

**2006 Wegmans LPGA
Locust Hill Country Club
Pittsford, NY
June 21, 2006**

Pre-tournament quotes

AN INTERVIEW WITH SE RI PAK

DANA GROSS-RHODE: First of all, Se Ri, thank you very much for coming in. You've got to be excited starting another tournament right after such a big win that was the 23rd of your career. You're so young.

Do you want to talk about coming back after your win at McDonald's.

SE RI PAK: Well, there is no question about it, it just feels great, especially almost two years, I've been kind of down the road and up and down every week.

But I got a great memory about the last tournament I won at McDonald's. That was very special for me. Even though before that week I got -- since that, actually, after let's say like in Orlando, actually, I got first great tournament in Orlando, and after that, I play a lot better. My game is more consistent now. That feels great. I'm striking a lot better. I feel much happier on the golf course. It is just very exciting to play each week. And I know my game is not quite there yet but, I know, I can play better each week. It gives me a lot of confidence out there. It's very enjoyable.

Most important, I felt I'm very comfortable with the golf course. At the same time I guess this is my first time ever, I feel, very enjoyable when I'm playing, especially the tournaments.

The last seven or eight years, just really focus each week for trying to win. And I'm trying to play really, really well.

After that, I just won so many tournaments but I don't think -- I don't think that was a great feeling. I'm always too much giving myself a lot of pressure every week. I never realize how much difficult it is.

And after that, I got two years gap. I am having problem here and there, and I don't think I really enjoyed my golf game and stuff like that.

But I have a break for time, and I just feel that the last seven years go past, and I just know what I've done before, I shouldn't do that. It much more makes sense myself. I'm human being. I'm not a robot. I'm not a machine too. But I think I can be really perfect for every single time for what I've done. I'm always playing myself out there. Or with B golf, the same thing, I'm moving the same routine. I never gave myself a break.

Then after that I guess I was very tired about it. Basically mentally and physically, I never realize it. It takes seven or eight years non-stop doing exactly the same, or giving up a lot more work to do, a lot more working. I And after that, I don't think I can handle it anymore.

So after that I got problems, I got injuries. I can't play last year middle of the season. That's a perfect time I guess. I'm a very lucky person. Having gone through that early. And I realize how important I am to being myself to enjoy it out there.

So right now I'm a very happy person as ever been, and I very enjoy it when I play golf.

And since I won last week, that gives me a lot of -- means my game.

After last weekend, I came this way, I feel free. I feel so strong. I like to play really well this golf course. I always like to play well here. I always like to win this event. Unfortunately, it really doesn't happen for me. But maybe this week I feel really great.

DANA GROSS-RHODE: Do we have any questions for Se Ri?

Q. Last year, what was it, you only played 12 events last year, what did happen, why was it that you only played the 12?

SE RI PAK: Starting early in the season I got some man problems with my body. One week my neck, I can't turn my neck, so I can't play for two weeks.

The next thing I find, I pull my muscle in my back. Little things keep coming and goes, I just can't control them. I am still working out a lot, trying to make myself physically great shape. I just don't know what happened. Just keep having a little bit of problem. I just can't play. Many times I withdraw because of little injuries. Now it's 110 percent back, so it's good.

Q. Were you also kind of sick of golf mentally? Were you kind of just tired of the game?

SE RI PAK: I was. I don't know why, especially last year, ever since the first event, I just don't know why I'm out here playing golf. No feel for me for my game. And I never, ever feel that way in my career ever.

But each week I stand on the tee and say, here again, I just -- it doesn't feel like I really want to play. I just don't want to play. I needed a break. I always say, I need a break. I want a break. I need rest. Something telling me just, you know, I want to go out there.

But somehow, each week of the tournament, especially I won so many times, I just don't want to keep up myself. So I just go out there every time, the same routine, try to go out and tee off. But it just never happened for me. I can't focus on the golf course. I never, ever enjoyed it myself. And I hate to be there, too, somehow. Like truly.

And I keep telling my coach, my parents, I just want a break. I just want a rest. Maybe I just came back for like a couple of months rest, and come back and maybe feel a lot better. I just can't do that.

Now, I go out and still play out there, even though I don't want to play. That makes it worse. Now I play everywhere, all of the golf courses, everywhere. Then suddenly I get injured. I couldn't play. I couldn't touch my golf club. And after that, it seemed like I need really, really a break.

Q. What about now, is it different now, do you feel refreshed out there, do you want to be out there?

SE RI PAK: Oh, yes, this is my first time ever being eager. I enjoyed it, very comfortable. And it gives me a lot of smiles, too.

Everybody knows the first couple of years I really, really focus on it. I don't know whose asked me, whatever call me and find out, stuff like that. I never heard it. I can't hear anything just being straight out to the fairway, to the green, and next shot, always too much focus on. I never really paid attention around so many galleries out there or friends out there. That was really fun part. People out there just follow you, and giving you a lot of clapping, just like support us. I never realize it.

I always keep playing so focused, I can't turn around, look around, how many people out there, what's going on. I never focus attention on that.

But now I like to see out there more friends out there. When they give me a smile, I give them a smile, that's like a big difference.

Q. You won the last tournament with an incredible shot on the playoff hole, how do you keep that momentum going, how do you keep it going this week?

SE RI PAK: You know, the first thing is, as long as right now I'm so happy about my game and happy about I'm out here exciting about each week. It doesn't matter how good, if I play bad or good, it still feels great.

Even the last time I won at McDonald's, which always helps me a lot, about giving another great confidence in myself, and in my game, which is -- especially this golf course is so tight, and small greens, and rough and the wind. It depends on the weather. But I remember this golf course is just so tight and so difficult.

But after the last win at McDonald's, it's no problem for me. It just seems like the fairways are wider and exciting to play such a hard golf course, and exciting to be here and see a lot of friends here. And I know this golf course, is another event, so this week is going to be great for me.

Q. Kind of a different topic, it seems like there is just a bunch of Korean players that are playing extremely well right now? What's the secret? How is it the Korean players are almost dominating the Tour right now?

SE RI PAK: I don't know. This as a very individual game, not the team game.

If I say you play the team game, maybe I know answer for it. But it's an individual game, I don't know what they are working.

Everybody, LPGA player, they work so hard for their game, and they try to win each week as they are here.

But, I guess, maybe part of it, for the way we are growing in our country, we have so hard time to play because the golf courses, most of them are private. And the condition-wise, we can't play the golf course in Korea. It's not easy like here. You go out there ever week you can find a tee time, you can get it anywhere you want.

But our country has never been happy. It's so hard. The golf course conditions are always great shape here, especially the tournaments.

And I think those pressures, the way you are growing up, we are already carrying all of this pressure, used to, so I don't think the pressure is going to be that much of a factor for our games. But I think because of the golf course condition, and the way the LPGA Tour players make us mentally a lot stronger, than we are used to playing in our country, and they work hard, too.

So all together, I guess, you know, they find it. Confidence in their game. They are young here. They have great talented players here. They use to be so good in our country. Here is a lot harder, more difficult to play here well. Each week they learn a lot and they kind of keeping the momentum going for every week, and then suddenly to have just as much confidence in their game, that's why they play well.

So, I'm not really sure exactly what is the answer why we play so well. They really handle the pressure so well.

Q. Se Ri, do you see yourself with this explosion of golf from Korea, do you kind of see yourself as a mentor, or a role model to these young golfers?

SE RI PAK: I say yes. Yes, they are starting so much popular amount of people, like kids. The last seven years, just amazing how many people, or how many kids are playing golf, start playing golf. And now they dream about, they play LPGA, they play PGA.

Even when I go back to Korea with so much different conditions out there. They go out there. They are playing. Now they ask me, who is your idol. They say Tiger Woods or Se Ri Pak, whatever. So many kids they have a dream about playing golf. I like to see that.

Before, our country, I was young, and I play golf, there is a lot of money to playing golf. The parents have to spend, lots and lots of money to play, getting clubs, play golf and the golf course, and private, and coach and stuff like that. It not easy to do that.

But now all of the parents they try to support whatever they need help. That makes a big different.

I'm very proud of myself to be out here, or give them people, or giving their kids dreams about it.

Right now, I'm very happy to see the young players from my country. I don't know what the people are thinking, but I really like to see that. Not even my country though. It seems like the last three years we saw so many young age players, actually they turn pro in the LPGA, that is great. They are always in great shape right now. They play so good. Emotionally, their reactions is like, all of the fans like to see that. I can see the last three to four years a huge change in the LPGA. So that was really improved.

Q. Just to follow up, who is your role model or idol, golfing idol when you were growing up?

SE RI PAK: Nancy Lopez is the woman's actually. And the men, I have a couple of guys like Greg Norman. He is always an aggressive player. So I like to play that way. Nick Faldo has got great swings, which is I like to have another part of it. So a little bit here and there.

Personally, the most, my idol was Nancy Lopez because I saw her every single time and she is always smiling. She is great for the fans. And personally, not because she is best golfer. The best golfer you play well so many times, you can be best, top. But the best things about her was her personality. She has a great heart. She is very open minded, and she is trying to help -- she is trying to help what happened. Any now we have so much difficult for ourself, and she is just always open. She is always there for me, too. She call me and ask me about any problem, just call me. 24 hours is open the phone for me. Even though that was rookie season. Even though I can't speak English, she just come out and always tell me she understand how much pressure I have. She understand how much difficult to go through those. She always talk to me and tell me how to control, how to make myself to being out there now and strong. So I never forget about it.

Q. Have you done that with any of the younger Korean players themselves?

SE RI PAK: I'm trying to like Nancy. Not so many. You see many Korean players come out from our country, sometimes they help. As best as can I help them, yes, I am. I'm always open for them, and always be there for them too.

Q. What's it take to win here on this golf course, do you think?

SE RI PAK: I think hit more fairways and make some more putts. But more above the greens I guess. These greens are so small, and it's not easy to make a lot of birdie chance here. I play yesterday nine holes, the greens are so soft. They are usually firm and fast. But yesterday was like soft and fast. So we have lot of spins on the ball. So I say probably on the greens, you make a lot of putts from the greens, you probably have a great chance to win it.

DANA GROSS-RHODE: I believe that's it. Thank you.

SE RI PAK: Thank you.

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