

U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur Championship

Wednesday, September 29, 2021

Bluffton, South Carolina, USA

Berkeley Hall Club (North Course)

Aliea Clark

Quote Quotes

Q. You're in all these events in the next few years. Are you getting back into golf do you think for -- more than you have been in the last few years?

ALIEA CLARK: Well, I would love to but I live in New York City and that's kind of hard. Again, I'm recruiting for consulting, if there's any consulting partners reading this -- no, I'm just kidding. I'm recruiting for consulting, so I think wherever I end up with a job, if it's more accessible to golf -- like I'm looking at some cities in the South, would love to end up back in LA, so I think there is definitely more golf in my future, but I don't quite know what I've gotten myself into because I have this Four-Ball qualifier, but I've got to recruit, and this summer I'm going to be like an MBA intern at a consulting firm. We're busy. I don't know what I'm going to do. We'll see what happens, but more golf in the future.

Q. What has today and yesterday been like?

ALIEA CLARK: There were so many -- I tried really hard out there. Obviously it's bright, it's sunny and it's hot and you're unhappy. I tried really hard to smile before every shot because it's like -- I said to Sam, my caddie, I was like, this is Baby Liea's dream. Baby Liea would be so proud of Current Liea. She was always way too much in her head, and I'm just out here having fun. If I hit a bad shot with my pitching wedge, the next time I have it in my hand it's an opportunity to hit it better.

Q. It does look like you have a very good attitude out there.

ALIEA CLARK: How can I not? It's like, I'm having a blast.

Q. 2017, was that your last competitive event?

ALIEA CLARK: I think so. I think my last competitive event was the Bruin Wave -- like UCLA's home tournament in 2017. I truly don't know. It's probably on my WAGR, which is not ranked anymore, but they keep the history forever.



Q. So this Mid-Am qualifier was the first USGA qualifier --

ALIEA CLARK: I four-putted the first hole. I was so nervous, I was shaking. I was playing with Jennifer and like fully -- I pulled a drive, chunked a 6-iron, had to hit like a 184-hybrid cut on to the green and then promptly four-putted. That was my first hole. But I shot 1-under in my qualifier. It was a good rebound.

Q. Going from that, not playing in a competitive event in four years, now you're playing for a spot to go to the U.S. Women's Open tomorrow.

ALIEA CLARK: I think my golf coach -- I think Carrie and Alicia at UCLA are pretty shocked.

Q. I was talking to Sam, that your parents can't make it out, but is anyone coming tomorrow for the match?

ALIEA CLARK: I've had quite a few friends like say they want to, continued I'm like, it's fine, you all are busy, you have real jobs.

It would be -- I don't know, I'm just happy to be here. I don't think anybody is going to -- I don't know.

Q. Previous match play experience, have you --

ALIEA CLARK: I've like lost so bad. I always lose in the round of 64 or 32 because I lose one hole and spiral.

Q. The 2015 Women's Am would have been the last time you played in a USGA championship.

ALIEA CLARK: I don't think -- I either missed the cut or lost in 64 at the Girls' Junior at Simms Hills and then the Am at Portland Country Club I lost in the round of 64. After shooting like 1-over in stroke play. Pretty sad.

Q. Well, you bounced back --

ALIEA CLARK: What's nice is the course here is like more manageable for my distance. At the Am if you hit one bad shot you know you're toast on a hole, but here you're not dead. You can recover. Whether it's your opponent -- also may be not hitting the best shot or the hole is just shorter



so you can manage it. It's like, this is nice. You're not dead.

Q. How was the course playing today?

ALIEA CLARK: Those pins were real tough. That pin on 9 was brutal. But I was playing well. You know, chunked a couple chips, chunked a couple wedges. Hit some really good putts.

Q. The one on 9, the chunked chip but then you recover with that, how far do you think that putt was?

ALIEA CLARK: That was long. That was like a 12-pace putt, so it was like 36 feet. Yeah. It was like up and down.

Q. Walk me through the afternoon match. You won 4 & 5, you got up early and then she came and tied it right around the turn. What was going through your head after that?

ALIEA CLARK: Well, I played -- I hit a poor shot on the par-5. I hit it in the water. I had a lie where I knew I couldn't go for it, but looking at where she was, it was like -- I really -- and how that pin is tucked, plus that par-5, it's like, if you lay up, God knows what lie you're going to have, and you're hitting a wedge with the ball above or below your feet. I feel like that hole is really determined by your drive. I knew I wasn't going to win with a par, so I was like, whatever, let's try it with the hybrid. Hooked it in the water. It's cool. But that was rough. I felt bad.

And then I also missed a couple short putts early. I feel like I kind of gave away some holes early on, so that made me feel better knowing -- because I given away some holes early on, not saying she didn't hit bad shots, but I missed short putts, like okay, get it together, try to get some birdies.

I think I had two birdies on 10 and 11 maybe --

Q. Yeah, 10 and 11 you birdied.

ALIEA CLARK: Yeah, I hit some good shots there, so I was like, okay, getting the momentum back. I like being at least 2-up. It's like a happy place for me.

Q. Which you were a good chunk of today and yesterday.

ALIEA CLARK: Yeah, that's like -- I feel like when you're close to making the -- when you're on the back nine and you're 2-up, it's like, you can never relax, but you can at least breathe a little better hitting your shots.

Q. You haven't trailed in any of your matches today or yesterday --

ALIEA CLARK: And you know what, tomorrow if I do, I won't give up, don't worry.

Q. Good, because you're not going to know what it feels like because you barely trailed in match play. How much does that do for your confidence when you're out there?

ALIEA CLARK: I try to always play like I'm 1-down. In my mind if we didn't have the standard bearers out -- I didn't even know when I was going to win a match before. I always just try to play like I'm 1-down, which when you're 1-down, you're trying to hit good shots. You're trying to hit the middle of the green and get pars and get it back. That's just in my opinion. Even if I'm like 4-up I'm still trying to play like I'm 1-down. I never do the math of the holes. That's just stressful. Forget it.

Q. I came out and saw 15 and 16 --

ALIEA CLARK: On 15 and 16 -- actually on the back nine, right around there, I actually started writing down because I have to turn in a draft of my script that I'm shooting October 20, so I'm like writing it down. It's like, I've got to go type it in final draft. I got an email from my production advisor that's like, you gonna send me this? Because I'm meeting with her on Friday to get everything approved.

Q. You mentioned that yesterday. Were you working on that during both matches today?

ALIEA CLARK: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. On the first hole we were talking about it, and then on the back nine I wrote down the beats of like what scenes I have to go write out.

Q. Give us a little --

ALIEA CLARK: What's it about? It's about a girl who gets a voice note from her really famous boss that she thinks is negative about her and she just got promoted, so she kind of goes down this imposter syndrome anxiety spiral where she has a conversation with two friends that are in her mind where they kind of -- it's like a personified imposter syndrome situation, and she realizes the voice note she got was by accident, the boss was just venting about like a weekend at her mom's place.

It's kind of like -- we've all been there where you get something from your boss, and you're like, okay, and then you kind of go down that spiral.

It's easy to shoot. It's in my apartment. I can make it on



budget and on time.

Q. How long does something like that take you to shoot?

ALIEA CLARK: So I'm choosing to only -- we have up to five days to shoot, and the projects that I'm producing, one is in New Jersey, one is in Virginia, one is in California, and all of those are like four- or five-day shoots, so the scope of those are bigger because they're my classmates who -- they're just MFAs. I've never written and directed my own short before, so I'm trying to make a very manageable project, so I'm just going to shoot for two days like in my apartment so I can like set it up and make it all work. Yeah, I'm sending my neighbor hopefully on like a staycation to use her apartment as like the crafty area. We'll make it work.

Q. Talk a little bit about more about the teachers and students and classmates back home and their --

ALIEA CLARK: The majority have been very supportive. They're pretty confused. I am co-president of the Stern Golf Club at NYU, and some of my Stern classmates have been truly shocked. They're like really proud. So that's super sweet. That's been great.

My film school classmates have all just sent their love and support, and most of my teachers have been pretty understanding, but I've got to go call one and let her know I can't be there tomorrow, which is maybe not going to go well.

Q. Now that you're a finalist, you're exempt into this the next three years --

ALIEA CLARK: I thought I was already exempt. The next three years? What?

Q. You were already for the two, now --

ALIEA CLARK: Do they tell you this anywhere? Where is this posted on the internet? That's amazing.

Q. It will be posted tonight.

ALIEA CLARK: See, now me and Talia Campbell -- we traveled down here together. I love her. She's a private equity baddie by day, Mid-Am warrior by week in the fall.

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