

U.S. Women's Open

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Houston, Texas, USA

Champions Golf Club

Alena Sharp

Quick Quotes

Q. It's been an interesting year with COVID, your marriage. You've been playing a fair amount of golf. How has the year been? Has it been a pretty stressful year for you and are you going to be happy to see the tail end of it here?

ALENA SHARP: Well, it's kind of weird playing golf in December with Christmas lights up and Christmas music, but I'm thankful we're getting to play the U.S. Open. It's nice that we get a chance to do that. Yeah, it's been a crazy year. We've been trying to stay safe the best that we can, and it's nice that we did get to play some golf, but honestly it's been tough because I haven't seen my coach in, I don't know, 10 months now. I haven't seen Brad since the end of February.

I've been doing videos back and forth, but it's just not the same as the hands on that you get when you have a lesson. We've been making due with what we have and playing pretty decent. I feel pretty good going into these last couple.

Q. How is your game right now? You seem to have found some consistency in the last sort of six or eight tournaments. You said you're feeling good going into this?

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, I feel pretty good. I hit it well in Tampa and started making some putts, and I think that's been the big change. We did a FaceTime session and went back to the basics a little bit with pressure in my feet and started to make a few putts at the beginning of the Pelican tournament and just gave me that confidence boost that I haven't had on the greens, and I also started working with a new mental coach, Howard Falco, and it's been very helpful working with him. Just really being mindful of my thoughts, and I wasn't really my best friend out there, so getting back to the basics of being positive and being grateful for being able to play out here on the LPGA and enjoying every moment of it.

Q. You said you weren't your best friend out there, but you have more than your best friend out there with you



now, now that you're married. This is your first tournament after the wedding; is it going to be any different? And did you get a lot of nice messages and calls from your fellow players?

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, we've gotten a lot of congratulations this week. I got a lot of texts, a lot of comments on Instagram and Twitter. Yeah, I don't know, maybe we already had our first marriage quarrel, I don't know. It's the U.S. Open, so -- no, all is good. Happy that Sarah is here with me, and these last two weeks are big weeks, so we want to have a good finish to the year.

Q. Was the wedding in your backyard?

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, yeah. It was nice to actually put our backyard into use. We just upgraded it, so it was nice to be able to do that.

Q. In terms of this week, obviously kind of a first time you've got to play two golf courses for the U.S. Open. For you is this more of a physical thing like I've got to play a lot of golf, I've got to figure this out, or is this a mental thing for you to wrap your head around, having to be ready to play two golf courses once the tournament gets going on Thursday?

ALENA SHARP: I think it's a lot of information, honestly. The one course, the greens are really challenging. The other course the greens are big. So it's really hard to know where they're going to put the flags. We might have some weather on Friday, so we've got it all this week.

I've played both courses now, so I have a good handle it, but I'll probably play nine more holes tomorrow just to get a feel. It's playing long. Both courses are pretty long, so a lot of longer irons in, some woods, which is -- I think it's set up for summer golf, not really for winter golf. We'll see if they move the tees up a little bit. But I think par is going to be a good score.

I think there will be people that shoot under par, obviously, but I don't think -- I think if I stick to par the first couple days, I'll be in good shape going into the weekend. That's what my goal is, being smart. You can get into some wrong spots out here on the greens and have very difficult up-and-downs.



Q. Do you think single digit under par is probably going to be the winning score if you had to --

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, I would be shocked if it's in double digits, but that just depends on if they move the tees up.

Q. So today is Tuesday; have you played both golf courses already, or what's kind of your practice time looking like?

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, I played 18 yesterday on the Jackrabbit and I played the Cypress course today. I've played both of them, so I've played 36 so far. It's just trying to remember all the holes to begin with. When you get back out there to play the tournament. Thankfully Sarah has seen them, also, two more times than me. She's walked both of them.

You know, with this, it's just -- I think it's going to be a mental grind for everybody, so you just have to stay positive and kind of just hit the middle of the greens, honestly. That's what I think the game plan is. With such long irons, you can't really attack too many of the pins.

Q. In talking to some of the guys last month for the Masters, a lot of them were saying, we're just happy to have a Masters at all. Is that kind of a similar thought, hey, we're just happy, two courses, December, whatever, we're just happy to have a U.S. Open here?

ALENA SHARP: Right, I mean, being able to play the U.S. Open in this unprecedented year, it's a huge bonus to play, no matter what month it is. I think everybody here is really happy that we get to play. The challenge of the U.S. Open, no matter what month it is, it's always a challenge. I look forward to it.

Q. I'm just wondering if this tournament in December in a pretty quiet time for sports, do you look at this as a chance for the women's game to get some more exposure, and do you think that could be a good thing for the sport?

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, I hope so. I hope that we do well with the TV coverage this week and people will watch us play. Yeah, I really hope that it does help us in the long run.

I think we've done well on TV this year already, so I hope that this one does just as well.

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