



Augusta National Women's Amateur

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

Rachel Heck

Quick Quotes

Q. 1-under today?

RACHEL HECK: Yeah.

Q. Good fight back from the start for you. Are you satisfied with the score at the end of the day?

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, definitely. I mean, so easy to look back on every round and think where you could have got another shot or two.

I feel really confident with my game. Feel like I was very much in control today. I'm very happy with how today went.

Q. What's been the reaction you have I've gotten from everybody since the story you wrote a couple weeks ago?

RACHEL HECK: Everyone has been just so incredibly supportive. It's been overwhelming. I've had so many people come up to me and say they've read the article. I had no idea how was it going to be received when I wrote it. It was just important I had it in my own words.

The support I've got from it is just overwhelming. Yeah, it's amazing.

Q. Did it change the way your perspective coming here this week having made that announcement and everybody knowing?

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, I think it did. I think even just the act of writing and publishing it made me reflect on a lot and realize how lucky I have and how much this game has given me.

It put everything into perspective. Like no matter of how I play this week, how I play tomorrow, I'm going to take the most incredible memories with me. Yeah.

Q. Is just talked to Emelia, and she said it was very freeing after she made her decision; the reaction she got from other people was very similar to yours, supportive and saying that's great. Has it been freeing for you? Has it felt that way?

RACHEL HECK: It has been freeing because I think I've known in my heart for a while that I don't want to turn professional. One, it took me a while to come to terms on my own, and, two, to tell people that.

I feel like I spent a little while giving cryptic answers, so I don't have to keep giving cryptic answers about what I'm going to do in my future. It's definitely freeing in that sense.

Q. Last year you came out and watched Rose win, even though you you were supposed to compete and were injured, correct?

RACHEL HECK: Correct.

Q. Was that difficult last year for you to be here, not playing, and then how is it to come back and to get this chance again?

RACHEL HECK: It's so great to be back playing. I honestly, last year watching Rose, watching her win was some of the best few days of that life. I had the time of my life.

Of course it was hard not playing. I'm a competitor, so I do want to be out here competing, so it's really great to be back this year.

Q. You would be coming here thinking right now this is my last chance at playing this thing. Do you not think that way now? Do you hope that maybe you'll get more opportunities, too?

RACHEL HECK: Yes, now I very much hope this is not my last chance playing here. Yeah, it would be great to be able to keep playing amateur events and hopefully get some more invites back.

Q. When did you graduate and when does phase two with Air Force Reserves and your day job...

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, so I start -- I graduate in June. I start my day job Monday after this, just a little internship for now.

So Air Force, figuring out exactly where I'm going to be based, but I'll commission as a second lieutenant before graduation.

So there is a lot of moving parts right now and trying to figure it all out.

Q. Do you look at the last stretch through the NAAs then? Are you looking forward to that maybe more than you would've? You've guys have always been competing and doing well, so?

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, absolutely. I think it's been a long couple years of injuries and illness, so those make you realize sometimes you take it for granted. Competing all the time, being with your team, being away has made me cherish every moment so much more, and I'm really pumped about our last few tournaments with my girls.

Q. Now for tomorrow, what are you sort of looking at coming out tomorrow? Scores were really low today and that 1-under, it's inside, but it's close. It's like it can go either way. How do you approach the second round?

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, really just the same as today. There is no point in watching leaderboards worrying where I'm at. I'm teeing off in the morning, which will be nice. We have a very conservative strategy. Just trying to play smart. Hit fairways, hit greens, two-putt for par; if a birdie drops, great.

So just going to keep that same strategy for tomorrow and see how it shakes out at the end of the day.

Q. How is your body feeling right now?

RACHEL HECK: It's okay. Definitely a little bit sore. It's a grind. But it's not as bad as I thought it would be. You tee off and there is so much adrenaline and the excitement of being here. Not too bad. Nothing Advil can't fix.

Q. What do you do well today on the course?

RACHEL HECK: I think I was really patient today. Really happy with my mental game. It can be hard coming here under the pressure. It's a very difficult course. A lot can go wrong. I stayed very level headed, calm, collected.

I just had fun with my dad out there. We were just -- you know, I told him before, we're going to have our strategy. We're going to commit to that. If I hit a bad shot I hit a bad shot. That's we did.

Q. First event you've played since announcing you're not going to turn pro. Did that help you on the course or change your mindset with your play?

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, I think it's definitely a little bit freeing. Writing that piece gives me a lot of perspective on the game and what it's given me. It's just nice to have everything out there kind of like I said before.

No more cryptic answers. I'm able to, I don't on, true to myself and with other people.

Q. I know your dad is a lot of your why you play golf. How nice was it to have him on the bag again?

RACHEL HECK: It's so nice. I missed it. It's been a little bit. I guess Women's Am was the last time last summer. Now that I'm staying amateur we're hoping we'll have a lot more of these together.

So it was great. It's really fun. We genuinely had so much fun out there. It's also a good time to catch up with him. I don't see him that much in college, so just talking all about life, telling stories with college my senior year.

Good time. Good five hours with dad.

Q. Didn't Rose carry your rib in her bag when she won?

RACHEL HECK: Here? It seems like something I would do.

Q. Something to that effect.

RACHEL HECK: I put in there a couple times. That seems right. I don't know. She's doesn't always know when it's in there.

Q. Does it only go in her bag?

RACHEL HECK: Most -- I just think it's the most funny to mess with Rose. It's so good every time, yeah.

Q. I thought maybe you put it in yours this time.

RACHEL HECK: Oh, no. I don't want that thing in my bag. It's just for Rose. (Laughter.)

Q. Has your dad caddied here for you before?

RACHEL HECK: He has. This is my third time playing that's he's caddied every year here. Yes. He hasn't caddied at Augusta, but he has here.

Q. Will he caddie at Augusta?

RACHEL HECK: That's a later problem.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports