

Sony Open in Hawaii

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Waialae Country Club

Cameron Smith

Press Conference



JOHN BUSH: We'd like to welcome the defending champion of the Sony Open in Hawaii, Cameron Smith.

Thanks for joining us for a few minutes. First of all, if we can get to you take us back to the victory last year at Waialae.

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, it seems like so long ago now, really. I mean it was just a great week. I come directly from Australia. Didn't have much time off because of the Presidents Cup and those events down there in Australia and was coming off some pretty good form and felt good about my game. Didn't get off to the best start but kind of stuck in there.

The weather was a bit dicey last year, so it was one of those weeks where I think it could go either way for some people, and just managed to hang in there and yeah, Sunday afternoon, had a really good chance of winning and took advantage of it.

JOHN BUSH: If we can get some comments on your season up to this point, really solid play, five Top-25 finishes in six starts including the tie for second at the Masters.

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, it's just been really solid. Nothing has kind of stuck out, I guess, as being really good. I've actually putted really well -- I lied. I've putted really well. I feel as though if I can get my longer stuff, and especially my irons into a good spot, I'll be able to compete every week.

Yeah, just working on that with the coach. I mean, not trying to overdo it. Just little steps. Hopefully it all falls into place very soon.

Q. Just wondering, do you feel any differently this week as the defending champion?

CAMERON SMITH: No, not really, mate, to be honest. I'm pretty crazy. I don't really like to get into that stuff. I mean, defending champion, I'm sure I'll be in a decent group on

Thursday and Friday, so maybe a little bit more pressure there.

But no, I'm looking forward to Thursday. I feel as though I've come off a pretty solid week last week. Felt as though I played better than what my score resulted in.

So looking forward to the week. I love the place. I love the golf course. So yeah, hopefully give it a good defend.

Q. What is it about the course you like so much?

CAMERON SMITH: It just reminds me so much of home to be honest. The grasses are almost the same. You know, very -- where I grew up is very flat and you know just kind of like this golf course, you kind of have to -- it's windy. It's always windy. You always have to control your ball into the greens, which I love doing. I feel as though you can be very creative around the greens here. Yeah, I love it. Great golf course.

Q. Just looking back at last year, when did you feel like you could really win this golf tournament?

CAMERON SMITH: I mean, it wasn't until the last few holes to be honest. I remember Steeley holed out that bunker shot on 11 and from that point on, I thought I was kind of a little bit distant. I knew I had to play some really good golf from there, and you know, Steeley gave me a few coming back in.

Basically everything from that 12th onwards went my way and it needed to. So I mean, probably, yeah, not until the last couple I knew I was in with a chance.

Q. And you mentioned your coach. Who are you working with these days?

CAMERON SMITH: Grant Field. He coaches out of Pelican Waters Golf Club in the Sunshine Coast.

Q. So you send a lot of video to him?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, we haven't seen each other face-to-face for about 13 or 14 months now. So it's been



quite a while. We've kind of made our way around it with FaceTime and other technology that we're able to use these days.

Yeah, we've been doing a really good job of staying on top of it and probably --

Q. What's the biggest thing you learned about your game from the week at the Masters and what have you been trying to do to improve on what you need to do to get over the hump and win a big one like that?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, I think like I was saying before, I think the biggest thing for me is just getting back to that longer stuff. I feel as though my short game and my putting is in a really good spot. I feel like I can make the putts when I need to make the putts. I just need to hit it closer, basically.

Q. Masters amounted they will have limited fans. Curious your thoughts about that and if you view that as encouraging for the future?

CAMERON SMITH: I mean, absolutely. We miss the fans out here every week. I mean, I feel as though the atmosphere around there was obviously down this year. It's such a unique place in that you can hear everything that's going on throughout whole course. I think if we get a few out there, it will definitely make a difference.

Q. Different question. You know, a lot of guys, it seems, are winning early on the PGA TOUR. We're seeing it sort of more and more. Curious if you think an amateur could win out here. Obviously they don't get as many opportunities, but if they would be capable, and why or why not?

CAMERON SMITH: An amateur winning out here?

Q. Yeah.

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, I mean, it seems like the guys that are coming out of college and amateur golf this year are doing so well so early. I'm sure we've had a few guys that have contested within the last couple years, and I don't know, it's hard to say whether they win or not. Maybe the different pressure of a PGA TOUR event might just hold them back a little bit and they need those few starts to kind of settle in.

I wouldn't say it's off the cards, but I would say it's a very difficult task for sure.

Q. Would it surprise you if -- it hadn't happened in a long time but would it surprise you if an amateur won

out here? Not this week, just in general?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, it would surprise me. I think you just need the experience of being in contention and having that pressure.

Q. First, explain the mullet, and give us a good look at it.

CAMERON SMITH: How did I know you were going to ask that? It just come around, I saw a few of the rugby league boys at home doing it. It was a great time to do it during quarantine, just something fun. Make people have a laugh about it. I've just kind of kept it going. I've almost turned it into my good luck charm. It not bad. I think it needs a little bit of a trim at the front. I'd really like to go full business at the front and party at the back. But maybe within the next couple months, it might change up a little bit.

Q. So the plan is to keep it going and get it nice and filthy, yeah?

CAMERON SMITH: Absolutely.

Q. This is a bit obscure, but you're No. 2 in the Aussie rankings in terms of Olympics. What would that -- does that hold any interest to you at the moment in terms of your thoughts, or is it just too far away?

CAMERON SMITH: I haven't really thought about it to be honest. Everything's just been so up and down, I guess, the last year or so. It was definitely one of my goals last year. It's still one of my goals. I'd love to be there. I'd love to represent Australia. Yeah, so hopefully we get the go-ahead and we can get over there.

Q. That holds no fears for you, that stuff, mate?

CAMERON SMITH: No. I just think I just need to keep doing my job, week-in, week-out here, and hopefully I get a call-up.

JOHN BUSH: Thank you for your time and best of luck as you try to repeat.

CAMERON SMITH: Thank you, sir.

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