

AIG Women's Open

Press Conference

Tuesday, 8 August 2023

Charley Hull



OLIVIA McMILLAN: We are delighted to be joined by Charley Hull. Charley, thank you for joining us in the AIG Women's Open Media Centre. We are here at Walton Heath, and I think you have a little bit of experience playing the course. So can you share your thoughts of it with us, please.

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, I played here back in it was end of February, beginning of March and I played with my friend, Thomas, and yeah, I really enjoyed it back then. I played a couple of times, and yeah, I really, really like it. It kind of suits my eye. It's nice to be at home. I'm staying at home because I only live 35 minutes away. So it's good.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: Obviously this is the first time that the AIG Women's Open has returned to England since I think 2019. As an English player, it must be nice to be back on home soil and playing in a major championship.

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, it is. It's really good. It's just nice to have home comforts this week, and hopefully the weather will be a bit better the next few days.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: You said that you've played the course a few times. Obviously that heather, that's what Walton Heath is known for.

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, I've actually played it a few times but I've not played it off these tees. Like, I've played it with my friends and we've both been off the backs, so it's actually playing quite short out there, and I think it will be very scorable.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: Obviously you're saying that you're playing off different tees to what you're used to. Do you think that maybe that gives you an edge if you're used to playing it longer?

CHARLEY HULL: Not necessarily because a few holes I won't be hitting driver on, and that's a rescue. It's just getting your head around that. There's nothing too much to worry about. When I played with my friends, I pretty much go through every single shot and take driver on every hole. Whatever I do, you need a driver, so I might -- with my caddy, he's actually telling me how to play the golf course

properly.

Q. (What about the course suits your eye)?

CHARLEY HULL: You can kind of just see it right ahead of you, and you can kind of see like the fairways, the shapes and that where links sometimes it just feels like you're hitting into a field. It's nice, it's got the heather and the trees on it, as well, even though there's not a lot of trees. I just like the feel of it.

Q. At Woburn, if you remember going back a few years, you used to talk about taking the trees with you when you went to another tournament. You would say, all right, I'll pretend there are trees down the left, and then shape your shot accordingly. Now this course will allow you to do a little bit of that, won't it?

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, a hundred per cent. It suits my eye. I really do like this golf course. I played here first I think back in 2013 actually, and I really liked it then, and it was with my dad. And I actually played with Sam Torrance on like a special golf day.

Yeah, I've just got some good memories of this place. But it is a nice golf course and it's not super bouncy, so you can still hit the ball high, which I like.

Q. And are you still, going back to 2013, when you would have really been walloping the ball without having a second thought, do you hit it as hard now as you did then?

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, I think so -- actually, I don't know. There are a lot more different shots I hit now, like draw the ball, fade the ball, hit it high, hit it low. I don't have to hit it always hard, but I like to commit to my shots still.

Q. And what would be your favourite shot? If I asked you to putt on a demonstration straightaway, what would you offer to hit?

CHARLEY HULL: Well, I've always seen the draw. If I hit a 2-yard draw, I see it in my head like as a fade. I like to see a 5-, 10-, 15-yard draw. That's when I know I'm hitting at my best.

But obviously that's not everyone's ideal shot, but I love a draw, even though I do find it easier to manufacture and hit a fade if I have to hit it into a back right pin than hitting a high draw into a back left pin.

Q. Is there anything in particular that you've taken away from Pebble that you can bring into this week?

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, just trying to -- yeah, it's a bit like -- I'm a weird player like that. If I don't start with a birdie or if I don't start with a bogey, I just make a lot of pars, I get quite frustrated and bored. But it's almost if I start with a bogey, it's like, right, I've got to fight back now and it's really interesting. And if I start with birdie, it's like, let's see how many holes I can birdie.

So I just take that mindset of taking every shot as it comes and have that feeling even when you're making loads of pars and stuff, because at the end of the day, you've got plenty of chances for birdies out there, and I just like hitting the next shots.

Q. Can I ask you about your group for rounds one and two?

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, I don't even know who I'm playing with. Who am I playing with.

Q. Nelly Korda and Lydia Ko.

CHARLEY HULL: That will be fun. I like them both. They are both really nice. I like Nelly and I like Lydia. Obviously me and Lydia have played a lot together throughout the years because we are turned pro fairly young, and I'll be looking forward to that. That will be fun. Do you know what times they are?

Q. I can check.

CHARLEY HULL: Thanks. May as well get a line.

Q. What makes Lydia Ko such a good playing companion?

CHARLEY HULL: I like watching her around the greens, because she can hit loads of different, like, flop shots and I really, really like that. She's good off tight lies.

Q. And in terms of how she is when you're playing with her, is she very thoughtful?

CHARLEY HULL: Oh, she's a lovely person. She's a really, really nice person, Lydia is. Like, she's just a completely normal person. That's what I like. She's down-to-earth.

Q. I see. And what would she do that would please you? Would, say, she go and run and help look for a ball or is she just --

CHARLEY HULL: A lot of players, it's usually a courtesy to help the other player look for a ball, but yeah, she'll do that. Hopefully we don't lose any out there. She's just a really nice person, and so is Nelly. Nelly is a lovely person as well.

I'm not really a chatty person on the golf course. I'm kind of in my own world and my own bubble. I talk to my caddie, but yeah, have a few words here and there but they are both really nice.

Q. Is that important to be able to have someone with whom you can interact on the way around?

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, a hundred per cent. It really doesn't bother me too much. Like, if they don't talk to me all the way around, it wouldn't bother me because I am in my own bubble, and so is a lot of players out there.

But no, they are lovely people, especially when you speak to them in the players' lounge and everything. They are really, really nice girls.

Q. First of all, you're off at 8.20.

CHARLEY HULL: Okay.

Q. How important is a fast start? It's obviously a long week.

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, obviously, like, you want to get off to a fast start because it gives you good momentum for the rest of the week.

But I don't know, if you look at Pebble, I didn't have the fastest of starts, but still all about the mindset, really, and never -- never give in.

Q. Does that help if you're --

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, it's like my friend said to me, he always used to say to me, "Winners don't quit and quitters don't win," and that's always stuck in my head.

Q. And that will give you the mindset, I guess, that if you're, you know, five six back going into the final round --

CHARLEY HULL: A hundred per cent.

Q. You know what you can do?

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, you just go for every pin. It's a lot of fun that way.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: Can I just ask you more broadly about women's sport? Obviously in the UK, women's sport are having a real moment, England seems to be playing so well in the netball, in the football, etc. How important is it for you and the other players that golf becomes part of that conversation and we have a real chance this week to make that happen?

CHARLEY HULL: Yeah, a hundred per cent. Obviously when I was younger, I never really looked up to anyone apart from Laura, and I would always go out with the boys, and I wouldn't change that for the world because it made me the player that I am today. But.

Yeah, it's great what they are doing. I'm not really into women's football or netball, but I think it's brilliant. And you know, it's great for the future, and it would be good, like, events like this and America can be shown on TV over here and getting young kids watching it, and that will be the next generation coming up.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: Charley, thank you so much for joining us and best of luck this week.

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