

Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions

Friday, January 19, 2024

Orlando, Florida, USA

Lake Nona Golf & Country Club

Gemma Dryburgh

Hally Leadbetter

Quick Quotes

Q. Here with Hally Leadbetter and Gemma Dryburgh at the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions. Explain this relationship. You two are pretty solid friends. You see it on social media. To actually get to play today, tell us about the relationship and how fun it was out there today.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: I'll go first. Well, we know each other from high school, from like 15 years old onwards, so we both went to IMG. Same group, we had the same coach, Kevin Collins. Shout out to him.

HALLY LEADBETTER: Shout out to him.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: We've known each other since then and been best friends through high school.

HALLY LEADBETTER: College golf as well. I was like look at this, Gemma, who would've thought, you and me playing in an LPGA event. Look, miracles happen.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: I was actually asked -- all the players were asked who they wanted to play with and I requested Hally. I don't know if she knows that.

HALLY LEADBETTER: Wow, my ego is getting a huge boost at the moment.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Why would you not want to play with a friend?

HALLY LEADBETTER: Aw, we had so much fun today. Like old times.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, we did.

Q. Hally, you work in golf and have your own career in the game. To watch Gemma and what she has done the past couple years, how cool is it to see your friend

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succeed and play alongside her in her territory?

HALLY LEADBETTER: Oh, my, gosh, it is so cool. I don't know if you had a chance to see the last shot on 18. Hybrid to like five feet. I was like, this is why Gemma is a winner on the LPGA Tour. She is so, so good.

I think it's really impressive too because in high school Gemma beat me. You know, not as much as -- now she can beat me by.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: We were competitive.

HALLY LEADBETTER: Yeah, we were competitive. And now there is no way in hell I could keep up with her. So it's really cool to see her steady progression from high school to being a winner on the LPGA Tour, and I'm so proud of her. So cool.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Thank you, Hally.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

GEMMA DRYBURGH: We had classes together. Hally would definitely talk more in class.

HALLY LEADBETTER: I was the Salutatorian.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: You were.

HALLY LEADBETTER: I guess on paper maybe me. No, Gem was a very good student. She went to Tulane, so, pretty good school.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: You went to Rollins.

HALLY LEADBETTER: I did. Also a good school.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Also a very good school, yeah.

Q. I love this compliment-fest.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: No, you're great. You're better.

HALLY LEADBETTER: No, you're great.

Q. Gemma, for you, how cool has it been for you to see what Hally has done in the game and playing

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alongside her this week?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, it's been so cool. She's absolutely thriving in the game and her space. It's been so cool to see how she's progressed through her career as well, and she is pretty much in the perfect job I would say for her. Golf has been a huge part of her life and she always been hilarious since I've known her, and she has continued to be hilarious on social media.

And beyond that.

HALLY LEADBETTER: We were talking today about -- Gemma and I -- a program they offered at IMG was called Game On and it was an athlete class, they had to help athletes get out of their shell. I thought it was really fun and we took that class together.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: That's where our friendship really --

HALLY LEADBETTER: That is where -- it was an improv class in high school.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Hally was -- they were always volunteering, oh, who wants to go next? Hally.

HALLY LEADBETTER: They were like, someone else.

Q. Gemma, just your comfort level. I remember you coming to this tournament for the first time. Now as a consistent winner, Solheim Cup player, these things, what's your comfort level? How much has it grown out here?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, it's grown so much. Ever since winning on tour it just gives you so much confidence you can do it any week out here. It's nice to start this week. It's a limited field so it's among the other winners, so you never know what's going to happen this week or any week.

Definitely more comfort as the years have gone on, and just proved myself out here.

Q. Just a couple more for both of you. Obviously having lived out here, you know the member bounces, you know the lines.

HALLY LEADBETTER: You got a few today.

Q. I was going to say, did you pick up on anything that you may not have seen yesterday or in the past playing here?

HALLY LEADBETTER: I don't think she would've learned

anything from me. Yeah, I did grow up on this golf course but I was playing it when I was 12 or 13 years old, like 1000 yards shorter, so.

And also, yeah, so it was a lot longer than when I played it. Still kind of the same -- I happened to run into a woman that was best friends with my grandmother that I haven't seen in like legitimately probably 17, 18 years.

So a lot of people that come out to Lake Nona to cheer on the pros, and for me to be, oh, my gosh, hi. How is your dog, that kind of thing. It's really cool to be back here.

Q. Didn't you have a funny story meeting Annika out here for the first time?

HALLY LEADBETTER: Yeah, yeah. So this is really where I learned to play the game. This is where my dad's first golf academy was, where the chipping green is now. So whether my dad was teaching Nick Price or Nick Faldo on the range and I would be hitting balls next to whoever.

Yeah, I remember my parents signed me up for the Girls Golf clinic with Annika who now lives in the house I grew up in. My parents always say, like Annika was moving down the range spending a couple minutes with every girl and Annika literally waited 20 minutes there for me to just make contact.

Then, what was funny, after we moved out of the house and we -- I went down to IMG, got recruited by a couple colleges, and they were sending recruitment letters to Annika's house, which used to be my house. I drove up here to get them. She was like, wow, much improved. I'm like, yes. (Laughter.)

Q. Serious note, playing pretty well this week Gemma and in a good position heading into the weekend. What are you looking for from yourself the next two days and maybe some member bounces out there you may have seen?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, some member bounces would be nice. Maybe Hally can give me some of them.

HALLY LEADBETTER: You can have them for the weekend.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Thank you. Game feels really solid. Definitely hit it better today, so it was nice to see that. Been working on a couple things over the off-season. I am just cementing them in tournament golf.

So feel like I could do that this weekend and see what happens.

Q. How have you learned this golf course? I know it's a really challenging place and really challenging greens. Have you learned more about Lake Nona in the past couple years?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Definitely. There is a lot of run-offs and cheeky little -- even the second green today I hit it close and it spun off the green. It's subtleties like at that can catch you out.

Yeah, staying on the right side of those run-offs is definitely key. Me and my caddie, Paul, have definitely learned those over the last couple years so hopefully can bring that into the weekend.

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