

Dana Open presented by Marathon

Thursday, September 1, 2022

Sylvania, Ohio, USA

Highland Meadows Golf Club

Lauren Stephenson

Quick Quotes

Q. All right, here with Lauren Stephenson after a first day 66. It's been a bit since we've seen you since Northern Ireland. How are you feeling after day one here at the Dana Open?

LAUREN STEPHENSON: Feeling really great. I've got a little bit of allergies, so that's interesting. There is something blooming in the air. But feeling rested and recovered after two weeks at home. Five weeks on the road the last stretch was kind of a long time, so it was nice to see family and spend time back in Dallas.

So feeling ready to go for this next stretch.

Q. Taking a look specifically at the round, your front nine, as we were just saying, was a little all over the place, but that back nine holes for you, Nos. 1 through 9, when did it finally feel like it was clicking?

LAUREN STEPHENSON: Yeah, I just did a really good job of staying patient all day. Started with a scrappy bogey on No. 1. I was like, this is going to be an interesting day.

But, yeah, I mean, I turned it around going into the back nine, and just kind of on this course anything can happen. I was hitting the ball well. Just wasn't really scoring.

So just kind of let the birdies start flowing and enjoyed some good ball striking on the back nine, and was able to make a few putts, so...

Q. Five birdies in your last nine holes. What were some of the highlights out there for you?

LAUREN STEPHENSON: Yeah, I hit it to like two feet on 4 and 7, so that helps. Those tap-ins are always really nice. Good to keep the momentum going.

Q. Closing with a birdie on the last hole as well, how are you feeling about your game at this point of the



season?

LAUREN STEPHENSON: I'm feeling really good. I haven't had the result I've wanted all season, but I've played well and I feel like I've just been kind of getting in my own way, so I'm trying to just have fun.

I enjoyed Northern Ireland and I saw success there, so just knowing having fun leads to usually good golf is kind of my approach.

Q. I know I said earlier that we haven't seen you since Northern Ireland. We talked a bunch in Northern Ireland about it was a last-minute decision for you to play that event. To see a top 10 finish like did you there, how much did that help you as you were preparing to rest for a couple weeks before this event?

LAUREN STEPHENSON: Yeah, helped me a ton. I had two missed cuts on my Europe stretch in the last two majors, so that's never fun.

But finishing on a high, finishing in the top 10, gave me the confidence boost I needed for this last half of the season. Kind of been missing that piece of just feeling comfortable and confident in my game.

So I feel like that was kind of all I needed, was a little boost to go into two weeks off.

Q. What do you think it is about two weeks off that really helps you as a player when you're getting ready for this final stretch?

LAUREN STEPHENSON: Yeah, it's always nice to spend time with family. I was fortunate enough to go to the beach. That's always nice and relaxing. It's just nice to get a mental break from golf. It's so hard on you mentally playing day in and day out. It's definitely a grind, so it's nice to kind of clear your brain for a few days.

Q. You had a T15 finish here last year, I believe. You've played here twice; made the cut both times. What is it about Highland Meadows that you think makes this such a scorable place for a lot of our



players like yourself?

LAUREN STEPHENSON: It's just such a ball-striker's course. If you're off line you're not going to score well, but if you can hit it well tee it green you'll have a lot of looks, so you can kind of, like I did today, stay patient and end up with a 5-under round.

It's fun. I wouldn't say it's overly easy, but it's definitely like a ball-striker's paradise, so I like it.

Q. All right. Thank you very much, Lauren.

LAUREN STEPHENSON: Thank you.

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