

LIV Golf Adelaide

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Adelaide, South Australia, Australia
The Grange

Ripper GC

Cam Smith

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome to the media center, Cam Smith, captain of Ripper GC. 8-under for the day. Just please walk us through the round. I believe it was bogey-free. How did you feel out there?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, felt really good. I think maybe scrappy at times with my irons, but managed to get it up-and-down. Short game felt really good today. Putter felt really good.

But again, hit plenty of good drives and plenty of good iron shots to give me a chance at birdie, and yeah, rolled in a few putts.

Q. Right now Ripper is at 40-under as a team, sitting in second place. How good does it feel heading into the final day knowing that you're right there for a shot at the team title?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, absolutely. This is why we're here. This is what we wanted to do. We're in a really good position to go out there tomorrow and give it a really good run.

It's not going to come easy. Being behind Legion, defending team champs, they've done it plenty of times before, so we need some of our best tomorrow.

Q. As you're up here keeping an eye on a couple of guys finishing on 18, when you've got players like Jon and Bryson up there and making some incredible shots, does that add any extra fuel to the fire? How do you approach that knowing that you're out there going after the title against them?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I guess it doesn't really add fuel to the fire. I think most of us expect those two guys to be up there most weeks. They're two great players in their own right, obviously playing some pretty good golf here at the moment.

They're going to be hard to chase down tomorrow. I think

I'm six behind. Anything can happen out there, though. It's tricky. The greens get slick and firm. Anything can happen.

Q. Cam, can you describe or tell us what it's like to have a score like this in front of crowds like this in your home country? Obviously you guys have put a lot of emphasis on how you play this week. You got it done today. What's it like? What's it like to spend four and a half hours in front of this crowd?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, it's pretty epic. It's really epic, actually, particularly when I got off to a really hot start, and it seemed like the crowd just grew and grew and grew and the momentum was growing. Guy shouted out to me on the 17th tee, he said, "Fire up." I'm like, I don't think I can fire up anymore. I think if I fired up any more, my head would just explode. I was really out there on a mission today, and the momentum and the energy was so high that I really didn't need any help. It was a pretty cool day.

Q. Also, can you talk about the way Lucas has played? Obviously he started poorly in Riyadh but then bounced back and was key to the team win. He's carried that momentum through to this week, too.

CAM SMITH: Yeah, he's a world-class golfer. He's one of those guys, I think, that just keeps improving. Year after year, he just seems to get better and better. He's got better since he's been out here. He's knocked on the door so many times for a win, it wouldn't surprise me if he broke through and got a win this year.

It seems like he's doing all the hard yards, and his time will come.

Q. I know you'd love to be in that final group, but the fact that it's going to be Bryson, Rahm and AK in the final group, how much fun will the crowd have tomorrow?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, it'll be awesome. I think given that the team is up there, I think the energy will be high again. I

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can only recall a couple years ago the energy that we had, particularly in the playoff hole, but all day really on Sunday with the crowd egging us on to go ahead and win was pretty special. I'm expecting more of the same tomorrow.

Probably going to have to manage some emotions, I guess, tomorrow. It's tricky out there and stuff can go wrong pretty quick. You've just got to stay in it and keep doing what you're doing.

Q. Can you just talk very briefly to your mindset about playing 72-hole tournaments now so when you have a slow start on the front nine on Thursday you know in the back of your mind you've got time to work your way back into the tournament?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I guess there's not as much stress on making birdies as quick. I started with even par on Thursday. If we had have started on Friday with even par, the tournament would be over already, and I've run fourth and maybe had a half decent week, but it is nice knowing that you have time, and I don't think that would -- not that it wouldn't have happened, but it's just easier to make good decisions when you have time.

I think sometimes, particularly when you're on the back foot, you can try for a little bit too much and maybe get in your head a little bit too early in the tournament. It's nice to have that extra 18 holes to just settle in, really.

Q. Cam, your game really seemed to turn a corner with the Australian Open. Is there anything in particular that you and Grant are doing differently?

CAM SMITH: No (laughing). No, really. I think I just lost a ton of confidence in my longer stuff, and it took a while to come back. When you're playing against fields like this, you want to win. You want to do good.

Yeah, I think maybe just put a little bit too much pressure on myself because of how I was swinging it and how it felt, particularly on the range. It just took a while. I don't really know what to say. My swing doesn't feel any different. My game doesn't feel any different. It feels like I finally got some momentum behind me and some confidence.

I hope you're right. I hope the Aussie Open was the turning point. It definitely feels like that. But at the same time, all of that stuff can get taken away, and it's just another week.

Just got to keep the momentum and keep the confidence up.

Q. What's likely to be the bigger hurdle tomorrow, the

six-shot deficit or the two guys who are in front?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I mean, giving six shots to both Bryson and Jon is probably not where you want to be on the last day, to be honest. It's going to take a lot. If I went out there and played similar to what I did today, I think I'm in with a chance. I don't think it's easy out there. I think you can definitely get on the back foot here quickly, particularly early in the round.

Those first five holes, really, out here are pretty brutal. You have to hit every shot pretty good. We'll see what tomorrow brings. Hopefully I can bring the same stuff as today.

Q. I don't know if you know this, but you and the team featured quite prominently in the documentary that came out, "Greens and Gold." Having that in the back of your mind, what are you expecting from the South African crowd, experiencing your crowd now? What are you expecting in South Africa?

CAM SMITH: I think more of the same. I know the South African boys are really pumped to have a home event. They're really excited to bring everyone to their country and show what it's all about. That's one of my biggest joys of the year is bringing our league here, and not really showing everyone around, but yeah, just getting people to experience Australia. I think it's the greatest place on earth, as the South Africans think South Africa is the best place on earth. So I'm sure they're excited.

I can't wait to go there. It's my first time in South Africa. Yeah, we're all pumped to go there?

Q. As a host team, hosting in your home country, what have you learnt over the years as being the host team?

CAM SMITH: I think it's easy to use all your energy early in the week, and the boys have actually been in my ear about managing some maybe commitments and stuff early in the week because it can get a lot.

By the time Thursday, Friday rolls around, you want to be really fresh to play your best golf. Because it's your home event, you want to play well. But they're seasoned veterans, so they know exactly what they're doing.

That's all I would say.

Q. Obviously seeing your face on the shirts everywhere, how would you feel seeing Louis's face everywhere in South Africa? Could you deal with it?

CAM SMITH: How would I feel? I think I would have a



laugh, to be honest. I think I would. Yeah, it would be quite funny seeing Louis's face on some shirts, to be honest. Maybe the teeth could be a bit wider apart or something, who knows.

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