



Augusta National Women's Amateur

Friday, April 5, 2024

Hannah Darling

Quick Quotes

Q. How was it out there today, and what does it mean to have this final round and the practice round today at Augusta National?

HANNAH DARLING: It was a lot of fun. I don't think you can ever have a bad day at Augusta National. It was perfect conditions. A little chilly this morning, but it's perfect. The course is unbelievable right now.

I think in terms of playing the practice round today and playing the tournament tomorrow, the way I've always described it is today you get to appreciate the golf course for what it is, and then tomorrow you get to appreciate the tournament for what it is.

It's just tomorrow -- obviously I've been here for the last two years. So I know what it's going to be like tomorrow. It's going to be --

(No audio).

HANNAH DARLING: I'll be nervous. I know I'll be nervous. I'm expecting that, and I'm preparing for that. My dad always told me when I was younger, Nerves are a good thing, it means you care. I most definitely care about this.

I'm so excited to go out there tomorrow. At the end of the day, those nerves on the 1st tee are privileged. There's a lot of girls and women that would love to be in our shoes on the 1st tee tomorrow and have the opportunity to play in this event. It's 100 hundred percent a privilege, and I'm very grateful for the opportunity.

Q. What was your favorite shot you hit today?

HANNAH DARLING: I'm Scottish. I hit stingers all the time. So I love the shot on 16, skipping over the water from the bank there. I think I was about one foot off being perfect and rolling up to the green. It just got stuck in the bank.

Yeah, that's what I find fun. I just love that sort of playing the golf, I would say.

Q. How validating is all this momentum, coming off a win at Darius Rucker, coming into this event playing well? How validating is that for you?

HANNAH DARLING: It's been very validating, but at the same time, I wouldn't say it's a surprise. I've always known my game is there. I would say that last year I didn't quite perform the way that I know I can, but I've also made some strides in different aspects of my life.

I'd say I matured a lot, that sort of thing. So I learned other things other than golf, and my performance is getting back

to where I know it can be. So that's very rewarding for the all the hard work I put in. It's an exciting place to have my game right now.

Q. In what ways would you say you've matured?

HANNAH DARLING: I think when you're at a low point in your game, I think it's very easy to maybe make excuses for things or stuff like that, but actually just taking it on the chin and being, okay, this is what's not going well right now. This is what makes it better, and keeping very level headed.

I would say that's the situation I was in. It's like just got to put in the work. It's not put in more work. I would say I'm a hard worker as it is, but just that sort of thing. And life in general. I'm a junior at the University of South Carolina. So I'm one of the older ones on the team.

I was a freshy once, and I was making some mistakes, and just gradually through university you learn. Being away from home, I'm on the other side of the world from home, you're bound to mature at some point. You're bound to learn and grow up.

Q. Did you ever end up going fishing?

HANNAH DARLING: Sadly not. I got back yesterday, and I was pretty tired and just had an easy night. I would have loved to have went fishing, but unfortunately, the day just didn't allow it.

Q. You're not the first person to mention how jarring it was to go out on the golf course and see how many people were actually out at Augusta National. What's something else that transpired during your competitive rounds that you would only have learned by being there and experiencing it the first time?

HANNAH DARLING: I would say -- I mean, yeah, there's a lot of people, I think, that have seen the support for women's golf is -- one thing was maybe surprising, but it was also really rewarding to see that and how much we have as a whole women's sport and women's golf at this kind of level has grown.

Yeah, I would say that would be the one thing that really surprised me. I'd spoke to people before I played this event and kind of asked them what they experienced. I actually played with Maria Fassi a few weeks ago at the LPGA event and spoke to her. She's been giving me some encouragement this week, and she sent me a message yesterday.

So having that, and she's given me some good advice, like take it one shot at a time and that sort of thing. Yeah, it's a great event to be a part of.

Q. Besides that, any other advice she's extended to you?

HANNAH DARLING: Yeah, just one shot at a time, have fun. The one thing, speaking to her, that she kind of remembered was just, I would say, the sportsmanship between her and -- who did she play in that? Yeah, Kupcho in the last round. She just said they had a blast out there and had a lot of fun.

Yeah, you're going to have a great time no matter how you play. Just going out with that perspective tomorrow is going to be really important for me.

Q. Is it difficult to have that balance? It's obviously something you want dearly. You want to put your head down, but you also kind of want to look around and appreciate it. Is it kind of hard to strike a balance between the two?

HANNAH DARLING: I think so. I know for me personally I play well when I'm very present and very process focused. I think for me just going out there and having the process of going into some really good numbers, picking some really smart targets, being committed, having fun, not worrying about results or anything that's outside of my bubble is really important.

I personally feel like, if I can handle that very well tomorrow, I'm going to have a great day.

Q. This probably goes against this then, but setting up 1-under par, is there a number you have in mind that you'd like to get to tomorrow and see how it stacks up?

HANNAH DARLING: I'm not even thinking about a number. I'm going out there. As I said, I feel like for me, if I get results focused, I start pushing things a little bit too much, and I know that's not where I play my best golf.

I'm not even thinking of a number tomorrow. I'm just going to go out there, do all the things I just said. Have a lot of fun walking around one of the best golf courses in the world and enjoy the day.

Q. If you are thinking about it, what would be a great score tomorrow?

HANNAH DARLING: I think it's very situational dependent. I think a great score is somewhere in the 60s. It's very possible out here. But, again, I don't want to go there. If you can appreciate that.

Q. What does it say about South Carolina's golf program that there's two Gamecocks in the top 10 going into the final round?

HANNAH DARLING: Two Gamecocks in the top 10 and a Gamecock commit in the top 10 as well. It says a lot about our program. Women's sports in South Carolina is in a great place right now. We've got our women's basketball playing tonight.

Yeah, we're in a great place. I think going into the rest of the season in terms of college golf, we're in a really good place, and it's very exciting. Louise is one of my close friends, and I'm getting to know El very well. I wish them both the best of luck tomorrow, and hopefully Gamecock golf can come out on top.

Q. Do you plan to watch the South Carolina game today?

HANNAH DARLING: I wish. We have an event here tonight at 6:30, which I'm going to enjoy a lot. I'm kind of split minds, where do I want to be? I'm going to enjoy the event tonight, have a great time, and maybe see the score when I get back, maybe watch it on replay.

Q. I wouldn't bring your phone and stream it during dinner.

HANNAH DARLING: No, I'm not allowed to do that, unfortunately. I would have loved to do that, but I'm going to have my attention on the event tonight and see my score afterwards.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports