



Augusta National Women's Amateur

Saturday, April 6, 2024

Lottie Woad

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. It's a privilege to welcome our 2024 Augusta National Women's Amateur champion, Lottie Woad. Lottie, congratulations on your terrific victory.

You had a lead going into the final round but faced a deficit coming down the stretch, before birdieing three of those last four holes. Can you walk us through the three closing holes, and especially the last putt, to win the Augusta National Women's Amateur.

LOTTIE WOAD: I felt like the three birdies I got were probably not as important as my par save on 14 because I think if I'd gone three back at that point, it would have been pretty difficult to get that back. So a good save there after having like 215 in because I hit the tree.

15, didn't hit a good drive either, had to lay up, but managed to hit it to 15, maybe about 15 feet. (Video interruption) the feeder pin. Thought I could one close in there but ended up missing that. Felt like I hit a good putt. So I felt I could make some coming in.

17 is a short hole. I think I had 104 in, so it was a good chance there. The putt I left myself was pretty quick. I knew I definitely wasn't going to be able to leave that short. Just kind of set it on its way and managed to catch the right edge, and it went in.

18, I was honestly just thinking about making birdie rather than par. I knew I needed par for the playoff, but the pin was such a nice pin that I knew I could use that backstop a little bit. I'm not sure the shot used it in the end.

Then that putt, I feel like it was probably going past, but I was just being sure I didn't three-putt it either with it being so quick. It was a bit of a double-breaker, and luckily it broke back right at the end.

Q. Can you talk about how you maintained your composure and the nerves out there.

LOTTIE WOAD: I knew teeing off, only having a two-shot lead, at some point during the round someone was probably going to overtake me with it probably being scorable. Because I looked at the pins before and they were in some pretty nice locations, so I was prepared for someone to go low. When I ended up being two back, I was like, okay, so I've got these birdie chances that they have. Just gave myself the chances at the end and luckily holed some putts.

Q. Lottie, these are the finishes that players dream about. Was it better than the dream?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I was hoping it was going to be like a nice stress-free day, but it was far from that. In the end, it's a cooler way to finish, so yeah.

Q. Lottie, two things. Were you looking at scoreboards during the round? And then can you take us down to the bogey on 13 and sort of how you regrouped from that?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I looked at the scoreboard pretty much every hole when I saw it. I always look at the scoreboard, so I wasn't going to change that.

It helped me know where I was. It helped me know that I had to go low the last few holes. Then in terms of that bogey on 13, that was just a really bad hole. I went with my 4-wood off the tee, tried to draw it round, struck it terribly, blocked it right, got the layup all wrong with the wind, left myself really far back, hooked my pitching wedge. Then I want to say my first putt was going in the water I hit it so hard, and luckily it stopped. Then missed the putt.

Then I looked at the scoreboard and saw I was only two back, and I knew there's chances every hole coming in.

Q. What club did you hit on 18, and how far were you trying to pitch it? How were you trying to play the shot?

LOTTIE WOAD: I think I had 123 to the front, and it was about 130 pin. Maybe it was playing that with the elevation.

I just hit like a little 9-iron shoulder to shoulder, 130 number, and I think it pitched about pin high. I was trying to go right of the pin, but with the left-to-right wind, I was trying to saw it out at the pin, but it just stayed there. It was the right club in the end.

Q. Kind of to follow on the last a minute ago, when you make such kind of a careless bogey on a birdie hole, 13, then get in trouble off the tee on 14 and go long, is there any part of you that allowed yourself to think, man, this could be slipping away from me?

LOTTIE WOAD: I mean, a little bit, but not really. I just don't really like that 14th tee shot. I did the exact same thing in the practice round, hit the tree, bounced back. I knew there was no way of me hitting that green from there. Short wasn't good. Long wasn't good. So I just kind of hit my hybrid up there.

I played a really good chip, but it still went a good 10 feet by. And that putt luckily just caught the right edge because it looked like it was going to miss low kind of the whole time I hit it.

I knew even being 215 from the pin, two back, if I could somehow make par, I was still in it, but if I made bogey there, I was definitely out of it.

Q. How young were you when you first started kind of making these specific game plans like very detailed before a tournament? Then did you stray from that game plan at all at the end?

LOTTIE WOAD: Probably when I was 15, maybe 16, when I first got into the England girls kind of squads and working with the coaches there. My course management at that point was all over the place. So trying to sort that out a little bit.

I obviously had help this week with Robbo, my caddie, being the England women's coach. We had a game plan from last year that we could lose a little bit and just made a few changes and just stuck to it really.

Q. Lottie, winning this event typically gets you into a lot of big things this summer, opened some doors for you. Can you put into words what winning a championship like this means and where it was on your radar maybe years ago?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I was trying to not think about what kind of came with it when I was playing, but now looking back on it, it's pretty cool, what I'm going to be able to play in this summer, and it was one of the goals this year, but it's so hard to win a golf tournament.

So I just keep trying to put myself in the right places. Got one over the line here. Yeah, I'm just really happy.

Q. It's been obviously an incredible week, but you do have the opportunity to play in some of those LPGA major

championships in the next year and even one in a week's time. What is it like to have those exemptions into those major championships, and what do you think that will do to lift your career as you have professional aspirations, I would hope?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, it means a lot. It's what I want to do. I want to be a professional and to be playing in these events. To get this experience so early on is going to be great for me.

I haven't played in a major before. I think I've played in a couple of pro events, but never like an LPGA event. So this is going to be really exciting for me.

Q. Everyone in your circle talks about how hard you work and how much you want to be the best, what you're willing to sacrifice. What made you fall in love with this game to begin with and then want to be the best?

LOTTIE WOAD: I think one of the things I love about this game is just there's so many aspects to it, so many ways that you can improve and you can really never get bored with the amount of different shots and stuff, especially for around here, that you need to be able to play.

I just enjoy working hard on my game. Yeah, just trying to get better each day really.

Q. Lottie, you had some pretty vocal supporters out there, one of whom was your grandmother, Marian?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yes.

Q. Who was the lady with her?

LOTTIE WOAD: That was my aunt, so her daughter.

Q. Do either of them play golf?

LOTTIE WOAD: No.

Q. And the second thing is you seem, if I may say so, very calm and composed. Are you trying hard to be calm and composed, or are you naturally calm and composed?

LOTTIE WOAD: It's probably a bit of both. I don't really get too hyped up on the golf course, like I'll rarely fist pump. That was probably -- I think the last two holes, I probably threw a little one in there. That's probably the most you'll get out of me.

I just like to stay in the moment, and it's something I've been working on. So I just don't want to get too ahead of myself really.

Q. Are you like this in your whole life? Do you consider yourself fairly calm and composed as a person?

LOTTIE WOAD: No.

Q. When do you get worked up?

LOTTIE WOAD: I don't know.

Q. Traffic lights?

LOTTIE WOAD: I mean, sure, yeah. I just feel like on the golf course I might be slightly level-headed most of the time. Not all the time, definitely not all the time, but than I am in class or something like that.

Q. When you first heard about this tournament, which is about five years old now, how did you think about it and when did you first get the inspiration to come here?

LOTTIE WOAD: When I first heard about it, I saw it on TV, which was obviously quite a while ago. I always wanted to play in it, but at that point I was pretty far off getting to play in it. It definitely inspired me to work harder and continue just enjoying the game and just trying to get better.

My first time playing it was when I started at Florida State. So I feel like I grew a lot playing college golf and getting a lot of experience playing against the best in the world who are obviously all here this week.

Q. How does this compare to the Girls' Am that you won?

LOTTIE WOAD: Well, this is better. I mean, I'm happy I won both of them. The Girls' Am was my last junior event, so it was really nice for me to end on a high before I came to FSU and started playing college golf, and it gave me a lot of confidence coming in that I could just hit the ground running and just kind of fit into the college game quite quickly.

Q. Lottie, we heard you're a football fan. Do you have a sports hero or anybody you've kind of found inspiration in?

LOTTIE WOAD: Well, I am a Leeds fan, and I don't know if anyone knows the score because we were losing before I teed off, but I don't know what the score was. I'm really hoping we won, but I'm not sure on that.

Football, probably I haven't got a football hero, just support my club.

In terms of golf heroes, I usually try and support the English pros like Charley and Georgia, what they've done, specifically when Georgia won The Open. I was quite young when that happened, and that definitely inspired me.

Q. Did it help to have competed on this course before? In other words, is it a little bit like a poem that you need to read multiple times in order to understand it?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, definitely. Playing this course before, I was really confident with the lines off the tee because when I first came here last year, I didn't realize actually how tight in demand it was off the tee.

I knew coming into it, so I knew I needed to work on driving it a little bit, then just getting comfortable on the greens. I think it's very difficult to be comfortable on the Augusta greens. And even Champions Retreat, those greens are really difficult.

Knowing the reads a little bit and how quick some of the putts are, even though I still like ended up ramming half of my putts by on the front nine today.

Q. Do you embrace the strategic nature of this golf course? Because you seem to kind of methodically go about your business.

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, I'd say so. I've gotten my plan, like the lines off the tee. I'm just kind of checking the compass on the course planner a lot because the winds were swirling all over the place, and you can kind of get tricked into thinking the wind's one way when it's actually not. That's important when it's so tight off the tee.

So I was just really focusing on that and just sticking to the plan I'd worked out really.

Q. Two down with four to play, your caddie and your college coach had a lot of belief in you because they know you have a lot of belief. Where does that come from inside you?

LOTTIE WOAD: I'm just a pretty competitive person, so I obviously wanted to win. I feel like the confidence and stuff like that just comes from knowing you've put in the hours and knowing I'd practiced my putting a lot before this week because it's usually a weaker part of my game, and if it doesn't fall into place, it can affect whether I win or not.

This week was probably one of the -- specifically today, one of the best weeks I've had on the greens, and thankfully it came at the right time.

Q. What did you learn about yourself as a competitor today?

LOTTIE WOAD: That I'm never out of it. When it was tough out there, I hung in there. That's going to give me a lot of confidence. Mistakes are bound to happen around this course. It just wasn't a good time for me to make one, but I did, and it happens.

I just stayed relatively calm and knew that I could get some back.

Q. Talking about your work with the sports psychologist, were you able to employ some of the strategies you've worked on with him today?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, definitely. A lot of breathing, trying to calm myself down a little bit, particularly as -- I feel like I never had as much adrenaline as I did today. I was hitting the ball, specifically my irons, really far. So it kind of threw off my distance control a little bit at the stop. I was trying to either factor that in or calm myself down a little bit to make sure I was hitting it the right distance.

Q. You mentioned your focus of trying to stay in the moment and not try to get too high or too low. When you're in a situation where you're down a couple with four to play, are you still able to find fun in that moment, understanding that you're a competitor and clearly there is a job to be done, but were you able to still kind of take a step back and realize you're playing the back nine at Augusta National in the tournament?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, if I'd been told before this week that I'd be two back with four to play, I would have been like, yeah, perfect, that sounds great. To be in the mix on the back nine at Augusta is something that everyone dreams about. So I was trying to really embrace it.

I didn't really have anything to lose at that point. Think I was in second, but I couldn't really drop too much. I had a couple of shots in there. It was really just go for it.

Q. Since you said you were playing close attention to the scoreboards the whole time, was there any part of you looking up at Bailey's score thinking what is she doing out there, and what course is she playing?

LOTTIE WOAD: I was definitely looking at that. I had a feeling someone would go low. I didn't think -- I think she shot 66 low, which is a really impressive round. So I was obviously seeing her score keep on getting better and closer to mine and then eventually overtaking it. But I thought that was probably going to happen.

I had to remember that I had holes ahead. The finish, there was some chances in there. So I just had to kind of get through the hard holes without too much issues other than the bogey on 13, but yeah.

Q. You just watched this when it started. I assume you watched the Masters all those years on television. With all that, what's it like sitting in Butler Cabin about to get a trophy?

LOTTIE WOAD: It's pretty cool. I don't think it's really sunk in yet. I finished my round not that long ago, so I'm still kind of getting back in the moment here.

Yeah, it's just really cool to be standing in the same place as the Masters champions have stood and just following in their footsteps a little bit.

Q. Lottie, you said that obviously you just did this, so you've got a lot of things to think about. You're going to play in numerous professional events and majors. Does this, what happened today, change your timetable at all in regards to professional golf?

LOTTIE WOAD: I don't know. I'm probably not going to be thinking about that just yet. Just going to keep trying to get better and play well and see what happens really.

I don't want to rush anything, but just going to keep working with FSU. We have a National Championship coming up, so just trying to give ourselves a chance in that.

Q. You just mentioned FSU. You were joined by two teammates this week at Augusta in the Women's Amateur. Can you speak to the strength of the program and also competing in the ACC and what American collegiate golf has done for you to get to this point?

LOTTIE WOAD: Yeah, having three of us, including myself, playing this week just shows we have a lot of strength in our program at the moment. Hopefully we can just continue that into postseason. Mirabel in particular played really well this week. She couldn't play the fall, but she's really gotten into it in the spring.

Hopefully we can keep pushing each other on. Hopefully this win will help us keep going.

Q. Lottie, what was the name of the club where you learned to play? And was the professional there the man you regard as giving you your first instruction?

LOTTIE WOAD: The club I first played at was Farnham Golf Club. It's still the only club I'm a member at to this day. I started there around 7 just in the junior academy. Luke, my coach, is the head professional at Farnham. He's been my coach since I was 7.

Q. Does he have a second name?

LOTTIE WOAD: Bone, B-o-n-e.

Q. Could you take us through your five birdies in terms of the clubs you hit.

LOTTIE WOAD: Hole 2, I hit 7-iron. I hit a really good drive on that one. Just trying to land it front of the green and feed it round. The ball was really close to being really good. It just hung on a little bit on that slope.

Hole 7, I only had 60 yards, so a 58-degree. That putt was lining that I had there.

15, I think I had 91, playing about 87 I hit a 54 there.

17, I think I had 104, 103. I hit a 50-degree there.

18 I hit the 9-iron.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Lottie. Congratulations on a terrific championship.

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