

LIV Golf London

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Hertfordshire, UK

Centurion Club

Ripper GC

Cam Smith

Marc Leishman

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome Ripper GC. We are joined by our captain, Cam Smith, and Marc Leishman. Cam, you are the solo leader as of now, shot 8-under, had a bogey-free day. Tell us about your round.

CAM SMITH: It was just really good. Wasn't much bad stuff in there, to be honest. Probably got a little bit scratchy there through the end of the tough bit of that front nine, but I don't really put that down to really poor swings, kind of just mental errors. But left them in pretty good spots anyway.

All in all, yeah, really solid.

Q. Marc, You're one shot off of Cap at 7-under today. You had four birdies in a row when you started out. Tell us a little bit about your round.

MARC LEISHMAN: Yeah, was happy to finally get a score on the board. It's been a while. Played really well. Finally got my shirt, my clothes. My clothes didn't turn up in Spain. They turned up at my doorstep in Virginia Beach Sunday night, which was not much good to me because I was in London, so then it was sent over here. It turned up after one hole, I changed shirts and went on to birdie six of the next seven holes. So I guess I might have to wear this one again tomorrow.

Yeah, happy with the day. I didn't do too much wrong. Pretty tough stretch from sort of 1 through to about 7 I would say, and played them really well with only one bogey and a couple of birdies. Yeah, happy to get out of there with a 7-under and a good start to the tournament.

Q. You had the opportunity to play with your teammates today. Tell us, does that have an impact on your round and your mindset when you're playing with your fellow teammates, or is it just another day out there?

MARC LEISHMAN: It is fun. The boys struggled a bit today, so everyone was a little quiet.

It's good playing with them. It doesn't change things too much. Yeah, it's always nice to play with some good mates.

Q. You guys will be paired up together tomorrow when you guys are both battling each other out. Are you guys friends or foes on the golf course as you go out there tomorrow?

CAM SMITH: Friends I would say. I think we both want to play the best that we can play, and whoever wins wins. It kind of is a bit of an interesting dynamic with the team stuff and the individual stuff, but we've still got a team tournament that we want to win, as well.

We've got to play good again tomorrow.

MARC LEISHMAN: On a Saturday we're obviously friends. Sunday afternoon we both want to win. But yeah, your competitive juices kick in, but always at the end of the day we're mates.

Q. Cam, with the Open looming and your title defense, how important is it to kind of really start taking another step and peak at the right time this week?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I feel like I've been on this kind of trend for a few months now. I feel as though I had a really good shot there in LA, as well.

Yeah, just got to keep doing what I'm doing. I feel as though Sam and I worked really nice today, which is probably the first time in a long time where we really stuck it out and actually talked through some shots, and probably something that had kind of been a missing piece, I guess, to the puzzle, and it was nice to figure that stuff out before another big tournament coming up.

Q. Can you give us maybe one example?

CAM SMITH: Oh, I think when you're hitting it good, you're so relaxed, you're just hitting it good, so you're not necessarily thinking about what you're actually trying to do. Just there's the pin and I'm just trying to hit it there.



Whereas when you're hitting it good and you're actually trying to hit a shot and fly it a specific number -- there was just a lot more of that chat going on before we hit the ball.

Q. In terms of the Rippers, do you do anything different to shake things up, or did you do anything going into this week to kind of, hey, let's kick it into gear type of thing? Obviously you guys did today.

MARC LEISHMAN: No, we didn't do anything different. I think we've all been playing decently without any results. My putter has been pretty poor all year. Finally sorted out what was happening there.

I think the boys are pretty close to some really good play, as well. Sometimes it just takes some time. Something clicks. I had something that clicked yesterday in the pro-am on the second nine. I was just plodding along on the front nine and started seeing some putts go in and some really good shots. It just gave me some confidence, which sometimes that's all it takes.

It's a very hard game to play when you're low on confidence, and just a little bit of that can go a long way.

Q. Did you have to pay for shirts last week?

MARC LEISHMAN: I bought a couple pairs of shorts. We got some shirts from the merchandise.

Q. You got a discount?

MARC LEISHMAN: Saved some money.

Q. Cam, you spoke earlier in the week about how the Open Championship last year was maybe a bit overshadowed by all the rumor going on. Even though you're going in as defending champion this time, do you feel mentally a little bit freer?

CAM SMITH: I definitely don't think leading into the tournament it was really that big of a topic. I think it was more kind of after, and those two or three days after it was frustrating to kind of take.

But I feel good. Look what we've got here. It's another good venue, another good crowd. The English fans are so much fun today. I loved it.

I feel good. I don't think there's going to be anything there. I've seen a bunch of the boys the last three majors, and yeah, it's been nice.

Q. You were asked a little bit about your preparations.

Obviously different in terms of it being a team format, 54 holes. Does that change much, or is this crucial for two weeks' time at Hoylake?

CAM SMITH: I wouldn't say crucial. It would be nice to put together another nice couple of rounds.

Like I mentioned before, just speaking to Sam a little bit more, that's kind of helped the mojo a little bit today, and hopefully we can get that going there for another couple of days. Just a really solid finish.

It's been tough for me to put -- especially out here this year, put three really solid rounds together, and just kind of boost the confidence even more.

Q. Marc, how strong a contender do you make him to defend his title?

MARC LEISHMAN: Yeah, I think any tournament that Cam enters, he's certainly a strong contender. I think playing this week is going to help him. The wind is very different I feel like in England and Scotland. It's a lot heavier. Getting used to that is pretty important, taking spin off the ball. Cam is very good at that time, and throw his wedges and putting on top of that, and he's a pretty formidable opponent.

I think he's going to -- as long as he plays good and makes the putts, that's what it comes down to at the end of the day. If he can make those putts when they matter, which he's pretty good at, I think he'll do all right.

Q. Cam, you made four 2s today, so your approach play is obviously getting dialed again. How close are you to the form that you were in at St Andrews last year?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I think I'm the same golfer if not better. I think my driver is cleaned up a little bit from last year. I think, like you mentioned, the approach shots are really good. I think it's been really good there for a couple of months, and I keep going back to blaming Sam, but it was nice to have those conversations out there today and actually really commit to shots. That's probably why I had four 2s today.

Q. How much fun is it to play in front of an English crowd when you're about to go 3-0 up in the Ashes?

CAM SMITH: I was waiting for someone to bring it up.

MARC LEISHMAN: We were getting a few score updates today, actually. It was good. It was all Australians, though. It wasn't too much English.

CAM SMITH: It wasn't too many English people yelling out the score.

Q. Cam, obviously there's a lot of chat about this framework agreement, and I'm not going to ask you about that, but one person we haven't really heard from is Tiger Woods. What do you think his silence says about what he thinks about what's happening?

CAM SMITH: Oh, geez, I don't even know. I think if he had something to say, he'd say it for sure. I don't think he's holding anything back.

Just probably like all of us, just waiting for a few more answers.

Q. Cam, when you play like this and you shoot 63 on a tough track like this, what do you work on tonight? Do you go to the range, or do you just bag it and just go to bed and start fresh in the morning?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I think if there was something to clean up, I'd definitely go out there and hit a few balls or hit a few putts or something. But yeah, today was pretty solid.

I think a couple of weeks in a row you've got to start thinking about how tired you are, all that stuff, so a good rest, probably a big long sleep-in in the morning, and just come out, and hopefully it all feels the same tomorrow.

Q. Are you of the same opinion, Marc? Are you in the same boat?

MARC LEISHMAN: Yeah, I wouldn't be going to the range. Our next goal is ordering well at dinner.

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