

U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur Championship

Thursday, September 30, 2021

Bluffton, South Carolina, USA

Berkeley Hall Club (North Course)

Aliea Clark

Quote Quotes

Q. Talk about how many texts you had.

ALIEA CLARK: How many did I have? It was like 178, right?

SAMANTHA: 139 texts and then like 50 DMs.

ALIEA CLARK: I had more. I had like 170 texts. Oh, my God, I wonder how many texts -- I only have 152 right now, but I bet I have like 20 DMs on Instagram.

Q. From friends, family --

ALIEA CLARK: Friends. I only have 18 right now, but I had like 24 at one point. I also have like 40 follower class from like random golf dude.

But it was so fun. Like so many people reached out. All my friends on Tour reached out, like Sarah Schmelzel, Marina Alex, Lindsey Weaver, Bronte, you see -- Michelle Wie was like, "let's go." It's like, guys, it's the Mid-Am; let's be realistic, my body is breaking.

But yeah, I feel like I more disappointed a lot of other people unless myself today but also myself. I definitely -- it's like tough to think about leaving five-footers on the lip. She had one lip-out. I had like three at least, three lip-outs. I definitely was feeling the 10 rounds today.

I don't think mentally I was giving up. I promise I was trying. Maybe it didn't look like it, but I was trying.

But yeah, just a couple shots went right. I thought I put a good roll on it, it was just short. Greens were tough today. I couldn't get my speed down. I haven't blasted it past the hole like that ever on this course, since I shot 83. I felt like I did when I shot 83. But it's okay. I made the finals, it's great.

It was really sweet, my parents aren't here but I had Martin Rathers, who is playing hooky from his 1L year at Harvard Law School to come down here, which is incredible, and



then he had to see me lose 5-down. Oh, my God.

MARTIN: I would not have missed it for the world. I texted you on Monday, and I was like, if you make the championship, I'm there. I was going to hold myself to my word.

ALIEA CLARK: He texted me on Monday, he's like, If you make the finals, I'm there. I'm like, Haha, okay, sure.

MARTIN: Five matches later, here we are.

ALIEA CLARK: Five matches later, here he is, hopped on a plane. Oh, my God, and I didn't see any of the highlights on Golf Channel, but Martin was on his United flight and sent me a video of the highlights on Golf Channel and he was like losing his mind. It was maybe the sweetest thing I've ever received, I said to my parents. It was really cool.

MARTIN: People all around the country were rooting for you here. Also you could see it this week, just talking to the fans how supportive they were of what you were doing. You were a crowd favorite, and to come down and see this, it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

ALIEA CLARK: I definitely -- I didn't know if they were telling the other girls this, too, but I definitely felt a lot of love here this week. There was one point Rich Ford, the chairman, I don't think he thought I could hear him, but he was walking a little bit behind me with a buddy, and he was like trying to hype me up, I had just lost a hole, and his friend was like, You're not supposed to play favorites, and Rich was like, I know, I know, but like Clark is my kid. I was like, aww. He called me Clarkie. He's like Clarkie is my kid.

SAMANTHA: We were eating breakfast in the locker room this morning, and the staff came in there and asked Aliea to sign -- like they bought stuff from the pro shop like cups and stuff and were like, can you guys sign it, like we're really rooting for you. We signed their badges and their IDs and everything.

ALIEA CLARK: It was so kind. Everyone this week, it was like a great reminder of how much fun golf tournaments are. Obviously I'm really disappointed I left some shots out there today, but like cup is still so full. I had a blast.



**Q. How would you describe just the whole week?
Having Sam here --**

ALIEA CLARK: Aww. Having Sam here was incredible. She's a big reason of why I kind of started playing a lot again because when you play golf with a new golfer, they just get so excited to hit it on the green, and then you're like, oh, I can get a birdie, that's exciting, too. Very much brought back my like love for the game.

I don't think I'd be here with any other caddie.

SAMANTHA: Not even your dad?

ALIEA CLARK: Not even my dad. He would have gotten a lot more bummed out when I was 3-down. You were only medium bummed out.

SAMANTHA: I was medium bummed because we had never been 3-down.

ALIEA CLARK: I was 2-down, and she was like, What do we do. I was like, What do you mean? She's like, We're down, and I was like, It happens. You get down in life, too. I was like, I'm 6-down in grad school right now; I'm so behind. But that was kind of funny. I had to like calm, placate my caddie.

SAMANTHA: We had only been up or tied.

ALIEA CLARK: That's true we've only been up or tied, but if you're going to do something, do it all the way, and I was down all the way today. Just kidding.

SAMANTHA: But you're still smiling.

ALIEA CLARK: I can have a glass of -- I can drink that. The tournament is over.

Q. You were the second 64 seed to ever make a USGA final.

ALIEA CLARK: Did the other one win?

Q. No, didn't win, so you would have been the first --

ALIEA CLARK: Aww. What about in the Mid-Am? How is the 64 seed in the men's Mid-Am doing?

Q. He fell in the semis to Hagestad, who's like really --

ALIEA CLARK: Really good? Yeah. I had some Mid-Am men's -- I know Stuart Kerr was playing there, like a couple guys who were saying good luck. It was really sweet.