

Dana Open presented by Marathon

Thursday, July 13, 2023

Sylvania, Ohio, USA

Highland Meadows Golf Club

Mia Hammond

Quick Quotes

Q. All right, Mia, to be under par your first round on the LPGA Tour, just what was today like for you overall?

MIA HAMMOND: I mean, I just had to take the whole experience in as one. It's so much different than everything I'm used to and it's just truly amazing to see all the people out here, being able to play with people I've looked up so since I was seven years old when I first started.

I mean, going into today I didn't think I would shoot under par. I was hoping for somewhere around even, but I feel like I played great today and hopefully it carries on for the rest of the week.

Q. In the Monday qualifier I believe you shot a 66.

MIA HAMMOND: Yes.

Q. To go from that, get a couple days to prepare for this, what was going through your mind and what did your prep work become?

MIA HAMMOND: Yeah, there's parts of my game that I've always struggled with. Putting is definitely the biggest thing for me, so over the past couple days I've been trying to get the feel for the stroke, get the speed of the greens down.

That's always, like I said, been my biggest struggle, having that extra I guess thing to fall back on, which is typically my ball striking, it's never really left me.

It's just kind of nice like when you're hitting it closer to the hole it's like, oh, it's okay if you miss a putt here or there.

It's relaxing.

Q. What was the first tee like this morning when they read your name?



MIA HAMMOND: I was such in awe. It was insane. I mean, I've never experienced anything like that, you know, people clapping, cheering your name. It's just so incredible.

Q. You have quite a size crew out here. I know they all traveled down with you. Explain who you've got following along with you today.

MIA HAMMOND: Yeah, so my parents are here with me for the whole week, and they've always been my support system, so thankful to have them.

A few family friends from Zanesville Country Club, which is where I learned to play golf. Then a couple other people from our hometown. They've just been a part of my life since I was very young and I'm so thankful to have them all here.

Q. You obviously started well today. Do you feel like that settled you down?

MIA HAMMOND: Absolutely, yeah. Absolutely. To have a first couple holes be under par, I mean, it was -- it took a lot of nerves off and really got a start to the round.

Q. Did you kind of reevaluate or reset your expectations or goals today on what you did early or...

MIA HAMMOND: Not entirely. You know, once I get on the course I kind of just forget about the outside world and the goals I set for myself and focus on what's in front of me.

So I wouldn't say I was focused on goals per se, but just trying to get the shot as close as I can to the hole and get one shot back here or there.

Q. I haven't seen the tee times tomorrow, but I assume it's early; is that right?

MIA HAMMOND: I believe 9:10.

Q. Did you like playing a really good round and then

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getting to start again right away?

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MIA HAMMOND: Yeah, yeah, definitely. It's good to stay in rhythm and not have to sleep in and wait three hours, go to the course.

It's definitely good to just get up and go.

Q. And then just the last few days, today as well, the putting green, the driving range, what's it like being around all these -- I know you said like Lydia Ko was an idol of years. I don't know if you talked to her.

MIA HAMMOND: Absolutely, yeah. I talked to her on the range this morning. Like I said, it's just so amazing to be with all these people I looked up to since I first started playing the game. They've truly -- I mean, they have really shaped it for me, and I've always aspired to be like them.

It's truly great to be out here competing against them.

Q. Did you talk to your playing partners much during the round today?

MIA HAMMOND: Here and there, yeah, yeah. They gave some great tips and they're very, very nice people.

Q. Did they realize you were 15?

MIA HAMMOND: They asked me on the 9th hole. I don't think they knew in the beginning.

Q. I know it's summer vacation, so does that mean not being at school means kind of 100% focused on golf?

MIA HAMMOND: Yeah, yeah, pretty much. My dad actually works at an indoor facility called The Golf Room, so I'm there with him quite a bit practicing and just preparing my game for these big tournaments.

Q. Was he on the bag, your dad?

MIA HAMMOND: Yes.

Q. What does that mean also just to have your dad on bag, to be able to go through this experience, to finish the way you did? I mean, it's got to be a little bit emotional as well.

MIA HAMMOND: Absolutely. He's been there with me since the beginning and it's just so great to share this experience with him. He's got me where I am today. He's my coach, my caddie. I mean, he's everything for me in this game.

