

# AIG Women's Open

Mixed Zone

Friday, 23 August 2024

## Ashleigh Buhai



ASHLEIGH BUHAI: At the end of the day it's still a little tender and aggravated, but the hole is good.

### Q. What happened to it?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: I broke it. I tore it at KPMG. It's been a really long two months. Olympics I was still playing with a hole in my shoe.

### Q. Left or right?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Left baby toe.

### Q. Two eagles in three holes?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Yeah, 14, hit a good drive, hit 3-wood through the green which is where you wanted to be with that pin today. It was easier to chip back. Kind of between the two shots, I was going to either 3-wood it or chip it and fly the slope, and I went with my gut, chipped it up and holed out nicely. Then yeah, 16 is a bonus. Hit a great drive down there. It's obviously a demanding tee shot. Was hitting like -- I played it at like a 77-meter shot, which is about four short, a little check on it and spun in the hole.

### Q. Three bogeys on your back nine but bounced back. Was that equally pleasing?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Well, that was my front nine, so it evened out. It was tough. That wind picked up for us playing the front, which was our back, and it was a little tougher today I thought because yesterday we had that nine and it was kind of cornering helping, and today it was cornering and hurting, and it played significantly longer. I hit 5-wood into 2, hybrid into 4. We were hitting 6-irons and 7-irons. 7 yesterday I hit sand wedge and I hit 8-iron today.

The cornering of the wind definitely made a big difference in that front nine.

### Q. How did winning this championship change your life?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: A lot. Obviously just the grind for so

many years gives you the belief that when you step up in any tournament you can, and obviously I'd say to end up winning it in the fashion that I did off having the lead, losing it, winning in a playoff, I just then know anytime I'm in a pressure situation, I've pulled it off at the biggest occasion, and I just have to remind myself that it's possible.

### Q. (No microphone.)

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Yeah, I do think so. I think it's always suited my game. I feel because I'm able to flight the ball and be creative and that's what you have to do, and I'm a pretty adaptable player. Especially today on that back nine, you had to adapt. Like the wind picked up. There were putts that would have been normally inside the hole, you were hitting a cup outside the hole and you have to trust it, especially when it's difficult putting downwind at the moment. But I think that's why I love this championship so much.

### Q. I think it was your win here where your husband became a little bit of a celebrity. Is that celebrity status still pretty strong since then?

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Yes. People do remember him more than me. We were in Cincinnati airport and it was just after that win and I had the trophy with me, and I put my clubs -- well, David loaded my clubs on the belt, and the guy checking me in was like, you look familiar, to my husband, and then he saw the clubs and then he put two and two together -- he's like, you ran on to the green, but you won the tournament. It was like, yeah, I'm here. Then I had the trophy with me and took it out and then Sarah's dad was actually working that day, too, at the airport. So we all had photos together and it was a cool moment.

### Q. (No microphone.)

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Yeah, it's great. They don't often get to come out. This was the one that I do try to get them out to. It's an easier commute from South Africa than to the U.S. So they weren't there the year I won. They were there the week before. But obviously this being St Andrews, extra special, and nice to be able to know I'll be playing this tournament for a long time so I can plan and book stuff in advance. They've been here with me previously, luckily. The first time I qualified, I played here



was '07, and they were here then.

But it's special to have them here, and I've also got my aunt and uncle here and a host family that I used to stay with in the U.S. before Dave and I found a place to live basically, so I call them my American family. They're here, too. So I've got some nice support.

**Q. There are some players in the field that would qualify themselves as golf nerds. What does this town and this place mean to you, and what do you remember specifically about the first time you saw it?**

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: So obviously I am a golf nerd. It's the Home of Golf. Popped up on my Facebook from the last post when we were here nine years ago, and my post was "driving in St Andrews, just got chills." I think if you're a golfer and you appreciate this game, that's what you get when you come here.

I was looking forward to coming back here, and I said to Dave, my husband, I'm so excited to come back and play now because I'm a different caliber golfer. Obviously the first two times playing here it's so different and you see shots differently, and now I have more shots in my bag to be able to hit. That's why I was the most excited about coming to compete and play here and see basically how much I've progressed since then.

**Q. The last time you were here was the last time the Open was here?**

ASHLEIGH BUHAI: Yeah, so I played in '07 and '13. The cool part is Morgan and I, we played in '07 together with Annika the first two rounds, and we were both like rookies then, kids. We still talk about it today. It was a cool moment.

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