

Ford Championship presented by Wild Horse Pass

Friday, March 28, 2025

Chandler, Arizona, USA

Whirlwind Golf Club

Kate Smith-Stroh

Quick Quotes

Q. Okay, here with Kate after her second round at the Ford Championship. Great round for you today. Can you walk through your round for us and just how it went.

KATE SMITH-STROH: Yeah, thank you. I got off to a hot start and then kind of made a couple bad swings. Didn't birdie 17, so kind of moved closer to the cut line, which big crowd on 18 that I just kind of got a little nervous out there.

So, you know, my caddie and I really had to reset. So birdieing hole 1 when we made the turn was great. I had a lot of fortunate things happen on the back side. I played well, but, I mean, I made like a 45-footer with ten feet of break going pretty fast, so I felt like some good fortune on my side.

When that happens I just try to ride it and make a good score out of it.

Q. You're a rookie out here on the LPGA Tour. Can you put into words when you're near the cut line and you're playing, are you watching it? What was the comfort level with some of that?

KATE SMITH-STROH: Yeah, it's really uncomfortable because I think like a lot of people just think, oh, it's making a paycheck. It's making the weekend.

Obviously you want to play on the weekend. It's more like major starts and like keeping your card and just like so many things that -- making some money, making some points does so much for our career.

Yeah, as a rookie it's hard to get used to. I'm used to cut lines but they just mean so much out here. Playing the weekend is huge.

Q. You obviously played on the Epson Tour before this and had some great experience out there. How do you prepare yourself for your first LPGA Tour season?



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KATE SMITH-STROH: Yeah.

Q. Loaded question I do know.

KATE SMITH-STROH: I guess you just have to know your weaknesses. I try to play with a lot of great players in practice rounds or keep great people close to me so I know like, oh, I want to like putt more like her, I want to chip more like her.

So just knowing weaknesses. So I was trying to get a lot better at my putting before this year and my physicality. Going if from to four rounds might not sound a lot, but I just wanted to be ready for anything, so tried to get in the gym a little bit more and try to be as prepared as I could.

Q. I know you battled to make the cut at the Founders Cup. First time now sitting five shots off the pace. For you from that moment to even Asia and to now, does it just feel gratifying to be in this position with 36 holes to go here?

KATE SMITH-STROH: Yeah, feels really great. Even though I have a full card, every tournament you're trying to think like, do I belong here? Am I good enough?

So just like fighting those things, so seeing like numbers factually like, hey, I'm up there is awesome. Missing the cut in China I was kind of like, am I on the right track? Am I doing the right things?

So this is a really good feeling going into the weekend. Ford has been like really great. This is such a fun event. I feel like we're on a big stage here, so it's just been a lot of fun this week.

Q. On your closing nine, had three in a row. Take me through those three holes and getting a good little birdie train going.

KATE SMITH-STROH: Yeah, it was a good birdie train. Yeah, made the 40-footer which was crazy, and then par-3 hit it to 15 feet; made that one.

Kind of ran my layup through off the tee in the desert; hit



hybrid short; chipped it up and made a five-footer.

Yeah, three in a row really kind of boosts your confidence going into the final few.

And then the last hole I saw I was T6. Got a little nervous. Made a bogey on the last hole. It was a pretty good bogey so I'm not too mad about it.

Q. When you do feel those nerves out there, what's been your key for kind of quashing or maybe you have a bogey and have to try to get yourself back in it?

KATE SMITH-STROH: Yeah, I just try to stay where my feet are. I keep telling myself that. Hey, be in this moment. Be the best you can right now. Don't borrow the next hole's stress.

So just trying to stay in the present and let what happens -- it's just going to happen and I'm doing my best to handle it.

Q. Seen a low one out here today; got two more days to go. Like I said, within striking distance. How do you keep this momentum rolling over the next 36 holes?

KATE SMITH-STROH: Yeah, I think we got a really good game plan about the course. You know, might get more firm as the weekend goes on, so been hitting it well, and, yeah, kind of same game plan.

It'll be nice to kind of have the cut line gone so hopefully can have a little more fun playing golf this weekend.

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