

Freed Group Women's Scottish Open

Wednesday, August 2, 2023

Troon, Scotland, UK

Dundonald Links

Gemma Dryburgh

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We welcome Gemma Dryburgh here to the FreeD Group Women's Scottish Open presented by Trust Golf. How does it feel to be playing here in Scotland?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Feels familiar which is nice. It's nice to come back to course us know already and obviously family coming to watch this week, so excited for that and to see the Scottish crowds as well.

THE MODERATOR: This is your first time returning to Scotland, now an LPGA Tour winner. How does that feel? Is it different? Has anyone come up to you?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: I guess it gives me some confidence coming into this week as well knowing that I can win out here, winning in November last year in Japan, so it's been a bit of a whirlwind since then but a fun one.

But yeah it will be nice to see the Scottish crowd since that, and yeah hopefully they know my name a bit more as well.

Q. All season you've been sporting the blank hat waiting for the perfect sponsor to come along. Do you mind explaining how this came to be?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: The Old Course Hotel became my hat sponsor. Pretty exciting. Announced it today. It's pretty special. I went over on Monday to see them and do some photos as well, but grew up going there as a kid so it's pretty special. Thanks to James, my management, my manager, for making it happen. But yeah had a blank hat most of the year but nice to fill it out.

Q. Like bursting into song here. After you won, and chiselling away and trying to get the ultimate thing on the Tour by winning, how have you reassessed? Have you reset your goals? Is that a tricky thing to do in terms of moving your expectations up a little?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Definitely. Obviously it was a life



goal of mine to win on the LPGA, so doing that, had to readjust some goals at the start of this year, and to win again is another goal of mine. To get into the Top-50 is another goal of mine, which happened last week, so going to have to readjust again.

Q. They always say getting your first win can be hard but sometimes your second win, harder, isn't it?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, hopefully it doesn't take too long, but it would be nice to do it again in the near future. But obviously just take it as it comes. I know it's very hard to win out here. I know there's a lot of good girls that haven't won out here yet but I feel lucky to have done that but obviously looking for the next one.

Q. The Solheim Cup is hovering on the horizon. That was always a target, obviously, but Suzann has spoken in quite nice terms about you, and that will give you a great lift and final push.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: She was obviously watching last week. She's here this week. So you know, it's obviously in the back of our minds. It's coming up in a few weeks. It's a goal of mine since I can remember. I remember watching Solheim growing up and I went to the one in Gleneagles when she had that famous putt, and I was there on the 18th green watching that. To be part of that would be unbelievable.

Q. Tremendous moment, wasn't it? For a golfer, that would have given you a great taste of actually being there.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Absolutely. It's honestly the best sporting moment I've ever witnessed. It gives me goosebumps thinking about it, the enormity of it. I don't know if she'd announced it yet, but obviously her final professional event and doing it in that style was pretty amazing.

Q. You were in team golf, Curtis Cup and everything. Not too look too far ahead but what are your attributes in a team environment?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Growing up, playing football,



basketball, I love team sports, playing in Tulane on the golf team there. Kind of miss that aspect to it when we play out here. So it's nice to actually maybe be able to play on a team again and you know, the camaraderie and the banter as well.

Hopefully I can bring something to the team, if I get picked that is, but yeah, hopefully get to be part of the team and bring some good vibes and banter as well.

Q. You are saying you always loved team sports. Can you remember a time when you kicked the winning goal or something similar?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, definitely, I remember the final, one of the tournaments, it wasn't me it was one of the club teams I played for, we were in a tournament and got to the final and we had a penalty shootout, scored my penalty. That was pretty special, and I remember for the school team as well scored some goals for them.

Just kind of loved being part of the team, and I was center midfield. Wasn't always the end goal but setting up goals for other people as well is always special. I also remember, this is basketball, though, scored three points to win a game one time so that was pretty cool.

Q. What nerves did you feel?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Similar to golf, it's a faster moment, you don't have as much time to think in golf. But using that, the same thing as you are on the golf course, breathe in and calm your self down, but a lot more adrenaline in that instance. But yeah, I think it all helps for the golf as well.

Q. Did your hat stay on --

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yes, it did. It was well on.

Q. Just following up on the Gleneagles, were you there in an official capacity?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: No, I was there as a fan. I did get free tickets, though.

Q. Did you have permission to get on the green?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Everyone was storming, and I did join the party after as well.

Q. Lest we forget, Evian, that feeling, especially on Saturday on the front nine, you were very much in contention. Did it feel different last week?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, a bit different obviously. It's a major, so first time I've been in that position in a major championship in contention. Used that same experience from Japan, and obviously when you're playing well like that, it does help your confidence going into those rounds.

So yeah, I thought I had handled it pretty well considering.

Q. Was there any particular part of your game, that front nine, you were holing some nice putts, I saw you out on the course with Nick at the end of the week as well. So was there something from that that fed into the week?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, so my putting coach, Nick Soto, was there all week. He was there till the Thursday and we did quite a lot of work on my putting, and I had seen him the previous week as well.

So I think that helped a lot, especially around Evian because the greens are so tricky. We worked a lot on speed, and I think that was a real key for me last week. I think it will be this week, as well, adjusting to the speed of these greens, as well, so using that for sure.

Q. In America, players are used to having team around them from 12 onwards. How did it feel for you, a Scot when you're picking up a simple bag of clubs to suddenly have a team?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: It's good. It's nice to have people around you to help you. None of us get here without team members and people to help us as well. It's definitely a team effort at the end of the day, even though it's just us out there, our caddies, as well, and coaches, family, as well. So it is a team effort at the end of the day as well.

Q. Did it surprise your granny or somebody that you would need all these people around?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: I don't think so. I think people like my family have always known that you need team members to help you out and throughout the journey we are on because it's not easy out here, so I think they are all kind of maybe that way, need a team around me and everything.

Q. Ahead of all these exciting things ahead in the rest of the year, this week, how is the course looking to you out there? Obviously you said you had to get used to the greens?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, it's looking good. I think after, there was quite a lot of rain on Monday and it was good considering how much rain there was. Drains really

well. Greens are looking good, obviously a little bit slower as they are on links courses but we'll get used to that. I think it will be quite windy. Should be a good challenge.

Q. And you had a great finish here last year winning the Jock MacVicar Award but does the course particularly suit your eye?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, I think it actually really grew on me last year. We played it when I was a rookie on the LET, I think 2016 or 2017. Played it both years and it really grew on me last year, and obviously playing well probably helps, as well. Got some good memories.

I think I had a nice eagle putt last year on, I think it was the fifth hole, par 5 over there, and kind of went birdie, eagle, birdie. So I have some good memories from last year.

Q. Seems to me like you relish the opportunity to play at home; the pressure is a nice pressure.

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, obviously it is a bit more. You want to do well. It's an event that you look forward to all year. Kind of got it in my mind that I want to play well at the Scottish.

But I think more experience playing it and coming back, you know, I think helps, and having a good week last week, as well, I think helps as well going into the next few weeks. Yeah, hopefully I can just relax and enjoy it.

Q. And you're in the Pro-Am with VisitScotland, who have done a lot for this tournament, so it's quite nice to be to hang out with them?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yeah, definitely. I had an invitation with them for Dunbarrie. So it's pretty special to support them. Did some work with them this year. It's great to play with them and have their support.

Q. You're playing with Ayaka Furue, your thoughts on her game?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Incredible. I think I'm playing with her the next two days, but yeah, incredible. I remember Mike, her caddie, was telling me she was hitting it really, really close distances with just hybrids and stuff.

So doesn't surprise me at all bought when I've seen her play, it's like darts into the greens. Incredible. I think she beat us all by I don't know how many shots but she was incredible, yeah.

Q. When you say family here, can you be specific?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: Yes, so Mum and dad, John and Marjorie, and then two sets of aunts and uncles. My dad's brother and sister and their partners, and then two cousins coming.

Q. And then you are in a house together?

GEMMA DRYBURGH: No, I'm just with my parents and my family are going to caravan on site.

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