

Chick-fil-A Charity Championship hosted by Nancy Lopez
Eagle's Landing Country Club
Stockbridge, Ga.
May 12, 2005
First-round interviews

AN INTERVIEW WITH CRISTIE KERR

Cristie Kerr, 36-32=68 (-4)

Scorecard: Hole 11, 182-yard par 3: bogey – pull hook 4-iron over the back of the green, two-putt from 40 feet for bogey

Hole 16, 191-yard par 3: birdie – 5-iron to 30 feet

Hole 2, 495-yard par 5: birdie – lob wedge to nine feet

Hole 4, 162-yard par 3: birdie – 8-iron to 12 feet

Hole 6, 478-yard par 5: eagle – driver, 3-wood to 25 feet

THE MODERATOR: Thanks for coming in. You won last week and are 4-under today. You still got it going.

CRISTIE KERR: Yes, this is actually the first tournament -- this is the first time actually that after I won a tournament that I played the following week.

It's just always happened that I have been off the week after I won a tournament. It's very coincidentally. It's kind of nice to get back in the flow of things I was pretty tired to get back. I didn't hit it great today but, you know, I hit a great back nine and had a good save on the last hole, so I felt good about my day.

Q. Are you learning to score better no matter how you hit the ball?

CRISTIE KERR: Absolutely. I've always been good at scrambling, even when I haven't hit too many greens. I like working on my short game a lot. And I spend a lot of time on it in practice, and always working on my technique, different types of shots, trying to give myself tough lies to try to get up and down at it.

So, I'm not really surprised by anything that I see on the golf course.

Q. Do you feel that is one of your strengths?

CRISTIE KERR: Absolutely. Short game makes a huge difference on a day like today. You could shoot 4-under versus 1-over. So short game makes a huge difference. It takes a lot of pressure off your game when you are not hitting it well because you know you can get up there and get up and down.

Q. Is the course different from previous years?

CRISTIE KERR: Yes, I think you're going to hear a lot of players complaining about the 9th fairway. Stacy P, Stacy Prammanasudh, hit a great drive and the whole left side of the ball was covered with mud. Just the 9th fairway. Maybe it's the just lowest point on the golf course. But the golf course has played a little bit firmer and faster than it usually does. Some of the greens are getting inexhorbitantly firm and fast, so that the groups coming in are going to have a hard time spinning their shorter shots and some to the par-5s.

But I like the way the course is playing for my game and, you know, just that 9th fairway was a little soggy, that was about it.

Q. That gully on nine?

CRISTIE KERR: Yes, but I don't know why. I think really, I think it's always been that way. It's always been the wettest fairway the nine years that I've been playing here. I think it's just a drainage problem. There is really no other -- it just seems like where the drainage lines come down off the hill there, that's where they are. I think maybe there is a leaky pipe or something underneath.

Q. Today was a good day for scoring?

CRISTIE KERR: Absolutely. When you don't have much wind, and you have good conditions in the morning rounds. But this course, in the past, tends to give up so low numbers. So you feel like you kind of have to get in the hunt early so that people don't run away with the tournament.

I did that last year in the first round, and hurt my neck in the second round, and just didn't have a good tournament. But I feel good about my game. If you shoot 3 or 4-under every day, you are going to have a chance.

Q. This is a star-studded leaderboard right now. Is that what the LPGA needs to get more attention right now with the NBA playoffs going and the men in Texas?

CRISTIE KERR: Absolutely. Quite honestly, people would pay more attention to us. They would see that that's the case quite often. So there are a lot of distractions being in the United States. Other sports going on, playoffs, what have you. So, I think, there is an interest growing in the LPGA, and I think the LPGA is poised to do what women's tennis did about five years ago.

We just got to keep doing what we're doing and maybe spend a little more money on marketing or whatever. I think our popularity is growing.

Q. Laura Davies shot 6-under today, does that surprise you at all?

CRISTIE KERR: No, I'm definitely not surprised by that with Laura. She can shoot a couple over. She can shoot 10-under. She is very long. That's an advantage on this golf course, especially with the par-5s. And I have played a lot against her in the Solheim Cup to know that Laura Davies can be there any week she wants to be, so I'm definitely not surprised to see her up there.

Q. Is it fun to see the top names up there and know that you are one of them?

CRISTIE KERR: Yes, absolutely. I feel like I'm starting to play really well. It's kind of fun to be in the hunt, in the chase. I'm really enjoying playing in competition more than ever, and I think that is showing in my scores. I'm not afraid to shoot under par. I'm not afraid to get in the hunt now which is a really good place to be.

Q. Do you have a different mindset this week with the win last week and ending Annika's streak?
CRISTIE KERR: Well, I mean obviously, she has been the best player in the world for a long time. But I think again there are a lot of players that are willing to step up and challenge her now. So I'm not too concerned about her. I got to go out and play my own game and hopefully I make a few more putts than her. Or a few more putts than everybody else in the field to try to win another golf tournament.

So, I think, to answer your question, you always kind of know she's there and capable of playing really well. But I feel like I'm playing capable as well now. So I just got to go out and do my own thing.

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