



# Augusta National Women's Amateur

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

## Hannah Darling

### Quick Quotes

**Q. I guess everything was working, but what was really working?**

HANNAH DARLING: I would say the mental side of it. The way I thought my way around the golf course was great today. I was really disciplined. Me and my caddie, we made some really smart targets, and we were just hitting committed shots to those targets.

I hit pretty much every shot today was great, and I didn't hit every great golf shot, but we hit great shots to our intention and to our targets. It's a credit to that.

**Q. How many greens do you think you hit out there?**

HANNAH DARLING: I have no idea. We kept saying it was just play boring golf, and I think the biggest thing for us is just staying in the moment and staying in the process. I don't like thinking about what's happened before. I played some great golf, but I was still just thinking about what was to come next and staying very present, so I couldn't even tell you how many greens I've hit.

**Q. Did you have any good up-and-downs today?**

HANNAH DARLING: I had some great up-and-downs. I've really been trying to work on using my putter around the green. I think especially today when it's really wet and there's a lot of chip shots into the grain and you need to get a lot of height on it, I've been trying to use my putter a lot more, and then on 13 today I was long right of the green pretty much dead where you'd put all the crosses on your yardage book, and I made a great up-and-down just about holed it and put it to about one and a half foot, so that was great.

**Q. Catriona was out there today. Did you spot her in the gallery?**

HANNAH DARLING: Yeah, I did. I think she followed me pretty much the whole day. That's cool. Yeah, she's a great person, and she's been a roll model to me growing up. She's done what most Scottish amateurs want to do in their professional career, and I'm really excited to hopefully play under her this year at the Curtis Cup.

**Q. I know you're really excited to play in your first LPGA event. What did you learn from that week?**

HANNAH DARLING: I think it was a great chance for me to reflect on where my game is at. I've been playing some really good golf, and I think that I just made some decisions that I wasn't very happy with. I kind of got ahead of myself. I knew around 50th in my second round I had to make some birdies, and I had to chase birdies, which isn't like me, and it's not what I've done when I played my best, so it actually was a great chance to take a step back and say that's not how I want to act, and this is how I want to act going forward.

**Q. You started off with three straight birdies. What are you thinking at that point after the third hole?**

HANNAH DARLING: To be honest, I remember hearing Annika quote when she shot 59 she had made quite a few birdies in a row, and she was like, I just need to make a par. I said to my caddie, I just want to make a par, and I made a bogey. I was settled down. I was fine.

But yeah, I just made some great putts that normally wouldn't drop, but they did today, and yeah, it was a great day.

**Q. How long were they?**

HANNAH DARLING: First hole was probably about 10 foot down the hill. Second would have been about 30 foot up the hill. Then on the par-5, 3, I had like a four-footer down the hill for birdie. That was quite a reachable par-5 today.

**Q. For birdie or eagle?**

HANNAH DARLING: For birdie.

**Q. The tee times were bounced back about an hour. I know it's not a lot but still something you have to navigate. How were you with that extra hour this morning?**

HANNAH DARLING: I got the text that we had an hour delay literally as I'd put my golf bag on my shoulder to walk downstairs for breakfast, so I took my golf bag right back down and got back into bed and slept for another 30 minutes and then got up and did it all again.

**Q. How different is this golf course from previous years? What are your thoughts on what the golf course looks like?**

HANNAH DARLING: I would definitely say -- this is my third year playing, so I've kind of seen -- it feels like all different ways the golf courses have played, and I think the first few years it was definitely playing a lot firmer. These greens and especially with the rain last night, it's a little bit softer, which is kind of nice, and I would say from yesterday, I would have said that the course itself was very dry. Obviously we've had a lot of rain, so it's a little bit wetter, but yeah, it normally plays pretty wet and firm, and I would say it's just a lot softer this year. But the course is in great condition, and it's a credit to the green keepers.

**Q. When the wind picked up your last three, four holes, did it get more difficult?**

HANNAH DARLING: Yes and no. I would say that there's areas on the golf course down by 13, 14 and then kind of on the front nine you're going in different directions and there's some chutes with the wind, at that point it's swirling a little bit, and it's kind of just trying to make a great decision on where the wind actually is.

But the last three holes we knew exactly where the wind was, so you've just got to play with that. I've said this a lot of times, but I'm from Scotland, so I kind of know how to handle the wind a little bit.

**Q. Can you walk us through 9, having that eagle chip --**

HANNAH DARLING: Yeah, I would say that someone looking at me hit that second shot thinks I've hit a great shot, but for me I've pushed it 20 yards right and ended up in a fine position. Yeah, that putt, again, as I was saying earlier, I was really trying to hit a lot of putts from just off the green, so just hit a really good committed putt from off the green and put it to about five foot, which for me was a decent effort, and then holed the putt for birdie.

**Q. Was that the putt that you putted that far back --**

HANNAH DARLING: Yeah, I putted from there. I think we've heard in a lot of times, a bad putt is a lot better than a bad chip, so just taking it from there.

**Q. With how you played this last month, handful of weeks, do you still feel like an underdog?**

HANNAH DARLING: Yes. Yeah, I really do. I think that the last few years in college I've not played how I know I can play, and I think that the last few months -- I got my first college win a few weeks ago, and for me, I really felt like it was a long time coming. To kind of get over the line and get it done there was amazing, at Adairius, it's our home event, it was great. It's just a credit to the work that me and my coach have been doing, my coach Ian Muir back in Scotland, we've done some great work over the last few months, so everything is just a credit to that.

**Q. Is he still director of golf at St Andrews?**

HANNAH DARLING: Yes, he is.

**Q. How much do you play out there?**

HANNAH DARLING: At St Andrews? Every time I have a lesson we'll go on to a secret very hidden practice area at the Jubilee and we'll go there and hit our own balls, pick our own balls up. It's a very Scottish way of doing it, if you like.

**Q. Did you practice in all kinds of weather? Do you have memories in terrible weather and perfect weather?**

HANNAH DARLING: Yeah, there's one picture I remember of me and Ian, we're on the range, and we've got about as many woolly hats and as many neck buffs as we can put on, and it is actually chucking it down with rain, and it was absolutely freezing in the middle of winter, and we took a selfie to remember, it's part of the good times but it's also part of the hard work, so it's cool.

**Q. You've been with him how long?**

HANNAH DARLING: A long time. A long time, since I was a lot younger. He was part of the Scottish Golf Academy, and that's kind of -- that's how I got to where I am. The Scottish Golf have been a huge support of me. I've been with him for a very long time.

**Q. How many rounds on the Old Course would you estimate you've played?**

HANNAH DARLING: Probably not that many. I've played it twice I want to say, in the St Rule tournament. Not as many as I would have liked.

**Q. You were one of two golfers from the University of South Carolina here. How much did you and Louise talk about it, and what kind of advice did you give her?**

HANNAH DARLING: Yeah, I just wanted to be almost a source of comfort for Lou. She's been playing some really great golf, too. Last fall she played great, and she's continuing that this spring. I just wanted to let her know that she just needs to go play her own golf, and she's going to be more than capable.

She had a few questions about the golf but then also just the tournament setup in itself. Yeah, I was glad to answer those questions for her.

**Q. How does it feel to be here representing the university and having such a strong start?**

HANNAH DARLING: It's a privilege. We are very lucky to have had the opportunity by our coach Kalen Anderson. She's a great coach, and we come from a great culture at South Carolina. Our women's basketball team is doing great. Our men's basketball team is getting a lot better. We just come from a really supportive group of athletes, and that's a really nice thing to be able to represent.

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