

ANA Inspiration

Thursday, September 10, 2020

Rancho Mirage, California, USA

Mission Hills Country Club

Brittany Lincicome

Quick Quotes

Q. Brittany, a 3-under round after the first day here. Heat is out, your caddie said you were hustling out there. How did you feel after the first day?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Well, she didn't let me walk the first three days, so I've been cooped up in a golf cart, so it was nice to get out there and walk a few holes. This morning was absolutely beautiful. It wasn't too bad. I think we beat the heat, obviously. I had a nice sun umbrella today. My dad always tells me you can't win it after the first day but you can lose it, so it was nice to get an under-par round for the first round, and I just love it here. It's just so pretty.

I drove it well, which is a huge advantage. Hitting it far and keeping it in the fairway is definitely helpful. The greens are already so fast this morning, I can't even imagine what they're going to be tomorrow at 1:00 when I tee off. Some of the holes, they're already releasing 20 on a few holes. It's really going to be -- I'm glad I got a good round today because tomorrow might be just kind of an average day is going to feel like an under-par day.

Q. Definitely some differences on this course this year. How did you adjust to those over the three days and how do you think the temperature really came into play, especially with the Bermuda out there?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Oh, my gosh, Bermuda is not my favorite. I'm not going to lie. That ball, if you hit it in the rough it's going to the bottom and you've kind of got to dig it out. Fortunately like I said I hit a lot of fairways so I didn't have to do that too many times, but the golf course, I think they lost about 100 trees, they said, which you can tell like visually it looks a lot more open, but if you hit it in the rough, you have no chance. You're just kind of playing you can get it somewhere back in the fairway or somewhere around the front of the green was all we were trying to do today. Even myself being a long hitter, I find the rough very difficult.

The trees being gone is great, but you still -- if you hit it in the rough, you're in trouble.



Q. You've got a lot of great memories here as a past champion. How different is it with it being in September and not its usual April date?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Yeah, it's definitely different, like you said, with the grass being different, and obviously this heat. But I'm so happy that we're back. I'm so happy that this event stayed on the schedule and that we got to come back here and play. I definitely would have been really bummed if we would have missed this event.

Even though it's going to be over 100 here in a couple days on the weekend, I'll still take that as long as we're here.

Q. How can you hate Bermuda being from Tampa?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: I know. I don't practice at home, so I try to stay away from the Bermuda.

Q. When you talk about your driving, is there any type of advantage with driving when the fairways have a little bit more grass on them and there's maybe less roll than there would be in April?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Oh, my gosh, absolutely. It was funny, I was talking to my caddie, obviously I'm closer to 40 than I am 20 now, so I'm not hitting it as far as I used to. Come to find out, I played a practice round with Lexi Thompson, holy cow she hits it so far, but yeah, the fairways are not running. When you're laying up on a par-5 or even if there's a bunker that's like 280, 290, my driving is only about 270, so the ball is not going anywhere when you hit the fairway. I think that makes it a little bit easier because when we play in April, even the lay-up on 18 when you're laying it up, you have to be careful, it might release 20 yards, so you really have to be mindful.

Today when it doesn't release anywhere, it's a lot easier to judge.

Q. How much did you have in on 18?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Too far. Way too far. It was going to land right in the middle of the lake.

Q. With Juli and Karrie not playing this year, you're the only player in this field with multiple wins in this



tournament.

BRITTANY LINCICOME: That's pretty cool.

Q. You didn't know that, did you?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Nope. It's good company.

Q. But knowing that and knowing how well you've played here, how much of an advantage is that as opposed to your physical game of hitting it a long way, just knowing that you can win here?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Oh, yeah, I mean, it's huge. Like I said, just driving in to Mission Hills and being here and just seeing the mountains and the flowers and how green it is, I really thought it was going to be burned out, honestly, but it's so beautiful. They've done such a great job to keep it so well maintained for us.

I think having won twice obviously gives me a huge advantage and just can reflect on all my good shots from the previous years, and hopefully that'll help me.

Q. You mentioned the trees and how it looks different. Just standing on the first hole it looks different. Were the other changes necessarily anything you noticed?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: No, not really. I mean, it's funny, when I was looking at my yardage book, it says missed the fairway, left is good, right is blocked, and now there's no trees, so I feel like I need a whole new yardage book. It definitely looks more open, but that doesn't mean it's more open. It's still extremely hard, and I feel like every single time we come back here, the fairways are getting more and more narrow, so you really have to be very specific where you're driving it and where the kick is. Even on No. 10, you have to hit it left center to keep it in the fairway or it kicks right. Just when you think you hit the fairway easy, you really need to hit it in a very specific spot to keep it in the fairway.

Q. What's up with the thumb?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Oh, God, who knows. I mean, I've had so many different doctors -- long story short, it just hurts when it bends back, so when I go to hit driver, I only hit balls like a month -- actually a week leading up to the tournament at Inverness, so I really thought I was going to have to have surgery, and luckily this gentleman in Orlando made this brace for me, and now I'm pain-free but now it's just learning to play with all the tape on and the brace on. I finally think I figured it out this week.

Q. When we talk about a good draw, it's usually wind

or rain, but when you know you're going out early and have the heat, do you feel some pressure to take advantage of that?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Oh, absolutely. Definitely playing in the morning you have to take advantage of it because tomorrow, like I said, I think even par is going to be fantastic. I mean, I said already a few greens today were releasing 20 yards already, and that's only in the morning. Tomorrow I'm going to have to beat the heat. I haven't played later than 8:00 a.m. any day this week. I've played at 7:30 and 8:00 on Monday, so tomorrow I'm going to have to battle the heat, battle the firmness of the greens, and it's going to be a little bit more challenging for sure.

Q. This tournament often has big galleries, rowdy galleries. How much did you miss that energy today?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: I miss it every week. It's kind of a catch 22 because when you're playing, like my dad was out watching, it's like your junior golf days when your parents were just there watching you, which was great, but especially this event, coming up 18 and having the big crowds and if you're playing well having them support you and back you and just giving you that extra feeling of wanting to play well and feeling off their momentum really is helpful. So to not have fans, it's kind of like, thanks, made a birdie. You're like waving to like that one fan that's in their house. It's definitely different. I miss the fans for sure. But I try to think that they're out there in my mind.

Q. What is it with your thumb specifically?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: It's like the volar plate or something. It just hurts when it bends back too far, so when I go to like hit a driver hard or really any club, like when I was home I could only hit 20 balls at a time before it was just on fire and I couldn't hit any more balls. With the plate it just doesn't allow it to bend back too far, and it's pain-free.

Q. How much do you practice now? Obviously not at home; we've covered that already.

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Not very much.

Q. How many balls did you hit this morning?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: I only hit for probably 20 minutes.

Q. Is that normal?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Yeah.



Q. Even when you're --

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Yeah, played nine holes Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. Everyone in my group, they're like, are you playing 18 today? I'm like, no, too many holes.

Q. What were you expecting when you got here in terms of the entire week?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: Like Brown and burned out and just not very pretty, but I mean, the superintendent here, oh, my gosh, he deserves the world. It's so beautiful. I thought the greens were going to be all yucky and burned, and it's actually beautiful. I was a little bit shocked.

Q. You told me yesterday how important the driver was, but looking at your stats, looks like the short game was pretty solid today, as well. What were you most pleased with?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: That's shocking because it's been my worst part of my game here recently. Just taking so much time off, it's like a whole year really since I played after having Emery, and short game has not been there, so I was really pleased to make a few long putts today. I haven't seen that in a while. And then the short putts to save par obviously to keep the momentum going and the round going.

But driving it well is huge, too. If you can't hit the fairway, this rough is so thick and the ball goes straight to the bottom, so it's hard to get it out and have those opportunities to make birdies. Driving it well and then putting it well is obviously a great combination.

Q. You told me yesterday, too, how much different this golf course looks off the tee. For a longer player like yourself, do you feel like you can be more aggressive?

BRITTANY LINCICOME: You can, but again, if you miss the fairway, you're in big trouble, so it's kind of picking your battles and missing it in the right spot I think is the biggest key. If you miss it on the left side and you can run it up the front of the green, that's great. If you're right and you're blocked, it's very tricky. So I definitely missed it in the right spots today. I could take advantage. I was driving it really well, felt like I could swing as hard as I wanted to, and it was going straight, which was a really good feeling, so that really helped today.

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