

Sony Open in Hawaii

Sunday, January 14, 2024

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Waialae Country Club

Grayson Murray

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome the 2024 Sony Open in Hawai'i champion, Grayson Murray. What a dramatic finish that was. If we can get comments on your second PGA TOUR victory and also the way you got it done there in the playoff.

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, it was not easy and never is easy. It feels like sometimes the round takes 10 hours because it's a grind out there.

Keegan played great and kind of was back and forth all day, and obviously Ben posted 17-under early. Keegan was at 17 with one to go and I was at 16 with one to go and I had to make a birdie to at least have a chance, and obviously hit a heck of a wedge shot in there close to get that birdie and fortunate enough to get in that playoff.

That tee shot on 18 is not a good tee shot for a fader with the wind off the left. Tug it off the tee in the playoff, and we each just had to lay up. Didn't hit my best wedge shot, but obviously I made the putt and was expecting both of them to make birdie, at least one of them.

You never know what's going to happen in this game. This is a silly game. Hats off to Ben and hats off to Keegan for a well-played event. Unfortunately one person has to win, and that's the way it goes in playoffs.

But I'm very pleased.

Q. In a golf setting, if you think back to being one behind Keegan and hitting a bit of a peeler off 18 not knowing where it's going, in the playoff being 40 feet and seeing Ben there four, how do you keep positive?

GRAYSON MURRAY: You know, I was just so fortunate to be in that situation. I feel like -- I think a lot of things are going right in my life right now and I'm at peace. I was at peace with the 40-footer in the playoff.

I expected Ben to make it, and like I said, this game is crazy.

But I knew I had to give it a chance. I wasn't going to leave it short. Obviously 100 percent of the putts that you leave short don't go in. I just gave it my best stroke, and obviously it went in.

Yeah, I stayed positive. That's all you can do. I think there's so many ups and downs throughout the round. You've just got to play your game.

I know it's so cliché, but it's true. You just have to focus in on what you're trying to do and know that your good enough is good enough.

Q. Can you talk about what's going through your head or your emotions when you see that putt go in, and B, that moment where you realize, okay, that's --

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, that putt was looking good the whole way. I'm a sucker for some good celebrations. I love making big-time putts in big-time moments. I'm never going to back down from a celebration.

Obviously Ben I'm seeing there, he's going through his full routine and looked confident and maybe he just misread it just a hair. You never want to see that. You don't want to win on a missed putt like that.

But he's playing -- I think he finished third or second last week or somewhere top 5, up there high, so he's obviously playing really good golf. I know his win is right around the corner.

Q. You've talked a lot about some struggles. When you were drinking, would you drink during the nights of tournaments and stuff, too, and if you did, do you think you could have done what you did today?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yes, I would drink during tournament weeks. It was my outlet. I thought I was invincible coming out here as a 22 year old, winning as a rookie, played three days hungover when I won.

Best thing and worst thing that ever happened to me was winning my rookie year but also feeling like I was invincible.



It took me a long time to get to this point. That was seven years ago, over seven years ago. I'm a different man now. I would not be in this position right now today if I didn't put that drink down eight months ago.

Q. You mentioned your faith and your girlfriend, fiancée, and other support people. Were you ever in a program or anything like that specifically for alcohol?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, I did go to rehab for a month. It was by choice. It was time. The Lord was looking out for me then, and he's definitely looking out for me now.

My story is not finished. I think it's just beginning. I hope I can inspire a lot of people going forward that have their own issues.

Q. You mentioned after you won in Nashville looking forward to trying to get on a nice 10-year run and now it's a pretty good start to that run. Where do you think that confidence and self-belief, without having done this, came from?

GRAYSON MURRAY: It just goes back to just my life is so good right now. I wouldn't trade anything. I have a beautiful fiancée. I have beautiful parents. I have beautiful nephews, siblings.

Everyone in my life right now who is close to me who has been through the struggles with me, it's all a team effort. I'm not sitting here -- I am sitting here alone, but all of them are part of this.

I think this is just the start of something really special.

Q. Can you go back to yesterday after the third round and your comments. You were talking about if I'm going to lose this, it's not because I'm playing it safe. Reading between the lines, the golfer you are today is not the same guy as a year ago that would have that same kind of mentality, if that makes sense?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, I've never been one to be afraid of the moment, but I never really put myself in those moments enough to really have the chance. I would always -- I'd miss a lot of cuts.

Obviously you don't have a chance on Sunday when you're missing cuts.

I think just the more I put myself in position on weekends, the more comfortable I get. It's not a cockiness, it's just a confidence. It's confidence that I have the game to get it done. My prep work is done before I show up here on-site

on Monday. At that point, it's just maintenance, learning the course, and executing.

Q. How close were you to giving up and why?

GRAYSON MURRAY: I think I was -- I think I would always say it out loud to kind of justify, hey, hopefully if I say it out loud enough that I give up, that maybe I'll give up, then someone might say, you should.

Maybe I was feeling a little sorry for myself. My parents never gave up on me, so I knew that wasn't an option to give up.

This game has given me a lot. Financially it's given me a lot. It's given me a lot to just get away from everyday life struggles. It gives me comfort now on the course. I'm happy out there.

When I go home now, it's not about golf. It's about my fiancée. It's about my family and the perspective now that I have is -- I can't really put it into words.

Q. Going back to when you first were interviewed off the green, you said, when you get tired of fighting, let someone else fight for you, what does that mean?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, that's kind of a Jimmy Valvano quote. He said, when you get tired of fighting, let someone else fight for you. I don't know the exact words he said, but that's kind of where I got it from.

He was obviously battling cancer, something that I can't fathom. I'm sure he had days where he just felt like giving up and he couldn't go anymore. Maybe his family members were pushing him to kind of just keep going or maybe fighting for him and giving him a little more inspiration.

I think that's why he got more days out of -- the doctors probably said he did. I really lean on that quote.

Q. How did that get in your head?

GRAYSON MURRAY: I've always -- being a Raleigh guy, he coached at NC State obviously, and every year we see the Jimmy Valvano Award at the ESPYs and we always see him talking back in the day, his famous quotes.

It's just something to live by. The guy had such a great -- he was such a great inspiration to everyone, and they're still raising obviously tons of money through his foundation.

A guy like that who can have that type of attitude who's basically dying, why can't I, who I'm healthy?

Q. Who was the first to step into the ring for you, so to speak? When you stopped fighting and let others fight, who would you say is the first to turn this into a WWE --

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, I think at the time it was my parents. I'm so close to my parents. I think there were a couple other close friends that have seen me pretty much at my lowest.

There are days where I didn't want to get out of bed. I just thought I was a failure. I always looked at myself as a failure. I thought I had a lot of talent that was just a waste of talent.

It was a bad place, but like I said, you have to have courage. You have to have the willingness to keep going. Lo and behold, that's what I did, and I'm here, and I'm so blessed and I'm thankful.

Q. We can talk about kind of the climb back and drinking and being sober the last eight months. How would you define the other issues in your words?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, obviously I struggle with anxiety, I struggle with depression. That stemmed a lot from the alcohol use. I struggle with comparing myself to others, self-esteem. There's a lot of issues that -- I call them issues. I think they're common issues that we all endure.

I got tired of trying to fight it alone, and I asked for help one day, and that's when my life changed.

Q. I'm sure you didn't have Pebble and Riviera circled to start the year.

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, I think when everyone asks you what your schedule is going to be, you always say, these couple events, but maybe Pebble, maybe -- it might change, maybe Riv. Obviously you want to get in those, but you don't want to be like, oh, I'm going to be in them type wording.

Obviously it was a goal to be in all those events. It happened sooner than I thought it would, to be frankly honest. But it's special that I am in those events, and I'm looking forward to playing against the best players in the world.

Q. Have you played Memorial?

GRAYSON MURRAY: I have, yeah. I've played Memorial twice and Riv twice.

Q. Can you walk us through 18, the final hole in regulation, especially maybe what you and Jay were talking about, especially the approach, too?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, so the tee shot, like I mentioned, was really tough for me. I was kind of losing my balance off the tee shot the last few holes, just maybe a little nerves, maybe a little fatigue, and I left it out right.

I'd get over there, and we're trying to -- the rough isn't trampled down like we thought so I wasn't going to get a great lie when we did drop from the grandstands. We assessed the lie and I thought maybe I could open up a 7-wood and get it up there close to the green, but I don't think the risk-reward was there, so we decided to hit I think -- I forget what I hit, but we laid up to a great number where when the wind was in our face I could hit a low wedge shot in there.

I think we played that hole great, and we talked about -- when we did get out of position all week, we talked it out. That's the one thing I'm working on is just being super patient when I don't hit the shot that I'm trying to hit at first.

Q. Is that what you'd describe your front nine as, being super patient?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Super patient.

Q. When you see the leaderboard --

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, I think the first five holes on this course are kind of the meat of this course, and then as you get on there are more opportunities for birdies.

You see the guys start on the back nine and get on a little run, and fortunately they kind of ran out of holes when they had to make the turn on the front.

I kept telling Jay, we're hitting good putts, we're hitting them right where we want, and we're going to have one drop today, and it's going to be big, and it might be for eagle, and it might be for the win, and it might be -- it ended up being for the win.

Q. When did you say that to him, about you're going to make a putt?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Oh, I said it from the get-go. The first hole I hit a great putt. The second hole I just missed high. I think in the past I would have been a little bummed knowing I had an eight-footer for birdie on 2 that I kind of missed, misread.

When you give yourself enough looks like I did just hitting a lot of greens, I think I'm a good enough putter that I'm going to get the line and the speed correct on one of them.

Q. When you look back to those days when you felt you were invincible, what's the thing where you'd go, I can't believe I did that?

GRAYSON MURRAY: I think just the way I carried myself, the way I was very -- I want to say maybe a little arrogant at times. I think the alcohol brought a side out of me that wasn't me. It was kind of the monster in me in a way.

Now I'm super calm and I have the demeanor. I know the people around me knew the real Grayson. I have a big heart and I care for a lot of people.

But it wasn't showing; now I feel like it's showing.

Q. Going back to 2017 when you won for the first time, your rookie year, from a pure golf standpoint, how do you feel like your game has come along or changed since that time?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, I think back then I was just kind of hitting it as far as I could off the tee and kind of going and finding it and playing it. I didn't really have the shots around the green. My putting wasn't as great.

But just working with Josh Gregory now with my short game, he even came up to me this week and said, man, we're going to have some fun this year. You have a lot of shots that I didn't know you had in your arsenal.

That makes me feel good, knowing that I'm getting a lot out of my game that was there all along but maybe wasn't giving myself the best opportunity to show it.

Q. You touched a little bit on Josh, but your bunker play was pretty sick this week. Have you always been a decent bunker player or is that a big improvement?

GRAYSON MURRAY: I think it's a big improvement. I think I'm pretty confident when it comes to bunker shots, but there are certain shots that he has just taught me that -- technique and how to read lies. That's kind of what I did this week.

These bunkers were perfect. Sometimes we'll get plugged lies throughout the year and you can't do much with those. Every time I hit it in a bunker, I felt like I was going to get it up-and-down.

Q. 17 was good?

GRAYSON MURRAY: 17 was good, yeah.

Q. You mentioned the effect of alcohol on arrogance or cockiness. Talent is kind of a contributor to that, too, isn't it? Tell me what you've got.

GRAYSON MURRAY: I think it is, but I was humbled by that because I felt like the guys who came out kind of my year, maybe a year in front of me, I felt like I had pretty much their talent, and they took off and I didn't. So I think the arrogance, I kind of got humbled by that a little bit.

But I also was a little, I would say -- I'm trying to think of the word for it. I was a little jealous. I was a little jealous of the guys who came out my year or the year before and had all that success, knowing that I was just as good as them.

Jealousy is not a good thing. I think we all have our own paths and we all have our own journeys and we all have our own ways of getting to where we want to be.

I'm 30, and I feel like starting now I can be the golfer that I've always wanted to be.

Q. Getting sober is big; what about getting on social media or keeping it private?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, I put down Twitter a couple years ago. I think social media can be a great thing and it can be a bad thing. I do not like to read what people have to say about me because they don't know me.

Today should be good, but there will always be people who wish I didn't win. For that I'm thankful, and for the supporters I'm more thankful for. I feel everyone's support, and I tell my mom, don't look at Twitter because you know I'm your son and you know who I am.

Q. Where did you and your fiance meet and do you have a wedding date?

GRAYSON MURRAY: We do. We met in Palm Springs three years ago at the tournament. Her folks live in there now in Palm Desert, and we are getting married April 27th in Pinehurst, the Zurich week.

Q. Everything is tied to golf?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Everything is tied to golf. She's a golfer herself. She loves golf. She grew up around the game, and Pinehurst is an hour from my house or from where I grew up, and all my family members will be able to make it, and I think that's a special thing.

We're very family oriented and everyone is getting kind of

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

old, so we want to keep it kind of close to the house.

Q. You weren't in a great spot three years ago in Palm Springs I wouldn't think.

GRAYSON MURRAY: No --

Q. A reference point to Honolulu?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, exactly. That was kind of one of my very low points in life. It was not a good spot, but here we are three years later, and how the tides have turned.

Q. Right before the playoff outside the scoring trailer, you and your fiance had a moment. It looked like it was kind of profound. What was that moment like? What was the message?

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, we just said a prayer. We said a prayer that the good Lord is looking over us, and no matter what the outcome was going to be, it wasn't going to be life changing.

Me and her are still a son and daughter to Jesus Christ, and that's never going to change.

Q. Is there anything about this moment that's surreal to you?

GRAYSON MURRAY: I think I just envisioned this. I kind of just -- yeah, I think when you wake up and you wake up early and you work so hard and you put in all the hours, these are the moments that you live for.

Tiger had to do 80-some of these, and I felt like maybe he might have got tired of some of those, but I don't think he did. I think every single one of them he enjoyed doing.

Q. Did you grow up in the church and with faith or was it something that developed with -- a lot of times that does come with therapy.

GRAYSON MURRAY: Yeah, I grew up going to church, and my family, they're strong Christians.

I think I neglected that part of my life for a while, and meeting my fiance and how our lives kind of changed over the last three years, she's devoted her life to Christ, and I've devoted my life to Christ. That's what's going to be first in our relationship going forward.

Q. Forgiveness is a big part of that, so you can forgive yourself for being envious and whatever else, too, right, and mistakes you made in the past? Is that a big

thing for you?

GRAYSON MURRAY: It is. I think you've got to give yourself grace. We all make mistakes. I don't think anyone in this room has gone through life without a mistake.

You've got to let go of the regrets. You've got to let go of the people that you have let down. You've got to say you're sorry and move on. It's on them if they don't accept the apology.

But going forward, I just really want to make everyone happy and do the right things.

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