

U.S. Women's Open Championship 2018

Thursday, May 31, 2018

Sarah Smith

Flash Interview

Q. How was the course today?

SARAH SMITH: The course is great. I mean, considering the rain that we've had, it was -- I think I only had one ball that was kind of a little muddy. Otherwise I didn't need to pick it up. It was incredible. It was way dryer than I thought. The greens are pure, so the course is really nice.

Q. How were the fairways compared to the rough?

SARAH SMITH: The rough was not too bad. I wasn't in the deep stuff too often, which was nice. It's a lot dryer so it's not too heavy. The entire course is in great shape.

Q. What do you think is the strongest part of your game right now?

SARAH SMITH: I putted nicely today. I felt like it's been coming a long for a little while but just not holing a lot of putts.

Today I made a few nice saves early which kind of stopped the round from getting out of control and then made some nice ones for birdie on the back nine.

Q. Do you actively want to be in the lead at a major or do you prefer to have one shot back?

SARAH SMITH: I've never had the lead, so I'll have to find that out, I guess. I would much rather be playing well than not. I'm happy to deal with that tomorrow.

Q. How many holes did you play yesterday?

SARAH SMITH: I played nine holes yesterday.

Q. How was the course compared to yesterday?

SARAH SMITH: It was a little dryer, not as wet underfoot. I had a few muddy balls yesterday. It's incredible how much it's dried out in just a couple of days.

Q. How were the greens?

SARAH SMITH: The greens are awesome. There's a couple of spots that we've all walked that cupped it a little bit, but they're rolling beautifully even still in those spots.

Q. What is it about this golf course?

SARAH SMITH: I like the traditional style golf courses



with big trees. The fairways aren't super narrow, but a little bit of definition. I like the look of it, I think. The feel here.

Q. What's the biggest challenge?

SARAH SMITH: I think just staying where I am not getting too far ahead of myself. I felt like I've had some good rounds coming but I've actually been playing pretty bad. I just got to make sure that I stay where I am and not get too far ahead of myself, I think.

Q. So what's the difference?

SARAH SMITH: I have been working on a few things in my swing, made a couple of changes in my putting. I don't know how I got so messed up there for a little while. I would miss a cut by one or two here and there, then all of a sudden it catapulted into a few bad weeks. I got a little off track.

Q. What is going on with your putting?

SARAH SMITH: So I was using a bigger grip, so I went back to a standard grip. I went back to conventional. I had been putting cross-handed for probably four or five years, I guess.

I wasn't seeing the putter really well, and I like to feel my right hand which is kind of odd with new putting left hand low. It just felt really nice to get back to that. I changed a couple of drills. My coach gave me a different things to work on and it's felt for comfortable.

Q. Did you play the other nine on Wednesday?

SARAH SMITH: I walked them all. I planned to play nine on Monday, but I had two o'clock tee time. I would rather try and see them all than just play a couple and then get called in. Turned out to be beautiful and I could have probably played at least nine.

I got to chip and putt on every green. I think it kind of worked out better.

Q. Which nine did you not play?

SARAH SMITH: The front nine.

Q. Do you think you have to stop yourself from thinking about what position you are in with three more days to go?

SARAH SMITH: I think so. It's pretty early. I think later on in the week it might be easier to get ahead of

yourself. Tomorrow morning I have got to make sure that it's just a new day and not worry too much about where I am. Whether that's possible, I don't know. I would like to say that.

Q. How was it seeing Pernilla break through at the ANA? Has that given you motivation, maybe?

SARAH SMITH: Definitely. We play together quite often. Not to take anything from her win. It was amazing. It is nice to see someone that you have a lot to do with. You can see that it can happen. She worked incredibly hard for it. If anything, you just got to keep working hard and anything can happen in the end.