

The G4D Open

Mixed Zone

Tuesday, 9 May 2023

Kurtis Barkley

THE G4D

OPEN

Q. Start by telling us your name?

KURTIS BARKLEY: Kurtis Barkley. I'm from Ontario, Canada. I play at Cedar Glen Golf Course.

Q. What's it like to come over to the U.K. and play in the first-never G4D Open?

KURTIS BARKLEY: I'm pretty excited for the challenge. It's definitely a little different weather than we're used to back home in our summer months. It's going to be a little different but I'm up for the challenge.

Q. What are temperatures back home and how difficult was the journey in terms of acclimatising?

KURTIS BARKLEY: I played the day before we came over. It was roughly 20 degrees, nice and sunny and hot. I know the weather over here. I've come over a few times now. It's to be expected, right, at this time of year.

The journey was a seven-hour flight. A little tired. I arrived yesterday morning. Had a couple hours' nap and came out and got on the course and played a couple rounds.

Q. What are your hopes this year in terms of challenging for the title? Obviously you'd be very proud to win the trophy for Canada, wouldn't you.

KURTIS BARKLEY: Yeah, it's a great honour to represent my country and to come over here and challenge a course like this. Winning would be an extra, extra bonus. I'm just happy to be here and compete.

Q. You're no stranger because you played on the G4D Tour and you've had a lot of top three finishes; is that right?

KURTIS BARKLEY: I believe I've got about six seconds right now. It's just a matter of time to climb to the top. I'm just playing my own game, one shot at a time, one hole at a time, and if it happens, it happens.

Q. And what part of your game is the strongest at the moment? What are you hoping to bring to Woburn?

KURTIS BARKLEY: Tee-to-green I'm pretty solid. I'm happy with my ball-striking. It's a big, strong part of my game. So I've just got to make a few putts this week, and just take her one shot at a time.

Q. When did you start playing the game and who was your inspiration?

KURTIS BARKLEY: I started around three or four years old. My dad always played, and he was pretty good back in his day. So I always wanted to grow up and appreciate the game like he did and compete, and compete against myself and the course. So I was just, you know, trying to follow in his shoes as well as make my own footprints.

Q. What sort of challenges have you had to overcome being born with your condition and how have you managed to overcome those through golf?

KURTIS BARKLEY: Yeah, so I was born with severe scoliosis. It affects me every day, every minute. Some days it's a challenge just to get out of bed, let alone come out here and hit a ball.

So you know, I take one day at a time just like I take one shot at a time. It is what it is. I've accepted it years ago. I'm just happy to be here and competing.

Q. What advice would you give to youngsters with a disability? Would you recommend golf and what do you love about the game and how has it helped you?

KURTIS BARKLEY: Golf to me is a mindset. When I'm out here competing, I'm not thinking of my disability. I'm one of everyone else. I'm here to just get the ball in the hole. We all do it differently. We all have different kind of disabilities. It's just managing the course and trying to take less shots than the other guy.

Q. And what's it like playing at these kind of EDGA-related events, where you play with quite mixed abilities and mixed impairments, as well. How do you find the whole atmosphere of these events?

KURTIS BARKLEY: It's great. We are all competitors and

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players at first, and with all these different types of disabilities, when other players are watching other players, you know, it's inspirational to see how other people manage it.

When you've got tour pros watching you, sitting back and go, look at this guy smash his ball, it's great to have that aspect of it.

Q. And I remember when you appeared at The London Club, you were filmed by SKY TV. Am I right in thinking you helped inspire a few young people?

KURTIS BARKLEY: Yeah, it's quite amazing. I started Instagram and I never had it before, and I based it off my golf career and when you get back to the hotel or wherever we're at, and you get these inspiring messages from people you don't know and around the world that are like, you know, they are a huge fan, and they are happy to see -- like I had a father message me and their daughter had scoliosis, and it was such a hard feeling to get back. I'm just trying to do my thing and inspiring people along the way that I've never met or, whatever, talked to, if it wasn't in that case.

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