

AIG Women's Open

Press Conference

Wednesday, 3 August 2022

Georgia Hall



OLIVIA McMILLAN: I'm delighted to be joined by 2018 Champion Georgia Hall.

Georgia, welcome to the AIG Women's Open here at Muirfield, of course, and you've had a chance to play the links in the Pro-Am today. What were your thoughts?

GEORGIA HALL: Yeah, obviously I didn't really know what to expect coming here. Never been here before. But it was super windy today. So really got to play the course as hopefully it will be the next few days.

The course is in really good condition and definitely some trick holes out there, so looking forward to playing tomorrow.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: You finished runner-up in the championship last year and you were the champion in 2018. What would it mean to you to engrave your name on that beautiful trophy again?

GEORGIA HALL: Yeah, obviously it was the best moment in my career and my aim is always to win as many of these Opens as possible, especially on big championship courses like this win one. It's my highlight of the year playing this event, so I always have a lot of confidence going in, and I really enjoy the week.

Q. Your record on classic links courses is tremendous. How much confidence does that give you going into this week?

GEORGIA HALL: Yeah, loads. I couldn't come into a tournament with more confidence than this one for sure. Playing at home in front of home crowds, having a lot of people here that I'm close to as well, and yeah, playing this type of course suits me very well, I think. I don't get to play it much, only twice a year. So really excited and I just really enjoy it more than anything because I'm at home.

Q. Obviously this is the first big AIG Women's Open here. Can you just talk about coming through the gates for the first time, what the welcome has been like so far this week?

GEORGIA HALL: It's been really good. Like I say, I didn't really know what to expect. I've heard really good things about the course and it is really good. But yeah, just I think everyone wants to win here, especially because it's the first women's professional event that we are playing in. Definitely a good one to win this year, especially.

Q. The Celebration of Champions a couple weeks ago in St Andrews, what sticks with you as like the sharpest memory, what do you think of when you think back to a couple weeks ago?

GEORGIA HALL: Yeah, I mean, all of it was just -- it went by far too quickly for me. But meeting Tiger on the putting green before I teed off was probably the highlight for me. I was very nervous. I really wanted to hit driver off the first because obviously the ball is teed up higher but I had to hit 3-wood so I was hoping I didn't top it.

Yeah, I was very happy with how I played and to play against, with all those people, and to be in that group was such an honour. So of course very thankful to the R&A for letting me be involved in that.

Q. A question about money. When you're playing a golf tournament, do you ever think about money during the golf tournament? Do you think about it before or after? When does it come into your mind?

GEORGIA HALL: No, I don't at all. When I won this four years ago, as soon as I've picked the ball out of the hole, I just thought I had won the biggest event. I never thought about that until maybe the evening where I didn't even know how much I won. I wasn't interested. I just wanted to win the AIG Women's Open.

And also, it's great to have that as; as a professional golfer, it helps me travel around the world and gives me a better -- well, easier life. Maybe not better but easier. But I do it for competing against best in the world, and bettering myself as a golfer and seeing what I can do.

Q. Ahead of Lytham, Tom Lehman give you some good advice about course strategy. Did you chat to anybody at St Andrews about taking on Muirfield and did anyone pass on any tips?



GEORGIA HALL: Unfortunately this year, no, they haven't. They all know when I chatted to Rory and Tiger that the women were coming here. But no, I haven't this time. I haven't got no messages from Tom either. So we'll see how this week goes. I'm sure I'll be fine (laughs).

Q. In recent years, as well, you've played at Troon for the first time, how important is this journey that the Women's Open is on, and is there any time ever in your career that you felt that you were being held back from not getting into clubs, etc., and did that disturb you?

GEORGIA HALL: Yeah, I'm lucky enough, I haven't really had that issue growing up. But I think it's so important that the women are here this week. It makes such a mark on women's golf, and AIG and R&A have done a fantastic job working together to get the Championship here.

It just keeps elevating this tournament and what is needed with increased prize funds over the last couple of years, Walton Heath next year and St Andrews coming up soon, and we've got really big -- and Pebble Beach, the U.S. Open next year. I think the women's game is definitely in the best position it's ever has been, and I'm very happy to be in the middle of my career doing that.

Q. In the few days you've been around this property, has there been anything that surprised you, that is different than maybe what you heard or expected?

GEORGIA HALL: I heard they don't have a pro shop. I don't know, I found that a big weird. I think you have to go to Gullane to get Muirfield, I think that's right, Muirfield Aqueduct. But hopefully they have a merchandise tent for the spectators.

But yeah, apart from that, it's very historic, which I love, very old. You know, it's great just to be here, so that's what I love most about links and Open venues is when you walk down 18, the clubhouse is normally always behind the 18th green. It's so good for spectators viewing it, as well.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: Happy to confirm we do have a merchandise shop for spectators.

GEORGIA HALL: Oh, good.

Q. I'm sure you watched the football on Sunday; did you?

GEORGIA HALL: No, I was driving from the Scottish Open to here unfortunately.

Q. You kept in touch with it?

GEORGIA HALL: Yeah, T1.

Q. What did you think a British winner here would do for raising the profile of women's sport in the U.K. generally?

GEORGIA HALL: Yeah, obviously it would be amazing. I think when I won, as well, four years ago, it really elevated golf in the U.K. and women playing it. Obviously the idea is for younger girls to get into the game and to make golf aware to other people watching it, and I think obviously the coverage this week is going to be very big in the U.K.

But obviously, yeah, anyone that wins their home event is really big for their home country, and we've had some really strong players, probably better than ever, as well, competing this week. Yeah, hopefully one of us will do it.

Q. Curious if you could fancy a guess at what the final score would be, and if there's any reason why we should even worry about that?

GEORGIA HALL: To be honest I haven't thought about it. I'm not one to think about what I even want to score tomorrow. It really all depends on the weather.

But this is the type of golf course that can be very, very tricky in places, as well. It's very sneakily tricky. Off the tees, it looks quite easy, but when you get close to the green off the pot bunkers it can be quite hard. So I don't want to say a score because I could be miles out.

Q. Bad question then. Is there a stretch of holes that you think are particularly tricky, some part of the golf course that catches your eye?

GEORGIA HALL: I think there's going to be very similar wind all week. I've played it where I think the wind is going to be. 14, 15, I've had driver, 3-wood into two par 4s which is I think very tricky.

Obviously 18 is a long hole as well, driver, 4-iron in. So I think the last four, five, six holes are the trickiest, and I think they should be and it will be a great closing holes for whoever is leading. You definitely need to kind of stay fairly aggressive, I think.

Q. This question would have been asked by now if this was in England. Have you been inspired by the events at Wembley last weekend? I won't mention the country.

GEORGIA HALL: Yeah, I mean, any time England do well in any type of sport, especially women, it's fantastic to see,

and obviously they got loads of coverage.

Yeah, I just think the better us British golfers can do, the more it will inspire others. When I was younger, I had a couple that I look up to, and I think that's very important for the younger generation.

Q. You talked about your confidence level in this event and the fact that it's the biggest event of the year for you. How satisfying is it for you that in previous years you've been able to deal with the expectation and deliver when it is such an important event for you?

GEORGIA HALL: Yeah, last five years, I've been first, second, third year, obviously very confident, last year, as well, losing by one. Had a great final round. I don't really feel much pressure in this event to be honest. I just feel very happy to be playing at home, and I just try and take advantage as much as I can and really enjoy having -- when I walk on the first tee tomorrow, I'm sure there will be lots of people watching.

And I'm just really happy to get that support from my home crowd and really appreciate it, because I don't get a lot of that in the US and that's where I play the majority of my golf. It's more I really enjoy it, and therefore, I play better I think.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: We thank you for your time today and wish you the best of luck this week.

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