

Dana Open presented by Marathon

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Sylvania, Ohio, USA

Highland Meadows Golf Club

Mia Hammond

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, I'm here with Mia Hammond at the Dana Open, another local player. How excited are you to be teeing it up for the second year in a row as a sponsor invite at the Dana Open?

MIA HAMMOND: Yeah, I'm so excited. Going to be a great week. I can't wait for my family and friends to be here again this year. It's especially amazing for everyone because it's so close to home and an easy drive.

Definitely be a fun week again.

Q. Correct me if I'm wrong, but last year was your first LPGA start.

MIA HAMMOND: Yes.

Q. What did that experience do for you, especially with such a successful experience? Made the cut, finished in to top 30 I think.

MIA HAMMOND: Yeah, so it definitely taught me how to calm my nerves. The first tee shot last year I was visibly shaking. I think it's just how to handle it and kind of pull myself back from that moment and just take it in. Instead of worrying about what's in front of me worry about what's around me and who is out there supporting and just -- because I might not get many experiences like this and I want to make sure I'm taking advantage of the time I do have out here while I'm still able to play.

Yeah, it's a lot of fun and a really great experience.

Q. How important is this tour experience for you as a young player? How has maybe been helping your game?

MIA HAMMOND: Yeah, I think it definitely shows me what it truly takes to get to the next level. Everyone out here is so dedicated. A lot of them have been doing it for many years.

Just to know that the work they put in eventually helped them get to where they are now. So to know what I need to do to get my game and myself to that next level is super important.

Q. What sort of is your goes about getting to that level? How important is it for you to get to that LPGA Tour level? Is that a big goal of yours for the future?

MIA HAMMOND: Absolutely. Yeah. I think it's just -- I'm going to take everything slow for now and just prepare myself. My goal is to go to college and after college see where the path takes me.

Yeah, the LPGA Tour, having a successful career is my ultimate goal.

Q. I know you just mentioned to me college recruiting just opened up for you. Just take us through that process and what you're looking at and how your early stages of recruiting are going.

MIA HAMMOND: Yeah, it's a lot. It's overwhelming. June 15th is pretty much when everyone reaches out. Texts and emails started at midnight.

It's interesting to see what's out there, what's available for me. I think now it's just a matter of knowing where I fit in best with the team, coaches, facilities.

So a lot of things I'm taking into consideration. I haven't made a decision and probably won't for another three, four months.

So just to take the process, use as much time as I can, and figure out what fits me best as a person.

Q. I remember this time last year was like all these things you dreamed of doing all came together at once. That's a lot to deal with at one time. What have you learned about yourself from that time last year up until now?

MIA HAMMOND: Yeah, I think it's going back to what I



said earlier in knowing how to deal with the nerves and understand the moment that I'm in.

Just appreciate the time I do have out here. It's important to know that methods to pull myself together and just focus on one shot at a time instead of jumping ahead and jumping to conclusions.

One thing I'm really bad at on the course is I'll think, oh, if I stay even par here I'll shoot this specific score, instead of just focusing on one shot at a time and trying to use my entire focus to stay in the moment and stay present.

Q. Do you have a method to keep yourself present if you find yourself doing that?

MIA HAMMOND: I notice it and I try to just pull myself back and say, hey, calm down a little. Maybe take some deep breaths and just try to focus on whether it's a short putt or an iron shot. I might take a few extra seconds to figure out where the pin is, what the break might do. Take the whole process slower and pull myself back.

Q. As more people have started taking notice of who you are and how well you're doing, have you found other pros have been helpful at all in just talking to you or maybe doing things on the range just to get you to where you need to be?

MIA HAMMOND: Absolutely. Someone that's really helped me over the years is Tammy Green she used to play on the LPGA Tour a while ago. She won a major.

She actually lives close to our old hometown. She's been super supportive to me and my family over the past six or seven years now. I try to play golf with her once or twice a year.

And recently for the Dana Open Media Day I met Stacy Lewis, and every time I've seen her she's been super happy to see us, super welcoming, and she's had a lot of really good advice.

Q. You said you'll have family and friends here. Do you know how roughly?

MIA HAMMOND: I would say over 20 probably, yeah.

Q. Who are they?

MIA HAMMOND: Grandparents will be here, aunts and uncles, few of my parents' friends, few of my friends from school. It's hard to tally up how many will be here. Yeah, we've got a few tickets set out for them.

Q. How has your dad handled everything over the last year?

MIA HAMMOND: I think he gets more nervous than I do sometimes. I know especially when he caddies for me I can kind of tell that he gets a little nervous. He's super helpful and supportive, and grateful to have him with me this week.

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