

U.S. Women's Open

Friday, May 30, 2025

Erin Hills, Wisconsin, USA

Erin Hills GC

Sarah Schmelzel

Flash Interview



THE MODERATOR: Sarah Schmelzel, 4-under 68. The back half of your front nine, talk about that streak.

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, it was really nice to get off to a good start. I made a really good par on 10 and then after that I just was hitting it to 15, 10 feet and fortunate enough to make all of them which doesn't happen very often, so I just tried to capitalize on the opportunities and was fortunate enough to do so.

Q. What was your reaction to the golf course early in the week and did you feel like it fit your eye?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, we played practice rounds in so much wind, so I think all of us were pretty convinced that it was going to be very, very challenging. I think with kind of the benign conditions the last couple days at times we've been able to score as you can kind of see a lot of people making birdies out there.

I think it definitely prepared us to play as hard as it possibly could in the practice rounds and I'm sure we're going to get some of that this weekend.

Q. The three-hole stretch on 2, 3 and 4, you hit a great shot out of a divot on 2, made a long putt on 3 to save par and hit a good shot from a bad stance from a fairway bunker. Can you talk about that stretch and what it meant to keep your round going?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, whenever I hit it into a divot my caddie and I always tell him, it's such bad luck to hit it in a divot in the fairway that it has to be good luck. We wound up making a lot of birdies out of divots actually.

In those situations, I think especially on a week like this, you know you're going to get some tough breaks and you're going to have to really fight to make par.

I think I just did a really good job of staying in it and not really caring what it looked like and if it was ugly and just tried to get the ball in the hole as fast as I could.

Q. There's some collection areas right of 7 and fairway on 2 where there is a ton of divots. Do you see that becoming a factor and affecting scoring on the weekend here?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, a bunch of balls are collecting down there. I think it's all up to chance. Anything can happen. I definitely think if you're in a divot down in any collection area out here it's going to make the shot quite a bit harder. If that does happen, yeah, it will affect scoring.

Q. A lot of times in a major a player will come in playing good and for whatever reason they're overlooked by the media or the fans. Did you see this week coming for yourself? Are you surprised by how it's turned out the first couple days?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: No, I put myself in this position at Chevron. I did last year at KPMG, as well. I think overall between last year and this year I've just been playing really solid golf. I've been really oriented in the last year and a half, and I'm trying to come into golf tournaments not expecting to play well or expecting to play poorly.

I'm just really trying to hold myself to a standard of sticking to a process, and it's led to some really solid golf this year.

Q. Following up on Chevron, you did play really well there all the way until the final day. What did you learn from Chevron that you can apply to this major?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, I think anytime I've been in contention, sometimes you hit a point where you kind of feel like you're falling back too far, and I think in the past I've maybe let myself feel that way in a round rather than just really thought, hey, this is closer than I think it is, anything can happen.

So I think I'm just getting better and better at staying more and more present, and I think that's all I'm going to take into the next couple days, is that every shot could completely flip around or completely flip a situation.

So I think just taking that into the next couple days.



Q. You crushed it today in terms of your short game. When you have those kind of shots, how do you keep that panic down and really lock in on what you have to do going forward?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, I think you come into this week knowing you're going to have to showcase some short game shots and you're going to have to hit some really good chips, and a good chip might go to 10 feet and you're going to have to make a putt.

So I think just you kind of just know this week you're going to be tested that way. For me, I love when we play golf courses, where we play courses where it's a grinder's paradise. I think I just kind of thrive in that setting where I know that it doesn't matter how ugly it is, I just need to get around and make pars and shoot a low score. I think that just plays into my hand.

Q. Where does your grit and resiliency come from?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Man, I don't know. That's a good question. I think for some reason, I just kind of love maybe a little bit of that underdog mentality. I love just really having to dig it out of the dirt.

I'm a bit of a perfectionist when it comes to trying to get better at this game, and I think that can make you a bit of a grinder on the golf course where you just kind of don't give up and you don't give in.

I kind of pride myself on really trying to stay in it for 18 holes every single day.

Q. You guys were on the clock; what hole did you get put on the clock and how did that impact you?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Maybe like No. 2? We were on the clock from maybe like 2 or 3 for maybe like four holes, five holes. I mean, I think I've done a really good job in the past couple years of speeding up how I play, so for the most part that doesn't really affect me other than knowing you have someone timing your shots which is never really a fun thing in general.

For me, I don't think it necessarily affected anything. You're just kind of aware of it so it's a little bit of an added factor on to the round.

Q. It didn't take you out of a flow or anything, having to think about that?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: No, I think in a way it's like a little bit of a distraction. You just know that someone is

standing there timing you, so if you're in a precarious situation, you're like, I maybe can't take the extra few seconds that I don't usually take.

But that's just the name of the game. If you fall out of position you need to be on the clock and you need to catch back up, so it's kind of the consequences of your own actions, I think.

But it happens it feels like every week, so it doesn't really throw off the flow, it's just kind of an annoyance.

Q. What has the quest to win on this tour been like, the ups and downs of that?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, a very rewarding and humbling process, obviously. I haven't won yet, but when I get into positions where I feel like I have a chance to win, that's kind of a win in and of itself. I really just want to get myself into contention a lot.

I mean, you want to give up 1000 times because it feels like it's never going to happen for you, and I feel like I've gotten to a place where I'm just really confident in my process. I'm really confident in the people around me that are helping me.

That feels like enough of a win for my career on Tour. If I add actual wins on top of that, that would be amazing and I really hope to do that. But getting to that place where I feel content in how I'm going about my career has been very, very rewarding.

Q. Any inspiration from somebody like Mao who's first win was a major?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: As big as Solheim is, it kind of hungry for the really, really big moments like a major. I'm really grateful for that experience and all that I learned from playing in Solheim and playing on a stage like that.

I think that's really helped me coming into the majors since.

Q. You mentioned a few times your process. What does that look like for you now?

SARAH SCHMELZEL: Yeah, I think I've just gotten a lot better at how I practice. I've really tried to make my practice consequential, so instead of just standing there hitting balls, standing there hitting chips, I really try and put myself under the gun when I'm at home practicing and I'm by myself, and I think that that's prepared me really well for coming out here and knowing I've hit those shots maybe in a little bit lesser of circumstances, but still in circumstances in my head where I've kind of simulated.

I really lean on my coach, my mental coach, my caddie, my physio and my trainer, and I think just us staying in our routines that we do week in and week out, it allows you to kind of have less of that, like, anxiousness when you're out here trying to perform.

For me, it's just really leaning on those people and really sticking with my routines.

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