

# The 150th Open

Press Conference

Thursday, 14 July 2022

## Cameron Young



STUART MOFFATT: I'm delighted to be joined by Cameron Young, who currently leads The 150th Open on 8-under par.

Cameron, a bogey-free 64 to get your championship under way. That must have been a really satisfying start.

CAMERON YOUNG: It was. I think we worked our way around the golf course really well. I don't think that I played a perfect round of golf. I think it just kind of -- I scored really well. And I think we thought our way around kind of the way you have to out there.

STUART MOFFATT: I believe you came to St Andrews when you were a little younger with your family. Was that a bit of an inspiration for you? Something you've been looking forward to?

CAMERON YOUNG: Yeah, it is. Any time you set foot on the 1st tee or 18th green or anywhere, especially on that part of the course, there's just no hiding how special of a place it is. And it's certainly been a goal to get to an Open Championship. And for my first one to be here is a little bit extra special for me.

**Q. What was imperfect about the way you played if it wasn't a perfect way? Do you have a few examples of some of the smart things you did or strategic things you did?**

CAMERON YOUNG: Yeah, I didn't drive it particularly well. I think I hit it fine off the tee, but it wasn't just going where I was looking.

I think one of the ones, I hit it left on 5, the par-5, and that one just is uncomfortable for me. I know that those bunkers on the right are in play with the wind off the left. But I had it written down in my book, I said hard left is better than right. I made sure it was hard left today.

That's one, from over there, almost every time you're going to have a shot to fly it over that bunker in the middle of the fairway and roll it up on the green, which is exactly how it went. That was one of the ones. We did stuff like that a few times today.

**Q. What did you hit on that?**

CAMERON YOUNG: 7-iron.

**Q. Bob MacIntyre said in his press conference there that he fed off the energy that you gave out in your good round today. Was there a good vibe around your group today?**

CAMERON YOUNG: Yeah, for sure. I think we shot 2-, 3-, and 8-under. I know both of those guys, K.H. and Robert a little bit, so it was very comfortable. They're both really nice guys.

And we all kind of got off to a pretty good start. So I think it was easy to keep going given kind of the energy in the group.

**Q. You have a new caddie on the bag. I'm just wondering, you've had such a great year. What went into that decision?**

CAMERON YOUNG: Quite a few things. I kind of, as much as I've had a solid year, there's been a couple things missing, I think. I haven't won anything, and that was just something that could change to kind of exhaust all my options to see what I could do better. That was just something that we as a team decided was probably best for my golf.

**Q. And then you struggled last week. Did you kind of flush it away? What explains the dramatic turnaround?**

CAMERON YOUNG: Last week was hard. You're jet-lagged. We played in some pretty difficult conditions. That was one of those weeks that you have to just take away from it when you can. I didn't feel like I played horrible. I just scored really poorly.

Yeah, you start to feel a little better earlier this week and have some more time to prepare, and I think it can change drastically between what people feel like last week and this week.

**Q. Cam, you contended at the PGA Championship. What did you learn from that experience that can help you over the next three days?**

CAMERON YOUNG: I don't know. I think any time you're around the lead in a major championship or any PGA TOUR event, frankly, you get more and more comfortable every time. Whether I'm leading by three or one or four back after today, I'll sleep just fine.



I feel like I've been around, even though it's only been most of the year, I've been around the lead a good bit, and I think we'll just take tomorrow as it comes. That's really all I can control.

**Q. Just wondering some of the details on the trip over here. How old were you? Did you play other courses? How often did you play here?**

CAMERON YOUNG: Yeah, I came with my parents in 2010. So I would have been 13. I think we played eight or nine golf courses in six days. We played here, the New, the Old. We played Kingsbarns, Carnoustie, Gullane, Crail -- I'm probably missing one or two.

**Q. What was your best story or memory and first impressions of the place?**

CAMERON YOUNG: On that trip, the first time I got to be out here, my dad, I think, asked for permission to play from the back tees. I think that's something you have to do, if I remember correctly.

So when we came out to hit our first tee shots with the R&A building right there, there were a bunch of R&A members presumably watching. And I'm glad I didn't know; I'm sure I would have been nervous out of my mind.

But I think there's a picture of me hitting there with a bunch of those guys watching. That's really my first memory of here.

**Q. A couple things, on driver on 15 and 16, was that kind of your thought to play it that way the first time you saw it, or did you give that some thought or what?**

CAMERON YOUNG: Yeah, I think it depends a lot on the wind. 15's a tricky one. I just felt like today with that hole location, I couldn't get it anywhere near the hole, laying it up with anything less than driver. I was proven wrong by both the people in my group.

Yeah, I just felt like those bunkers in the middle of the fairway are definitely in play, but I know hitting driver, worst case scenario, I'm probably going to miss it left with the wind off the right, and I'm probably going to be able to hit it in the middle right side of the green. Out of that fescue, it's not too bad over there.

And 16 was really just the hole location. I felt like, even from the left fescue pretty far down there, you just have to dump it on the front edge of the green and it will roll somewhere around that hole.

So I felt like I had a big advantage hitting driver there because I've been laying up pretty far back, and to that specific hole location, I thought there was a lot to be gained hitting driver.

**Q. Since we're going to rule out the round you played as a 13-year-old for experience, however many days you had, how long did it take you to kind of figure this stuff out?**

CAMERON YOUNG: I don't think I've figured that much of it out honestly. You could play every day here for a year and you would just scratch the surface of what you can know about this place. There's so many humps and bounds and little nuances to the golf course, that we could never know in the four or five days that I've had to prepare.

So a lot of it's accepting that and figuring out as much as we can. I think we probably have seen about 5 percent of what's out there. There's a pretty endless amount to take in.

**Q. And then lastly, going back to the 13-year-old, where were you at that time in your life with sports, and what kind of spark did that give you in terms of golf? Were you all in golf? Did that do anything for you?**

CAMERON YOUNG: I played a little bit of ice hockey and baseball, I think, still at the time. I loved golf, and I played golf more seriously than the other two.

But, yeah, I've always loved golf over here. I think it's a very unique experience compared to what we're used to in the States. Yeah, I have a lot of good memories from that trip from playing in the rain and the wind and the cold.

Yeah, the first experience over here for me is one I'll remember a lot. I think just the unique kind of golf that you play over here is very special.

**Q. When you're 13, you obviously were showing some remarkable talent at that time. As a 13-year-old sometimes brimming with confidence, did you think to yourself or say to your dad, I want to be here one day in the British Open at that time?**

CAMERON YOUNG: I would guess probably not. I think at that point I didn't understand that you could play golf in college. I didn't get that concept yet. So I was still pretty clueless. I was just trying my best.

I think at that point I kind of knew that I was better at it than some people, but I really had no clue that there were options for me to do it more seriously than I was.

**Q. And you were talking about the group today, everyone really having a very nice round. Does that make it a lot more enjoyable to play with guys who are doing well? And is it sometimes I'm sure you've been in situations where one player is doing great and someone else is not doing well. You may have been on both sides of that sometimes. How**

**awkward is it when you have that divergence in the players in a group?**

CAMERON YOUNG: I don't know if it ever gets particularly awkward, but I think when everybody plays well, it definitely makes your life easier. Everybody's happy. And you get to see good golf, which always helps.

**Q. Did you adjust or add anything in your bag? And golf course, was it scorable or not very difficult today?**

CAMERON YOUNG: I usually play with a hybrid, and I put a 2-iron in play that I hit once and hit about 50 yards right today.

Sorry, what was the second part of the question?

**Q. If it was scorable.**

CAMERON YOUNG: I think it was difficult. I think the hole locations were difficult. But I think, if you were playing from the correct places, it was doable. You definitely could be in a world of trouble out there any day, even with not too much wind. If you start hitting it on the wrong sides of holes, you're going to have a rough day kind of regardless of what conditions are.

But it's very firm, and it's definitely doable if you're in all the right places. But if you're not, you're going to really struggle.

**Q. Cameron, you said earlier that you played over here in the wind and the rain and the cold. So am I right to assume it was the height of summer?**

CAMERON YOUNG: It was, yes. I think August.

**Q. Fair enough. Secondly, can you tell us a little bit about -- you're currently ahead of 155 golfers -- can you tell us a little bit about what you'll do away from the golf course to make sure you're physically and mentally prepared to stay there over the next few days?**

CAMERON YOUNG: Physically prepared, I won't do a tonne. I'll rest. Mentally, my wife and son are back at home in the United States. So I'll call them and hang out with them a little bit. I'm sure I'll eat dinner with my parents because they're here. But I really won't do much the rest of the day.

**Q. Do you do anything to take your mind off golf at all? Favourite DVDs or download movies, stuff like that?**

CAMERON YOUNG: I don't know. We might go take a walk around town or something, but I haven't really thought that far ahead, to be honest.

**Q. Has it kind of taken you a bit by surprise (indiscernible)**

**ahead today? As you think about it, does it surprise you that you're so far ahead of everybody?**

CAMERON YOUNG: Not necessarily. I think it's always possible. I shot a million last week, and this week all of a sudden I'm pretty comfortable. There's been a lot of work and a lot of preparation in between, but I think things can change in an instant, especially out here given how important the bounces and the mindset that you have are.

I'm not necessarily surprised, but I think I've been trying really hard to take it one day and one shot at a time. Yeah, that's why I don't know what I'm doing.

**Q. Just to follow up on the caddie switch, why Chad? What does he give you that perhaps you were seeking?**

CAMERON YOUNG: He brings a lot of experience to the table. I know he's been working on the PGA TOUR for about 20-ish years. He's worked for Vijay Singh, Nick Watney when he was No. 2 in the world.

So I think being around people like that, he has -- I mean, there's no replacement for being around good golf and major championship golf for 20 years. There's just a level of knowledge that is hard to find elsewhere. There's a bunch of veteran guys out here like that. And I think that knowledge is kind of irreplaceable.

**Q. You're one of the longest hitters in the world in pro golf. Is length an advantage here, or is it neutralised by the firmness?**

CAMERON YOUNG: I think it's an advantage everywhere. I think there's very few places that it really wouldn't play to your advantage. I mean, out here there's so many little bunkers. Being able to carry it a little farther, I'm going to have one less bunker in play than some other people.

There's always a way to use it to your advantage, and I think there's always a way to at least make yourself feel like it's an advantage.

**Q. You've played beautifully on some really great courses this year. Is it something they bring out in you, inspire you?**

CAMERON YOUNG: Maybe. I don't really know. I feel like I've played well at a lot of different places, and I've played really poorly at a lot of different places. So I think it really just come down to, like I said, taking each day as it comes.

I might struggle tomorrow. Who knows? I might shoot 64 again. But I think it's just important for me to take tomorrow as it comes and do what I can.

**Q. Cameron, a Fordham prep school in the Bronx isn't especially known for producing professional golfers, maybe more basketball players. Can you talk a little bit about maybe an improbable journey from the streets of New York somewhat to -- granted, you went to Wake Forest, but to the links of St Andrews? It doesn't happen every day.**

CAMERON YOUNG: I think the streets of New York is probably a stretch.

(Laughter).

Fordham Prep is on Fordham University campus. It's beautiful. And I lived at Sleepy Hollow Country Club, where my dad is the head pro. I lived on the lower course out there.

I took the train to school, but I also took the train back home to go practise. It might sound a little improbable, but I've been around golf my whole life. That's just kind of what I do.

**Q. Any bond association with Keegan? St. Johns University guy, obviously with the New York City ties.**

CAMERON YOUNG: Yeah, I've spent some time around him and enjoyed it. I've watched him play some phenomenal golf. I played with him at THE PLAYERS this year, and I think he made a double but it was a whole ruling ordeal. He didn't make a bogey. I shot 78 or something.

It's been fun to watch him. I know he does some things differently, and I know he's very focused and precise about what he does, so I have a lot of respect for his game.

Who knows where that comes from? It could be him individually and or it could be something that he kind of grew up needing to do. There's a lot to admire about him.

**Q. If you'll forgive me saying, you don't seem super excited to be leading The Open by three. Are you keeping things in check, or is it a bit more bubbling under the surface?**

CAMERON YOUNG: I think it's a pretty accurate representation of how I feel. I'm happy I shot 64. I'm happy that, as far as I know, I'm still leading The Open Championship, but it's not going to change how I feel an hour from now.

I mean, it might change how I feel on the 1st tee a little bit tomorrow, but I'll forget about it very quickly.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports