

AIG Women's Open

Mixed Zone

Saturday, 6 August 2022

Ashleigh Buhai



Q. You must be feeling absolutely delighted?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Yeah, obviously I'm very pleased. To be able to I think shoot that score in those conditions, you have to be able to pat yourself on the back; so much so that I thought I was 6-under, not seven, so I was 8-under playing the last, which I think I have to look back is probably one of the best rounds of golf I've ever played.

Q. Let's go back to the start of the day, the warm up. You obviously had a great round yesterday. Were you feel nervous at all or just feeling like things were all feeling in place?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: I was feeling pretty calm. I've done good work on my swing with my coach for so long now, and I feel my lines are where they need to be and I just need to keep my tempo. If I keep my tempo, then most of the time it tends to fall. The club tends to fall where it needs to fall.

I thought I had a really good warmup. Hit a few extra chips today because I didn't feel I chipped too well yesterday, or at least it showed on 17 that that paid off.

Q. You talk about tempo. A lot of people struggle to keep their tempo when the wind is gusting up to 26, 27 miles per hour. How are you managing that?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: It's different thoughts for everybody. We've kind of got it down to where if I swing 40 per cent up and I lock it in at the top, then my tempo is good, or you count one, two, three. That's all I'm trying to do is remind myself of every shot and 40 per cent up, 40 per cent up, and that's my only focus. After that, wherever the ball goes, it goes and luckily today, hit it pretty straight.

Q. You could see what's going on around you, making a gap on the field bigger and bigger, are you a player that feels comfortable looking ahead to tomorrow having such a big lead over the field?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: I don't think you can ever be comfortable in a major whether you're coming from behind or leading. It's going to be another tough day. The wind is

going to blow, which is good. I prefer it that way.

But they say big leads are often more difficult, and I think because you try to maybe play defensively. But I think I'll just keep doing what I'm doing and sticking to those steps.

Q. Lots of good shots out there, the second shot --

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: 14, I think it was -- I think I only had around 155 metres but I hit 5-wood. By that time, the wind was gusting up to 30 kilometres. We were playing three-club winds. Those holes are brutal.

But the good thing is, you have the space in front if you need it, and short is always okay and you can run it up. We got that one to the hole and on the next hole hit 5-wood again and 5-wood into 18. There was a lots of woods coming in.

Q. Have you ever played better?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Probably not. I think about when we played at Woburn a couple years ago, I shot 64 or 65 and I remember that being a really good day. I think I'm most proud of the way I just stayed focused and calm, and that's all I try to control. I wasn't thinking of the outcome.

I only saw a leaderboard for the first time I think when I was on 12 -- no, 13. And then I just said to myself, okay, that's fine, you're in a good spot. Check back in with yourself now and concentrate on what you're trying to do.

Q. Was there one shot you can pick out?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: To be honest the par saves are huge. I made a good par save on 1. Had a difficult bunker shot off the downhill line. Made a good save on 3. I was in three divots today, and they didn't come out every time how I would like to.

But I think -- I hit a nice tee shot on No. 4 today to a few feet, and the 5-wood on 14 was huge I think.

Q. You killed off a lot of challengers, potential challengers. How important is that?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: I don't know about that. Like I said, in



these conditions anything can happen. It's proven; there's been low scores, and likewise, the other way. We'll see what happens.

Q. Have you slept on a five-shot lead in your life?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: I don't think so, no.

Q. How do you handle the long mornings here waiting for your tee time?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Yeah, the first -- I got my tee time yesterday. I text my caddie, another cup of tea in the afternoon. I said, oh, we could have tea and play before we go out.

Took it easy. Only had breakfast around 10. I try to space my meals out, and then had lunch before I tee off. I think that's the hardest part. You don't want to overeat, either. Just tried to have a nice easy morning. Put on the men's golf and watched the men's golf down in Wales.

Q. Are you staying close by?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: About 25 minutes away.

Q. (Off-mic.)

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Something about Scotland to be honest. I love it. I've said this is my favourite tournament of the year. I love links golf. I love how you have to be creative. You don't have to stripe it. You just have to know what shot you're hitting and commit to that one. I do love the town. I was pretty bummed when I could not get an AirBnB in Gullane like previous years but it's pretty difficult finding accommodation at this time of year.

Q. (Off-mic.)

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Maybe. I don't know. I actually couldn't remember that. I know I had a good finish at the Scottish last year. But yeah, I like to be able to flight the ball and I do that pretty well and taking the spin off it, and I think that's obviously a huge key in wind being able to do that.

Q. Was it 3-wood in on 18?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: 5-wood. I was between 7 and 5, and it's difficult to get the wind completely right and I was on a little upslope so I tried to hold the 5-wood and obviously I just came out of it. I would say that's probably the worst string of the day that I had. Then just the putting into the wind, but we'll take 5 today.