

Curtis Cup

Saturday, June 11, 2022

Ardmore, Pennsylvania, USA

Merion Golf Club

Amari Avery

Rachel Heck

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We are here with Amari Avery and Rachel Heck. 4-0 to start your Curtis Cup career. You could not have dreamed this, right?

AMARI AVERY: No, I could not have put it together like this, but I've got a pretty special team with a great captain and just a lot of support here on home soil. This is very exciting for me.

THE MODERATOR: New feeling this afternoon; it's actually the first time you've been down in a match. Talk about the self-talk and what the vibe was like when you were down.

AMARI AVERY: Yeah, honestly we were just trying to get the tee box back and just kind of shift the momentum a little bit. We were playing really well, just got a little bit unlucky, but we knew that once we got the tee back we could control the match a little bit.

Q. Rachel, were you guys looking at the scoreboard at all, and for you guys to get that half back, did you know how important that was momentum-wise?

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, we always find motivation in looking at the scoreboard when it comes to team events, whether we're up or down, and in this case we were down, so more motivation to fight hard and really get what we can for the team.

We were motivated. We were having fun out there, and we're just pumped with the way it ended. It feels almost better than a win.

Q. Going into singles tomorrow you won't have a partner. What is the shift in the mind when you have to move into singles?

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, honestly it's a little sad when we move into singles. You kind of miss having your friend right there next to you. But we've all played match play in

singles format so many times before so we just take that experience with us, go out there, play our own games, play our own ball, and keep the momentum up that we created today.

Q. Amari, as a Curtis Cup rookie, what did you learn today with all these back-and-forth matches about your game and your mental game especially?

AMARI AVERY: Yeah, I mean, foursomes for sure is definitely tougher mentally, but I've played matches like this before. I think it's just definitely turned up a little bit that it's Curtis Cup, but like I said, I have a great team out here and a lot of support.

Just trying to grind it out and get as many points as we can.

Q. There was a point early in the afternoon where they were up at least two holes in all three matches. Do you guys start to do some mental math going, we've got some work to do here? How does that change your mind, and is it just as simple as saying we've got to get the tee back?

AMARI AVERY: I think so. I think you just have to put your head down and try and get control of the match. We're playing against some of the best girls from GB&I, so we can't really expect too much. We know how good they are, but we also know how good we are and we know we can turn it around if we try.

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, absolutely. You're not trying to do any crazy math. You're taking it one hole at a time. It's not good to think ahead and think how many holes you have to win. You're just doing what you're doing. Rose and I were playing well, I know they were playing well, so we just had to be patient out there and wait for things to go our way.

Q. How does that change? As college players you're very aggressive players, you're playing for a score, and you're trying to go as low as you can. How do you temper that back when you're playing in a team event? Is it just because you're with somebody else? What's the change in your mindset to do that?



AMARI AVERY: I mean, if anything I think it's the opposite. When you're on a team and you're not playing against each other anymore and you're playing with each other, I think it's even more hype and we kind of turn it up another level. I don't see a point in being too calm. I think you might as well get turnt.

RACHEL HECK: You're going to win or lose --

AMARI AVERY: That's what I'm saying; you might as well get turnt.

Q. Amari, you rolled in some big putts today in both matches. What have you learned about these Marion greens?

AMARI AVERY: Yeah, these Merion greens are hard. You have to be disciplined and you have to just realize that some putts aren't going to go in. Some putts you're just trying to get it up there and you're just trying to concede the hole really, but some of them you've got to roll them in to get the momentum changed. I think I've done quite well with that.

RACHEL HECK: Just got to get turnt.

AMARI AVERY: Just got to get turnt.

Q. I'm curious what's been your favorite part of this week so far outside of the actual golf?

RACHEL HECK: Everything we get to do with the team, team dinners, the van rides, hanging out in the hotel, playing ping-pong. That's really -- when you make the Curtis Cup team, that's kind of what you're thinking about. The golf is great, but we've all played golf before, but being able to be on a team representing the United States with these girls and just hang out -- we're college students, we're here having a great time. I mean, those are the memories that you take.

Q. Who's the best ping-pong player on the team?

AMARI AVERY: This is not fair. Rachel Kuehn. I'm trying.

RACHEL HECK: I'm getting there.

AMARI AVERY: She's pretty good. I love ping-pong, but I can't seem to -- the hand-eye coordination is not giving.

Q. Rachel, approximately how much glitter did you have at your disposal, and do you know how many faces you've put on today?

RACHEL HECK: Okay, it felt like I had unlimited glitter at my disposal. There was a little thing and I was like blown away by how far it went. Every little girl I saw -- if I saw a little girl without glitter on their face, I made a beeline toward her. She was my next victim. So we had to make sure that every little fan was covered in USA glitter.

Q. You mentioned on the broadcast how much rest has impacted your game and when to take time away. I'm curious, especially in a quick turnaround setting like the Curtis Cup how you worked that into your game.

RACHEL HECK: Yeah, I did not play the U.S. Open this year, so I kind of had a little time between nationals and Curtis Cup, and some people -- it might work for some people to really grind those few days, thinking about Curtis Cup, but for me I knew that I had to take some time off. I didn't touch a club for five or six days because I knew I needed to physically rest, mentally rest. I was pretty sick this spring, so I knew I needed to get over that. So I think just knowing your body is important, knowing what you need, so I felt really refreshed coming into this week.

Q. I met Isabelle today and her parents were telling me how much her conversation with you at the Women's Am impacted and inspired her to really get excited about this game. I'm curious for both of you, was there a moment when you were young that you met someone - it doesn't have to be a star - but someone that really inspired you to want to do what you're doing now?

RACHEL HECK: I think for me -- I don't think it was one of the biggest names. I never really got to meet Michelle Wie, Lexi Thompson, when I was young, but any girl -- there were a few professional golfers from Memphis and they played mini-tours, but I didn't know anything about them. They could have been the best golfer in the world to me.

I remember playing just a little par-3 course with her name was Haley Millsap, and I thought that was the coolest thing in the whole world because she was a professional golfer.

So of course playing on this stage, I know I'm just an amateur, I know I'm a college student, but to these little girls, they look up to us so much and I remember what that felt like. So it's our job to inspire them to provide an example to them because they don't really know who we are. They see us playing and we have to do what we can with this opportunity.

AMARI AVERY: That's perfect. I can't top that one.

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