

LPGA Qualifying Tournament Stage II

Thursday, October 21, 2021

Venice, Florida, USA

Plantation Golf and Country Club

Katherine Smith

Quick Quotes

Q. Nice round, 68. You're right there at the top of the leaderboard. Only one bogey on the scorecard I see at 3, and then you had five birdies at 2, 9, 12, 13 and 16. Nice bogey-free effort coming in. Take me through the round and how it progressed and flowed into that number.

KATHERINE SMITH: Yeah, I was definitely a little nervous starting off the week. Really hard to tell where the scores are going to be and how hard the courses are playing, especially because the two courses are so different. Got off to a little bit of a shaky start, just like a lot of lip-outs, three-putted a par-5 early, which wasn't what I wanted. And then a few putts rolled in on the back that gave me some momentum and got through some of the more challenging holes.

Yeah, I'm happy. I mean, kind of a weird week. Q-school is just tough as it is, so I'm just trying to get a good start and then hold on to it and keep making birdies throughout the week.

Q. You're on the Panther course today, Bobcat tomorrow. You mentioned some of the differences. What's a difference or two that's noticeable for you?

KATHERINE SMITH: Yeah, I think Panther is probably more challenging off the tee. Bobcat might be more challenging around the greens just because of the new undulations they've put in. I really don't know which one is harder.

I think it's personal preference. I like the Panther. I'm excited to see what I can do on the Bobcat and see how it is over there.

Q. You had mom on the bag, I believe, at stage 1, and then you got brother today or this week?

KATHERINE SMITH: Yeah.

Q. What's it like -- dad out here, too, watching?



KATHERINE SMITH: Yeah.

Q. What's it like to have the family out and just to have that kind of -- when you look over on the bag you've got that calming presence perhaps?

KATHERINE SMITH: It's great. I kind of say that my brother comes out for the big ones, and this is a big one. Mom did a great job getting me through stage 1 and keeping me comfortable. Yeah, I think it's special. I'm only four or five months into playing professional golf. I think it's special having family around at any point. Especially playing -- there's so many internationals this week, so you're really grateful seeing them because I know a lot of girls are on their own out here, and it's pretty tough either way.

Q. What's your brother's name?

KATHERINE SMITH: Carter.

Q. And your mom?

KATHERINE SMITH: Marjorie.

Q. And your dad?

KATHERINE SMITH: Chris.

Q. Your mom got the short end of the straw with the heat out in California.

KATHERINE SMITH: She got to ride, so that was good. I told my brother, it's probably good you weren't there stage 1. Mom did my laundry. I don't think you're going to do my laundry this week. Different skill sets.

Q. You won two events I think at Nebraska in 2021, including the Big Ten championship, which is a pretty awesome feat.

KATHERINE SMITH: Yeah, it was huge.

Q. How well prepared did you feel coming out of

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Nebraska to compete at the professional level?

KATHERINE SMITH: Yeah, I felt like I was extremely prepared. Lisa Johnson, the head coach, she came in with like two years left for me, and I think she really shaped me up. She said, hey, you have weaknesses and we need to make sure that you're leaving without those weaknesses. I've gotten a lot better at them, so I'm really grateful for my college experience. I haven't felt like the transition was too hard probably because I had good coaches and good teammates around me.

Yeah, I definitely feel like I'm trending in the right direction, and yeah, winning Big Tens was really special. It means a lot being in that conference and then also a Husker. It's been a great year, and just trying to ride the momentum.

Q. You mentioned that when Coach came in, fixed a couple weaknesses, and when you left you didn't want to have those. What was a weakness or two that maybe you're really proud of how far it's come along?

KATHERINE SMITH: Yeah, I think my short game needed a lot of work. I've kind of always had a strong ball-striking -- I think my skill was always ball-striking, and chipping and putting needed a lot of work, and she's like, you need to put in the time.

I'm really proud going into this week of the time I've put in. For me it's just like trusting that because I feel really prepared. There's nothing really I can doubt. Coming out here today I just wanted to see how it performed, and it did today.

Q. You mentioned you studied graphic design at Nebraska. Do you do a lot of that in your spare time off the golf course?

KATHERINE SMITH: Yeah, I really like designing golf course logos and redesigning them. I'm on the verge of starting my own business kind of doing design and consulting for mostly golf-related branding. That's kind of kept my mind less on golf all the time because I think for me it's hard to go 24/7 trying to perfect your golf game when I can focus on other fashions and feel like a little more well-rounded.

Q. When you're on a course, how does your graphic design eye work? Does it translate at all to your game or anything that you see out on a course?

KATHERINE SMITH: I think I'm super visual. Kind of on 9 today I was right behind a tree and I had to hit like a 40-yard cut, but had to go like under a tree and over a tree. I don't think I could do those shots without like kind of

having my art background. Art classes, it's like you have to look at the same thing and find really small details in it, so I think that's helped me kind of be more detail oriented on the course and kind of visualize things more.

I think like playing that as my strength has really helped.

Q. Obviously good day today; what's the biggest thing you've learned maybe in your few months as a professional -- you mentioned only been a professional for a few months. What's something you've learned or studied to make sure you can follow that up and keep the foot on the gas?

KATHERINE SMITH: Gosh, I've learned a lot, but I think like you're in charge, you're kind of your own business. You're in charge of playing well and keeping your affairs in order. So kind of taking ownership of your golf game. I think I'll own what I did today and -- I mean, you're the only one in your head 24/7, so you kind of have to be your own biggest fan I think is the biggest part of it.

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