt that was a little longer than the one you had in regulation and knocked that right in. Showed a lot of nerve there.

BRITTANY LANG: Yeah, that was really clutch. I hit a good tee ball and then just hit a really bad iron shot. I hit a great pitch and had about a 10-footer bowl out on the left. That was a huge momentum putt there.

MODERATOR: Obviously, unfortunate rules incident on the 17th with Anna. You find out on the 18th right before you're going to hit your third shot. Did that change the way that you were going to approach that approach into 18?

BRITTANY LANG: Well, of course. It's five paces on right there, it's tucked. I had lob wedge out, because I was going to hit a high lob wedge to land soft because I thought I needed a birdie. Right when he told me that, I was thankful he told me before I hit my wedge. I hit a little sand wedge way out to the right, and just tried to two-putt from over there.

MODERATOR: How do you feel getting your name on this U.S. Women's Open trophy with Paula Creamer, with Annika Sorenstam, with Mickey Wright, some of the greats in the game?

BRITTANY LANG: Yeah, it's pretty special. I've always dreamed of winning the U.S. Open. I have so much respect for the USGA and for this tournament. And to see these players -- I actually said something to somebody in Arkansas, and I just feel like I have extremely underachieved as a golfer. I feel like I'm so



capable of doing so much more than I've done. And this is just a little start to boost me.

MODERATOR: How much more does it mean to have your mom, your husband, your brother out there with you today? Did that make it anymore special?

BRITTANY LANG: It's amazing. When I won in Waterloo, Luke was there, which Luke is a crucial part of my success. But to have my family here, all of them, my mom, dad and my husband and Luke is an absolute dream come true to win this. And to have them here to celebrate, it's really special.

Q. It was such an unusual ending, was it a little bit disorienting finishing after being informed that or what was it like just to finish after hearing about the penalty?

BRITTANY LANG: Well, when he came up to me, I actually thought he was giving me a penalty, and so I was definitely relieved when I heard it wasn't me. You know, Anna is such a great player, it's so unfortunate to have something like that happen. But, you know, she's a classy girl, and I think the USGA handled it well. I'm thankful they told me before my wedge shot so I could take a little bit more club. But it's just part of the game and it's unfortunate.

Q. Do you think there's an issue of fairness that you got told before your third shot and she got told after her third shot? Anna thought the timing of it was a little unfair on the rules.

BRITTANY LANG: What do you mean? They told her after --

Q. After she took her third shot and they told you before you took your third shot?

BRITTANY LANG: I think the USGA did the best they could do. Before they looked at the TVs and found out what had happened, I think they handled it in a timely manner. I think they would have told Anna had they known before. But I think they waited to look at the video and then confirm it. And then once they knew, they couldn't control who had hit what shot and they told people as quickly as they could.

Q. Congratulations on winning the U.S. Open. But I'm sure you didn't want to win it that way. Your reaction?

BRITTANY LANG: Yeah, like I said, it's really -- you never want to win with a penalty or something like that happen, especially to Anna, who is a friend of mine and a great player and a classy girl. But it's unfortunate. It's part of the game and it happened that way.

I still had to play pretty damn good golf to get up there.

So really proud of myself.

Q. Did you say anything specific to Anna after that episode?

BRITTANY LANG: I just said sorry. I know she probably doesn't want to talk very much because she's probably super mad, all out of sorts. I just said sorry, bud, good playing. Because I know Anna really well, and I know she wanted that. I know it's going to be a little rough for her, but she's a great player.

Q. You said you felt like you'd underachieved in your career so far up to this point. Was there something that you felt like was holding you back a little bit that you feel like you've got a good handle on now?

BRITTANY LANG: Yeah, I feel like I have all the talents, physically. And I feel like I've done a lot of work with my mind these last few years, taken a break from coaches and really tapping into my natural mind and just trying to have a lot of control. It takes a lot of discipline and mental control when you're out there. And I just feel like I have such a good game and my mind hadn't really caught up with me. And I feel like I just wanted to put myself in these situations and learn and get better and get comfortable.

And it's not easy, you know, when you have something that you've wanted your whole life, it's right there, but all you have to do is execute certain shots. You think it's easy, but it's not that easy. Because you want it more than anything.

So this is a step in the right direction for me, for sure. I just think mentally being disciplined and learning to have confidence and learning to play good and hit the shots under pressure, which I showed that I did definitely in regulation and coming down the stretch. So it gives me a lot of confidence. I know I'm in the right direction.

Q. With the Dustin Johnson ruling and again today, the issue seemed as much about how and when the USGA informed players as the rule, itself. Do you think there should be any guidelines on that? Should they, as the question earlier, have told you at the same time? Should they have maybe stopped before the 18th hole, so it was kind of a level playing field? How would you view that, beyond today, just in general going forward?

BRITTANY LANG: I mean, I think they should tell you as soon as they know. I really don't think today was that big of a deal. They found out at a certain point and then they told when they found out. Anna happened to hit her third shot. So I don't think there's any problem there.

But I think it's tough. It's tough, they're making crucial decisions on a Sunday for a major championship. Did she hit the sand? They have to go look. Did the ball move? They have to go look and check these things. It's not that easy. So I don't see anything wrong with the way they handled that.

And I mean, I don't know what guidelines you'd have. The guidelines are as soon as you know, you should tell the players.

Q. And do you and most players think replay should be involved?

BRITTANY LANG: I mean, we have it in every other sport. Why not? Sure. Why not?

Q. You had your brother on the bag forever. Did he say anything down the stretch that sort of calmed you a little bit? What did he mean out there to you today?

BRITTANY LANG: Yeah, I rely heavily on Luke. He's the best. Not only does he know my game, but he knows me. Luke's not a whole lot of a talker, he's pretty calm, which is great. You want someone like that. He's a rock. We make birdie, you make bogey. He's pretty calm, and that's exactly what you want. You want to look over and good job on your good things, but when you look over you want to see someone not showing a whole lot of emotion.

I told him in the playoff, I was like, man, I got really nervous coming down the stretch there on 18. I've got to really just stick to what I was doing. And he always says just try to hit some targets. Hit your targets and everything is going to be fine. Just take some breaths and hit your targets. He always breaks it down and is very calm. It definitely helps me and keeps me calm.

Q. Now that you've won this, where can you go from here as a player?

BRITTANY LANG: I think this is huge for my career. It took me so long to win my first win out here on the LPGA. And I was actually just talking to somebody about this in Arkansas. And I just -- I was actually playing at my club the week before and I'm like, I never say it this, but I love where everything with my game is at, like working with certain things on my swing. I'm hitting it long. I'm hitting it good. I'm putting the best I've probably ever putted in my life. And working with my brother on a few different things.

I think this is absolutely huge, a huge momentum builder to say you won the U.S. Open. And like I said, just putting myself in that pressure situation, learning to get better there. So I think this is a huge, a huge step in the right direction for my career.

MODERATOR: You're the first champion, 30 years or older to win the U.S. Open since Annika in 2006. Did you expect this at this point in your career?

BRITTANY LANG: I think that's the problem, I haven't really expected stuff like this. And I think I'm capable of so much. And I haven't really expected it. I just -- no, I didn't expect it. I think I should start to a little bit more.

MODERATOR: On behalf of the USGA and everyone here in the media center, congratulations. Our 2016 U.S. Women's Open champion, Brittany Lang.